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# EMERALD HILLS MONTESSORI

*ENRICHED EARLY EDUCATION*

**Parent Handbook  
2024/25**

**Dear Families,**

Welcome to our Emerald Hills Montessori! This handbook serves as a comprehensive guide to our programs and philosophy. We are thrilled to be a part of your child's early learning, play, and education journey. At Emerald Hills Montessori, we believe in a collective effort between us and you to ensure your child's success, and we strongly encourage you to thoroughly read through this handbook.

If you need any further clarification or have questions, please feel free to contact our administration via email at [info@emeraldhillsmontessori.com](mailto:info@emeraldhillsmontessori.com). We want to keep you well-informed, and it's essential to note that the content of this handbook may be subject to change to maintain our high standards and adhere to licensing regulations. Rest assured, any updates will be promptly communicated through our monthly newsletters sent via email.

Thank you for entrusting us with your child's care and development. Together, we create a nurturing and enriching environment for your little one's growth.

**Emerald Hills Montessori**

1501 Bramble Lane

Coquitlam, BC

V3E 2S7

T: 604 942-5430

E: [info@emeraldhillsmontessori.com](mailto:info@emeraldhillsmontessori.com)

**Emerald Hills Montessori Before and After School Care**

(Portable - Behind Bramblewood Elementary School)

T: 604 942-5431

E: [info@emeraldhillsmontessori.com](mailto:info@emeraldhillsmontessori.com)

Emerald Hills Montessori's legacy dates back to 1996. As we continue to foster a stimulating and enriching learning environment for all our students, we uphold an open-door policy that encourages communication between families and teachers.

At Emerald Hills Montessori, our faith lies in our students, our families, our staff, and our curriculum.

### **Mission Statement**

Emerald Hills Montessori is committed to providing a diverse range of programs tailored to meet the unique needs of each student and their family. We deeply recognize the individuality of every student, embracing their distinct personalities and learning styles.

### **Philosophy**

Dedicated to nurturing the holistic development of each child, Emerald Hills Montessori crafts programs that allow children to explore the world through language, mathematics, science, social studies, art, literature, dance, and music. Our aim is to kindle curiosity across various subjects while instilling the following values:

- ✓ **Cultivating Independence**
- ✓ **Fostering Respect for oneself, peers, and the environment**
- ✓ **Building Confidence**
- ✓ **Developing Problem-Solving Skills**

We take immense pride in the diversity that thrives at Emerald Hills Montessori. Our commitment to inclusivity is reflected in our hiring practices and enrollment, which welcome individuals irrespective of race, color, creed, age, gender, or anything else that sets us apart.

Thank you for choosing Emerald Hills Montessori as the foundation for your child's educational journey. We look forward to embarking on this journey together.

## **Programs and Hours**

### **Infant & Toddler Program**

*Open January to December*

Ages: 12 months to 30 months

7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

### **Full Day Montessori Program**

*Open January to December*

Ages: 30 months – 5 years

7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

All students are expected to be in class by 9:30 a.m.

### **Junior Kindergarten**

Ages: 3 - 5 years

Classes time: 9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

The first 10 minutes of each session is designated as a short drop off period.

### **Before and After School Care**

*Enrolment is for 10 months, September to June*

*Summer Camp is available for July and August*

Ages: 5 – 12 years

Grades: Kindergarten to Grade 5

7:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

### **Emerald Hills Montessori services the following public schools:**

Bramblewood Elementary School

Panorama Heights Elementary School

Aspenwood Elementary School

## **General Information**

### **School Year**

Emerald Hills Montessori operates throughout the year, excluding statutory holidays like Easter Monday, Truth & Reconciliation Day, Boxing Day, and the last week of December. Please refer to the current school calendar for any planned closures during the year.

### **Attendance**

Regular attendance is crucial for your child's success. However, we understand that illness or family emergencies may lead to absences. In such cases, please inform the center by emailing [info@emeraldhillsmontessori.com](mailto:info@emeraldhillsmontessori.com)

For the well-being and consistency of our young learners, we request that children be dropped off at their program at or near the same time each day. This routine fosters a sense of familiarity and security, making drop-offs smoother and enabling children to feel safe at the center.

If there are any changes to the pickup routine at the end of the day, please inform both the child and the staff. This proactive communication helps avoid surprises and ensures proper coordination with the staff.

Upon arrival, all children should change into indoor shoes and wash their hands before joining their group, prioritizing hygiene and cleanliness.

For parents of infants and toddlers, we encourage allowing ample time for settling their child and communicating with the teachers at arrival. A smooth transition sets a positive tone for the day.

After dropping off your child, please make the staff aware of your departure so that we know the responsibility of caring for your child has been transferred to us. Sneaking away can cause insecurity and anxiety for the child, so open communication is essential.

The safety and supervision of all students are of utmost importance to us. We encourage daily communication between parents and staff regarding the child's day. If you have any inquiries or need to discuss matters with the teacher at length, please schedule an appointed time for a thorough conversation.

Thank you for your cooperation in ensuring the best possible learning environment for your child at Emerald Hills Montessori. Together, we foster a nurturing and supportive space for their growth and development.

**School Age Care - Changes in School Schedules**

To ensure a smooth pick-up and drop-off process for your child, kindly inform the office of any changes in the schedule through email or by leaving a message on the program voicemail. If your child won't require pick-up on a specific day, please notify Emerald Hills Montessori before 12:00 p.m. via email or telephone.

Additionally, it's essential for all students to meet the Emerald Hills Montessori bus or teachers right after their dismissal, as the waiting time is limited. We request that you inform your child's elementary class teacher, so they can promptly release your child to ensure a seamless transition.

**Staffing**

Our childcare programs maintain proper staff-to-child ratios in each classroom, ensuring a safe and nurturing environment. Our dedicated childcare staff are well-trained, with many holding certifications as Certified Early Childhood Educators and Infant and Toddler Specialists. They possess valid child safe first aid certificates and have undergone a cleared criminal record check. Many of our staff members boast extensive experience in the childcare field and continuously enhance their knowledge through workshops, conferences, and independent studies on relevant topics.

Occasionally, we welcome practicum students to the center, and we'll introduce them to you and your child upon their arrival. Rest assured that all practicum students also undergo a cleared criminal record check before starting their placements.

**Substitutes**

When regular staff members are absent, qualified substitute childcare staff will be called in to maintain the required staff-to-child ratio. In such cases, our priority is to have teachers from other programs cover the shift, ensuring familiarity with the children and the daily routine. Occasionally, schedule changes may be last-minute, and we may not have adequate notice to inform enrolled families. While you may not be familiar with the substitute teacher, we kindly ask that you introduce yourself and get to know them for a smooth transition.

**Sign In/Out – Infant Toddler Program**

For our Infant Toddler Program, parents are required to sign in and out their child each day using the daily log sheet. This log sheet serves as a valuable communication tool between parents and teachers, providing insights into your child's daily experiences and activities.

### **Snacks**

For the Infant Toddler Program, IT students should bring beverages (milk) and nutritious snacks and lunch from home in clearly labeled containers. The student's diet should consist of healthy and nourishing choices. For lunch guidelines, please refer to the "IT Lunch Policy" in Appendix II.

In all other programs, please ensure that your child's daily lunch box includes nutritious morning and afternoon snacks, such as fresh fruits and vegetables. We encourage providing additional options in case your child needs alternatives. For lunch guidelines regarding the Full Day Montessori & School Age Care Program, please refer to the "Lunch Policy" in Appendix I.

### **Field Trips**

We occasionally plan spontaneous walks outside the daycare for all programs, and all field trips are meticulously supervised. To ensure safety, we equip ourselves with a first-aid kit, cell phone, and proper means of travel, such as a 3-seat stroller for infants and toddlers. Prior to any class outing, we will inform parents and require signed permission forms along with the need for parent volunteers. A sign-up sheet will be posted in your child's program outlining the field trip and any necessary items your child may need.

Field trips are carefully selected to enrich and complement our programs. Emerald Hills Montessori will notify parents of upcoming field trips through monthly newsletters, enabling parents to make necessary arrangements. Please note that additional fees may apply to cover extra transportation costs and entrance fees when applicable. In instances where field trips may not be feasible, we organize special visitors to enhance the curriculum.

### **Birthday Celebrations**

We celebrate your child's birthday with a memorable candlelight ceremony, a birthday walk, and a class picture. Families wishing to share treats with the class are kindly asked to bring pre-packaged treats only. Treats will be given to parents at pick-up time, and you may distribute them to the children at your discretion. Alternatively, we encourage families to consider bringing a fruit or veggie platter for the children to enjoy in class.

To ensure that all children feel included, and no one feels left out, we request that birthday party invitations be distributed discreetly, avoiding any potential hurt feelings.

### **Parking**

During drop-off in the morning, please keep it brief to free up parking spots, as city by-laws closely monitor parking in the neighborhood. Parking in designated "No Parking Zones" may result in receiving a parking ticket. Always prioritize safety first.

***Leaving children in the car or leaving a car running is prohibited.***

***Emerald Hills Montessori does not accept any responsibility for damages, lost or stolen items from motor vehicles.***

**Donations**

Our creative teachers make great use of various materials like paper, fabrics, ribbons, buttons, yarn, and baby food jars for arts, crafts, and other activities. If you have any extras in good condition, we gladly accept these items as they will be put to good use. Additionally, if you would like to make other donations, feel free to ask the staff for our wish list.

**Newsletter**

Stay informed through our monthly newsletters, which will provide valuable information about the curriculum, classroom updates, and special events. If you would like to contribute to the themes in our newsletter related to your child's program, please reach out to their teachers.

Parents should regularly monitor their email for special bulletins, school closures, newsletters, and other important communications. Kindly ensure that the office has your current email address on file for seamless communication.

**Telephone**

When calling the Centre and directed to voicemail, kindly leave a detailed message at the appropriate program option listed below. To avoid confusion, remember to include your child's first and last name along with their program. Our administration staff and teachers regularly check the voicemail and will promptly return your call.

Main Centre: 604 942-5430

School Age Care at Portable: 604 942-5431

Email: [info@emeraldhillsmontessori.com](mailto:info@emeraldhillsmontessori.com)

During nap time, we kindly request that you give consideration and avoid calling unless it is an absolute emergency, allowing children to rest peacefully.

**Environmental Emergencies**

In case of environmental emergencies like earthquakes or snowstorms, please check your emails for any information and instructions regarding the Centre's closures. To keep communication lines open, we kindly ask that you refrain from calling us during such events.

Depending on the severity of the environmental emergency, cell phone towers may be damaged, making communication with the Center impossible. In such instances, families are requested to come directly to the Center to pick up their child/ren as soon as possible. Please be mindful that staff may also need to attend to their own families, so time is of the essence.

It is essential for all students to have an earthquake kit provided by their parents/guardians for the Center. For more information, please refer to Appendix III.



**Weather-Related Closures**

We understand that closures due to weather can be disruptive to families, and we make every effort to avoid them. However, sometimes last-minute changes become necessary. On snow days, the center may have a delayed opening to ensure safe commuting for both staff and families. Families will be promptly informed of any delayed openings or closures through email as soon as a decision is made.

**Power Outage**

In the event of a power outage at the center, families will be notified via email. If the outage lasts longer than 60 minutes or BC Hydro cannot determine an approximate resolution time, families will be asked to pick up their child/ren as soon as possible. Rest assured that children will be supervised until they are picked up.

**Nap/Resting Time**

Each child in our Infant/Toddler and Full Day Montessori programs has their individual sleeping patterns, and we aim to accommodate these patterns while gradually integrating them into the center's routine. Nap/rest time for these programs is scheduled after lunch, and each child will have a designated cot with their bedding from home. Please refer to your child's daily schedule for specific rest period times.

While we encourage all students to rest for at least an hour during the day, no student will be forced to sleep or stay awake. Those who do not fall asleep will be encouraged to have a rest time to calm their bodies and minds. Once the rest period is over, students who remain awake will be engaged in positive alternative quiet activities like workbooks, library books, puzzles, etc.

**Outdoor Play**

Daily outdoor play is crucial for the good health and development of our students, and it is an integral part of their daily routine. To participate, students should be equipped with comfortable closed-toe shoes and weather-appropriate attire for daily walks and playground visits. We ensure that all students are included in outdoor activities, and the class always stays together as one group. If any student is unable to participate in outdoor routines, please communicate with the teachers, and we will work together to find a solution.

For student attire guidelines for outdoor play, please refer to the attached supply list. During morning walks, our students wear fluorescent bibs to easily identify them as part of our group.

In the afternoon, students have the opportunity to visit our on-site playground. To ensure the safety of your child and others, kindly adhere to the following rules:

- Keep gates closed at all times.
- Refrain from bringing toys onto the climber to enable safe climbing with both hands.
- Only one child should be on the slide at a time. Sliding should be done on the bum or feet (not head), and climbing up the slide is not permitted.
- Ensure the area at the bottom of the slide is clear to prevent collisions.
- Follow the specific rules posted around the playground.
- When leaving the playground, please inform the teacher before collecting your child. Be sure to securely close the gate upon entering or exiting.

### **Cultural Holidays**

We celebrate holidays and festivals from various cultural and historical perspectives. Specific details about these celebrations will be highlighted in our monthly newsletter. While we actively embrace these holidays, we also encourage parents to share their cultural traditions. Feel free to speak to your child's teachers about other traditions and celebrations we can include!

### **Dressing**

When dressing your child, opt for clothing that they can manage themselves and that is suitable for the weather. Comfort and practicality are key. Keep in mind that our students explore throughout the day, engaging in activities like painting and playing in dirt. Therefore, it's best to choose washable clothing that can endure such activities. All items of clothing should be clearly labeled to avoid confusion.

For practicality, please avoid jump suits, long fancy dresses, neck scarves, necklaces, and overalls with elaborate fasteners. These can hinder restroom use. If your child wears a dress to school, ensure they have modesty shorts underneath to facilitate floor work. Jackets and hoods with drawstrings/cords should have these removed for safety reasons. Closed-toed, hard-soled shoes are essential for safety at all times; therefore, flip flops and crocs should be avoided. Please note that Emerald Hills Montessori cannot assume responsibility for any stained, lost, or broken clothing items.

**For parents and visitors entering the Infant Toddler program, please remove your street shoes at the main entrance. As our students spend time on the floor, we strive to maintain a clean surface for their activities. Your cooperation in keeping this area clean is greatly appreciated.**

**Toileting**

Students enrolled at Emerald Hills Montessori are to use the washroom independently, except for the students in the IT program.

Parents can promote self-help skills at home by encouraging and guiding their children through the entire process, including undressing, wiping, flushing and hand washing. Students should wear clothing that does not hinder the process. Students in Full Day Montessori and Preschool programs must not attend in diapers and must be fully potty-trained.

Infant Toddler program students will understandably attend in diapers or pull-ups. Parents are to provide diapers/pull-up for their child. Teachers will let parents know when stock is running low.

A potty-training plan will be developed and implemented when a child is ready. This period will be mutually agreed upon between teachers and parents, as it will only be successful if worked on together. Note students attending the Full Day Montessori Program OR the Junior Kindergarten Program must be potty trained by the time of transition.

**Supply List**

Please see the supply list provided for your specific program. As indicated, please label necessary items.

**Sunscreen**

Students must have applied sunscreen at home each day. The teachers will reapply in the afternoon before outdoor play. When selecting an appropriate sunscreen, please consider the smell as Emerald Hills Montessori promotes a scent-free environment.

**Communication**

Enquiries about your child's progress should be directed to the program teachers. Any questions you have regarding matters outside your child's program can be emailed to the administration team.

At Emerald Hills Montessori, we maintain an open-door communication policy; all parties are in a partnership and will work together to best meet the needs of the child.

Families are encouraged to discuss questions or concerns regarding any aspect of their child's care with us. When an issue arises, the goal is to resolve the matter and any differences of opinion in a peaceful way and find solutions that everyone can accept.

In the event of a conflict, the following steps will be taken: the parent/guardian and will meet with the Manager to define the issues and to understand their concerns. Solutions and/or appropriate resources will be identified, whenever appropriate. The enrolling parent/guardian and the Manager should agree upon a plan. If all parties cannot agree upon a plan, other arrangements may be required.

We also encourage some positive feedback for the teachers to boost their morale. To help us serve you better we appreciate you using this avenue of communication.

### **School Equipment Brought Home**

Beads, small blocks, plastic figures, etc. may seem insignificant but these items may form an integral part of the Montessori equipment. Missing pieces cannot always be replaced, largely due to availability and cost, so we request that any items mistakenly taken home be returned to the program as soon as possible. Missing pieces can lead to dampened educational experiences and missed opportunities.

### **Personal Belongings**

All toys, comics, trinkets, make-up, etc. should remain at home. If a child brings a personal item from home, this item will be placed in their cubby. It will not be accessible to the child during the program and will be returned when it is time to return home. This is to avoid items getting broken, missing or question in ownership.

Occasionally, teachers may request students bring books or artifacts from home relating to program themes. These items should be given directly to the teacher and will be returned to the parent directly.

Emerald Hills Montessori will not be responsible for any lost or broken items.

### **Vandalism**

When a violation occurs, intentionally damaging property belonging to the school, student or staff property, Management will likely ask to meet the parent/guardian regarding the matter. A care plan can be put into place to mitigate reoccurrence. Depending on the scenario, parents may be required to incur replacement costs.

If a child's behavior is excessively harmful to other children and/or staff, the child may be suspended or expelled. This will be determined at the discretion of Administration and may be in put into effect immediately. Emerald Hills Montessori reserves the right to refuse care. Parents will be contacted by phone and formal letter.

## **Emergency Contacts and Student Release**

### **Emergency Contacts / Authorized Persons**

At enrolment, parents must provide administration with names of emergency contacts who can be contacted to provide support to the child or Emerald Hills Montessori staff in the event the parents are unavailable.

Emergency contacts are authorized to pick up your child from the Centre when the parents are delayed, or in case of environmental emergencies – i.e. earthquake, power outage, snow storms, etc.

Your child should be very comfortable and familiar with your Emergency contacts. If they are new to your family, then please invest time and make your child familiar to them as they may be taking care of your child sometimes. Emergency Contacts should also be made aware of their role with Emerald Hills Montessori. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure their Emergency Contact/Authorized Persons have proper car seats when picking up their child.

Emergency contacts can be changed or extra names can be added at any time however, such changes will need to be made in writing. We ask that you email the office with said changes/updates. An alternative will be to update your child's records with their program teachers.

### **Late Charges**

Promptness in picking up your child shows respect to them, their teachers and helps in build your child's confidence and trust. In the event you are going to be unexpectedly late, parents are required to call the Centre so their child can be reassured and anticipate delay. An alternative would be to contact your emergency contact and have them pick your child up from the center. We ask that you still let staff know of the change in pick up.

After 5:30 pm, families will be charged \$1.00 per minute for the first 15 minutes and \$2.00 per minute thereafter. You will be given an invoice due and payable the next day.

When a child is not picked up within 5 minutes of the conclusion of the program, we will contact the registering parent or emergency contact. We will follow their instructions.

In the event we are not able to contact parents or emergency contacts by 6:30 pm, the administrator will contact the Ministry of Children and Families and inform them of the situation.

**Student Release**

Students will only be released to enrolling parent(s) or emergency contacts noted on the registration form. Photo I.D. will be required to verify the person's identity at pick up. If you have arranged for your child to go home with an adult not listed on the authorization form, the staff must be notified, in writing as stated in our Emergency Contact/Authorized Person's section. Emerald Hills Montessori will not release students to individuals under 18 years of age.

**Custody and Court Order Restrictions**

To enforce custody or court order rulings, a copy of the said order must be provided to administration. We are not legally allowed to deny a parent (enrolled or non-enrolled) access to their child without proper records and copies.

**Alleged Impaired Parent /Authorized Person Pick-up**

We ask that parents/guardians, be mindful to not be intoxicated or smelling of alcohol and/or marijuana. An innocent or casual drink before picking up your child leaves the teachers in an uncomfortable position.

Parents/guardians are required to make proper arrangements to transport their children safely at pick up time.

If a parent is picking up a child but does not appear to be using safe care, legally, staff cannot stop parents from picking up their child. However, staff will offer some options like calling a relative, friend, taxi, etc. They will not be confrontational, and they will treat this matter confidentially.

If the parent insists on driving and taking the child, the police will be contacted. If administration/ staff believe the child is at risk, a report will be made to the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

## Health and Hygiene

### **Preventive Hygiene**

Good hygiene is encouraged amongst the students. This includes routines such as hand washing before and after eating, wiping their nose, using the toilet, art activities and outdoor play. For more information, visit the Health Link BC website: [www.healthlinkbc.ca](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca)

At home, as at school, students should be encouraged to wash their hands using soap especially before and after eating. **Please also emphasize the importance of coughing and sneezing into a tissue or into the inside of their elbow.**

The staff maintain a clean environment by routinely sanitizing toys, materials and surfaces using a sanitizing solution.

All students in Infant/Toddler and Full Day Montessori programs are required to store their personal blankets, pillows, etc. in their own nap bins. Parents should take these items home for washing every Friday and return them the following Monday.

### **Illness & Communicable Diseases**

Students must stay home if they show signs of illness. This allows the student to recover faster and prevents the spread of germs and infections. Students should be kept home if unable to participate in daily class routines including outdoor play.

#### **Symptoms which require students to not attend school for a minimum of 48 hours:**

**Fever:** oral temperature of 100°F/ 38°C or higher, especially when accompanied by other symptoms such as vomiting, sore throat, diarrhea, headache. A Child can return back to school if they are fever free for more than 48 hours and without the aid of medication such as Tylenol/Advil.

**Diarrhea:** Multiple bowel movements within a short period (2 hours)

**Vomiting:** vomiting episode prior to class or within the last 48 hours.

**Coughing:** continuous coughing, having difficulty breathing.

**Pinkeye / Nose drainage:** eyes are red and excreting pus or mucus from eyes or nose. Student may return 24 hours after treatment has begun.

**Strep or Sore Throat:** especially when fever is present or glands in the neck are red and swollen. Student may return 48 hours after treatment has begun and no fever present.

**Skin Rash:** unexplained, undiagnosed or contagious skin rash; persistent itching, sores with crusty, yellow or green drainage which cannot be covered.

**Ringworms, Scabies:** bumpy red rash or hives may be in a circular shape. Student may attend between 48 - 72 hours after treatment has begun, depending on the medication.

**Chicken Pox :** pimple like blisters with fluid spread over the entire body. All blisters must be crusted over and no fever present before student returns.

**Head Lice:** small white eggs (nits) firmly attached to hair shaft. Student may return after all lice and nits are removed and treatment has begun.

**Communicable Diseases:** any other contagious illnesses or communicable diseases.

Any medicine required to treat above symptoms will mean the child is too ill to attend the center.

**We ask that you stay in constant communication with the administration team to arrange when your child can return to the program. We also appreciate updates on your child's symptoms such as new onset so we can make informed decisions to let families know; all such communications are kept confidential. These health and safety measures are enforced to ensure the good health of all students, parents and teachers.**

**In the event your child has an onset of illness, staff will contact parents/guardians to let them know and they may request parents pick up their child. Children should be picked up within 30 minutes to ensure your child is getting the care they need and to reduce the risk of spread to other students and staff. We are unable to maintain a 1:1 ratio of care with an ill child and so a prompt response to our call is imperative.**

**CAUTION** - Students with the following diseases and other communicable diseases need medical clearance from their doctor before returning to their program. **Visit: [www.gov.bc.ca](http://www.gov.bc.ca)** for more information.

Fifth Diseases  
Scarlet Fever (Streptococcal)  
Swine Flu (H1N1 Flu Virus)

If the onset of symptoms is sudden and a child appears to be ill, parents will be contacted immediately. The parents/emergency contacts will be requested to pick up the child as soon as possible. Every effort will be made to keep the child comfortable and reassured. Emergency medical attention (911) will be called if required.

If your child is absent because of a communicable disease, we appreciate an email/call to the Centre as soon as possible. We have to inform the enrolled students and their families to take precaution. This matter is treated as private and confidential.

**Administration reserves the right to deny attendance to any student who may have been exposed to a communicable disease. This decision would be made in the best interest and welfare of all students and staff. There is no exemption of fees under these circumstances.**

### **Immunizations**

Parents are required to provide a copy of their children's immunization records for our files. Please keep this information current and advise us of any changes. All enrolled students must have full immunization.

### **Medication**

Over the counter medications and vitamins will not be administered by staff to students. Please do not send cough candies, vitamins, throat lozenges, herbal remedies, to school with your child.



### **Prescription Medication**

Prescription medication will only be administered with a completed consent form. Consent forms may be obtained from your child's teachers. Prescription medication must be provided in its original container and include a measuring spoon or syringe.

As parents, authorize the teachers to administer the medication in the dosage and frequency stated on the provided medication. The dosage administered will be consistent with the recommendation of the physician/pharmacist prescribing the medication. Any unused medication will be returned to the parent at pick up.

**Emerald Hills Montessori staff will not administer medication that a child has not been given before.**

Students should not be in possession of any medication at any time. All medication must be directly given to the teachers upon arrival to the classroom. If medication is found in a student's possession it will be removed and returned to the parents.

### **Allergies**

It is the parents' responsibility to keep the school administration and child's teachers informed and updated with any medical changes, including seasonal or other allergies. Depending on the allergies, a low or high-risk emergency care plan will need to be filled out. Students who attend Emerald Hills Montessori with life-threatening allergies are required to have a completed Emergency Care Plan on file. Emergency Care Plan must be completed prior to a student beginning a program and must be signed by a doctor.

### **EPI- Pen, Inhaler & Benadryl**

Parents must provide Emerald Hills Montessori with an EPI-PEN &/or INHALER &/or BENADRYL. This will be kept in the student's classroom. Registration and enrolment is not confirmed until all Emergency Care plan/ Medication Forms are completed and received by the office.

Please be aware of expiration dates on medications.

### **Injuries**

If a child gets injured while at Emerald Hills Montessori, staff will quickly assess the situation to decide what action/attention is required – first aid, medical attention and/or emergency medical attention.

In case of serious injury, Emerald Hills Montessori staff will take the following steps:

1. Attend to the child's need and administer first aid as needed.
2. Call an ambulance and accompany the child to hospital emergency if required.
3. Call parents or guardians. If they are not reachable, emergency contacts will be contacted instead.

### **Behaviour Management**

## **Guidance & Abuse**

Emerald Hills Montessori provides a safe and caring environment where students should never feel threatened by classmates or care providers. Behaviour management is used to nurture a child's ability to develop self-control and positive social skills, considering each individual's unique personality and needs. Our goal is to empower children in their ability to identify and manage their feelings and to develop skills relating to empathy.

Activities within the program will be monitored and adjusted accordingly in consultation with parents, childcare staff and other professionals to promote ongoing development. Positive guidance techniques will be used to encourage appropriate behavior. This includes:

- Establish clear and consistent limits.
- Stating limits in a positive way
- Focusing on the behavior rather than on the child.
- Stating what is expected rather than pose questions
- Providing real choices
- Allowing time for students to respond to expectations
- Reinforce appropriate behavior with both words and gestures
- Encourage students to use the teachers as a resource when they cannot resolve issues on their own

Inevitably there will be occurrences of inappropriate behavior. It is at these times that there may be a need for an intervention by the teacher. The following intervention strategies or combination of the strategies will be used to help ensure that guidance is supportive rather than punitive.

- Gain attention in a respectful way
- Remind students of more appropriate behavior
- Acknowledge feelings before setting limits
- Redirect or divert when appropriate
- Model problem solving skills
- Offer appropriate choices
- Use natural and logical consequences
- Provide opportunities for students to make amends. Rather than demand a superficial

apology encourage genuine opportunities for students to restore relationships after incident of hurt or harm.

As a last resort, when a student's behaviour threatens their own safety and/or the wellbeing of others, a student will be asked to work independently within the group environment. This will allow the student to regain their composure and rejoin the group when he/she feels able to manage. Students will never be isolated away from the group nor be given time-outs.

As per the Child Care Licensing Regulations (CCLR), Section 52, children will never be subjected to the following as a form of punishment:

- Shoving, hitting or shaking by an employee or another child, or confinement or physical restraint by another child.
- Confinement or physical restraint by an employee, except as authorized in a childcare's plan if the care plan includes instructions respecting behavioural guidance.
- Harsh, belittling or degrading treatment by an employee or another child, whether verbal, emotional or physical, that could humiliate the child or undermine the child's self-respect.
- Spanking or any other form of corporal punishment.
- Separation, without supervision by a responsible adult, from other children.
- As a form of punishment, deprivation of meals, snacks, rest or necessary use of a toilet.

When a concern arises regarding a child's behavior, a meeting between administration, parents and/or teachers will be arranged. This meeting serves the purpose of exchanging ideas on how to help the child. A care plan will be issued so that all parties can work collectively and consistently to help the child.

Licensing Regulations defines a child requiring extra support as a child who for physical, intellectual, emotional, communicative or behavioral reasons require support or services that are additional to, or distinct from those provided to other children.

Care plans are created so both teachers and parents are aware of the extra support given to a child that needs it. A meeting is held with the parent and together with the teacher a care plan is created. A care plan is required to meet the individual needs of a child who requires extra support so they can derive the maximum benefit from a child care facility's activities and services.

Care plans are reviewed and amended on a regular basis. In some situations, we may ask the parent's written permission to include community professionals. A team approach will be used to develop strategies to best assist the student.

If there is uncertainty about whether the child may adjust to a classroom setting, a trial period may be set. When this trial period has ended, another meeting will be conducted to formulate a

plan.

Although Emerald Hills Montessori reserves the right to refuse care, withdrawal of a child from our programs is not requested without sufficient consideration. This is a process involving many hours of discussions, effort, and conferences between teachers, administration and parents.

### **School Fees & Enrolment**

#### **Fees & Method of Payment**

At Emerald Hills Montessori, payments are to be made through Pre-Authorized Debit (PAD), with e-transfers considered in exceptional circumstances. To complete registration, please ensure you set up your Lillio Parent Portal and enter your banking information into the app. Please download the Lillio Parent App from the Google Play Store or Apple App Store.

Payment received after the 3rd of each month will incur a late charge of 5%. It's important to note that there are no exemptions for missed days due to illness or vacations. Additionally, a \$25.00 charge will apply to accounts with insufficient funds (NSF).

For the current fee schedule, parents can reach out to the office. Fees are subject to annual review and potential adjustments every July.

#### **Affordable Child Care Benefit**

Families receiving the Affordable Child Care Benefit (ACCB) or those interested in applying for it should contact our office staff for the necessary paperwork. Subsidy applications should be renewed prior to expiration. After ACCB coverage, parents/guardians are responsible for the remaining portion of fees, which should be paid to Emerald Hills Montessori by the first of the month.

#### **Withdrawal and Refund Policy**

In the event of withdrawal or any changes to enrollment, Emerald Hills Montessori administration must receive written notice a minimum of 45 days before the intended withdrawal date. Withdrawals become effective from the 1st of the month. For instance, to withdraw from the 1st of October, notice should be provided by August 15th.

When proper notice is not provided, a full month's fees are payable to Emerald Hills Montessori in lieu of notice. Please be aware that withdrawals are not accepted for the months of May and June in the current school year for Junior Kindergarten & School Age Care programs.

Deposits will be refunded with sufficient withdrawal notice. However, if adequate notice is not received by the office, deposits are non-refundable.

**Eligibility for Enrolment**

Infants below 30 months of age are eligible for the Infant Toddler program. Children from 30 months to age 5 are eligible for the Full Day Montessori or the Junior Kindergarten program. These students should also be able to use the bathroom independently.

**Waitlist**

We maintain a waitlist for families who would like their child to attend when a space is available. When a space is made available, priority is given to our enrolled families at both locations. We consider the following:

- Priority to siblings of current enrolled student at current location
- Priority to sibling of current enrolled student at our other location
- Priority to student transferring from another program

**Bus Drop-Off and Pick-Up Routines****\* Before and After School Care Only**

Emerald Hills Montessori transports students by bus to Panorama Heights and Aspenwood Schools; In the morning, students must be in attendance into the program by 8:15. The bus is ready to leave by 8:20 am.

All students from Grades 1-5 are to be dropped off/picked up at the designated meeting point for each given school. Staff must maintain supervision of Kindergarteners until supervision is confirmed to be released to their respective Elementary School Staff member.

In the event the bus driver is receiving pressure to move the bus, and the children's classroom hasn't opened yet for the morning, they may only leave if and once the Principal, school monitor or another member of staff accepts responsibility over the supervision of Emerald Hills Montessori Kindergarteners until they are with their teachers. Staff will ensure children are under the supervision of an adult and are not left unattended. At pick-up, Emerald Hills Montessori staff will pick-up Kindergarteners directly from their classrooms.

Special arrangements may be required and will be discussed and agreed with families directly.

Each bus has a Drop Off/Pick-Up schedule. The schedule explains which child is dropped off/picked up from which school. Children are to gather at the meeting point.

If an unexpected event arises which hinders the daily routine of drop-off/pick-up, the driver is expected to adapt to the situation while ensuring the safety and supervision of children is maintained. This will be communicated to the office and parents if necessary.

Unless notified by the parent, the driver will drop off/pick up all enrolled students. The child does not have an option of participating (spontaneously decide to go home or to a friend's house without the parent's knowledge).

**General Routine and Conduct on Bus**

Students are expected to stay seated and wear seat belts on the bus. They are not allowed to consume food or beverages on the bus.

The driver may use their discretion by separating the students and assigning seating if necessary.

## Appendix I Lunch Guidelines

**For students attending:**      **\*Full Day Program**  
   **\*School Age Care students attending all day**  
   **\*Summer Care (K to Grade 5)**

Every child is required to bring lunch and snacks (morning and afternoon) everyday. Lunch must include a nutritious balanced meal. It is nice to get children to provide input regarding the contents and the quantity they eat and parents should assure it is healthy. It is our policy that any uneaten food is sent home so parents can monitor their child's intake. Please send lunch in microwave safe containers if reheating is required.

### **Lunch boxes must include:**

- an ice pack
- cutlery – please don't send any special or expensive items
- all parts of containers must be **clearly labelled**
- microwave safe containers, if reheating is required
- water bottle – avoid juice boxes and juice containers.

### **Lunches must not include:**

- **PEANUTS and all other nuts** (e.g. cashews, hazelnuts, almonds, etc)
- Thermoses or Flasks as they keep food and beverages at dangerously high temperatures
- Candies, chocolate, puddings, chips, popcorn, any sugar/salt laden items, etc. "Cup of Noodles" or other foods that take a long time to heat
- Processed, pre-packaged foods are highly discouraged.
- Commercially purchased fast foods such as McDonalds, Wendys, etc.
- Caffeinated beverages – i.e. Starbucks, Tim Hortons, Coke, Pepsi, etc.
- Energy drinks – i.e. Bull, Gatorade, etc.

**Emerald Hills Montessori is a peanut/nut free environment.** There may be students with severe nut allergies. Even accidental contact to any item or surface that has been contaminated with peanuts/nuts is enough to start an allergic reaction. If it is found that a child's lunch has peanut products it will not be served. A substitute lunch will be offered and the parents will be notified.

Additional foods may have to be avoided to ensure safety of individuals –parents will be advised by email or monthly newsletters.



## Appendix II

### Lunch Guidelines

#### For Students attending: \*Infant & Toddler Program

Every child is required to bring lunch and snacks (morning and afternoon) every day. Children should have input regarding the contents and the quantity they eat and parents can assure it is healthy. Any uneaten food is sent home so parents can monitor their child's intake.

#### **Emerald Hills provides:**

- A peaceful and gracious setting in which manners are modeled and mealtime is a pleasant experience.
- Help opening containers: toddlers are able to open Ziploc bags and lighter Tupperware with little or no assistance.
- A positive daily routine that allows the students to increase their independence in feeding themselves as much as possible. Teachers will aid as needed.
- Milk/water is served at the end of each meal so the child can fill up on food instead of liquids. Water should be in bottle or sippy cups. Juice boxes will not be served.

#### **Parents provide:**

- 3-4 bottles labelled with first and last name, including nipples, type of milk (i.e. formula or breast milk with date pumped).
- Formula/Breast milk (Place in the fridge).
- Nutritious and balanced food with no or very little salt, sugar or additives and that includes proteins & carbohydrates.
- Lunches (baby food/ solids) and snacks include fresh fruits & vegetables.
- 2-3 bibs with sleeves.
- Reusable or recyclable packaging
- Lunch boxes and all items must be **clearly labelled**.
- Please send lunch in microwave safe containers, if reheating is requested.

#### **Please do not send:**

- **PEANUTS and all other nuts** (e.g. cashews, hazelnuts, almonds, etc)
  - Candy, chips, cookies, chocolates (bars, cakes, puddings, muffins) and sugary juices •
- Choking hazard foods like whole hotdogs, raw vegetables, whole grapes or popcorn

**Emerald Hills Montessori is a nut-free environment.** There may be students that are seriously allergic to nuts (especially peanuts). Even accidental contact to any item or surface that has been contaminated with peanuts/nuts is enough to start an allergic reaction. If it is found that a child's lunch has peanut/nut products it will not be served. A substitute lunch will be offered, and the parents will be notified.

Additional foods may have to be avoided to ensure safety of individuals –parents will be advised by email or monthly newsletters.

**Some suggestions for our families:**

- Involve your child in choosing and packing foods. Give your toddler two healthy options "Would you like a banana or carrots in your lunch today".
- Keep portions small. Large amounts of food can be overwhelming and reduce appetites. Send enough food for seconds and the teachers will help with the portions.
- Cut food into smaller pieces that children can handle and avoid choking.
- Plan for a variety: children get bored with the same foods every day and may stop eating them.

## **NUTRITION RESOURCES**

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/canada-food-guides.html> This is Health Canada's website where you can download the **Canada Food Guide**. This site has a "**My Food Guide**" feature where you can plan a day's worth of meals and then compare your plan to the Canada Food Guide's recommended number of servings for your age and gender.

1. [www.healthlinkbc.ca](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca)

This is where facilities can find dietitian services which provides a free nutrition information line for British Columbians. Dietitian Services specializes in quality nutrition information based on current scientific sources. Topics such as diabetes, heart health, cancer, food allergies, pregnancy, breastfeeding, and nutrition for babies and children can be found here. Registered dietitians provide brief nutrition consultation by calling 811 from anywhere in BC. Healthlink BC has a dietitian dedicated to answer food allergy questions and a dietitian dedicated to answer trans-fat questions.

Also available, **Tips and Recipes for Quantity Cooking: Nourishing Minds and Bodies, Bake Better Bites** and **Lunches to go** from the website: [www.healthyeatingatschool.ca](http://www.healthyeatingatschool.ca)

Here are links to some Nutrition Resources put together by Fraser Health Registered Dietitians.

[https://www.fraserhealth.ca/-/media/Project/FraserHealth/FraserHealth/HealthTopics/Healthy%20food%20choices/Nutrition\\_Resources\\_for\\_Community\\_Partners.pdf](https://www.fraserhealth.ca/-/media/Project/FraserHealth/FraserHealth/HealthTopics/Healthy%20food%20choices/Nutrition_Resources_for_Community_Partners.pdf)

2. [www.bchealthguide.org/healthfiles/httoc.stm#D](http://www.bchealthguide.org/healthfiles/httoc.stm#D)

This is where Public Health Dietitians have made available a variety of nutrition resources about babies, infant, toddler and preschool nutrition. They include: Iron and your Health, Iron in Foods, Healthy Eating: Choosing Fish Low in Mercury, Helping your Toddler to Eat Well, Meal and Snack ideas for your one to three year old Toddler, Food Safety: Ten easy steps to Make Food Safe, Food safety for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables, Food Sources of Calcium and Vitamin D

### **Appendix III**

#### **Emerald Hills Montessori - Emergency Preparedness**

Emerald Hills Montessori must be prepared should an emergency occur while your child is at school.

Monthly fire and earthquake drills are practiced and recorded. In the case of a disaster, the building will be assessed for safety. If found safe, emergency supplies will be accessed as needed and provisions to stay in the building will be made. Please tune into CKNW 980 AM for any updates. Major roads may not be accessible during a disaster – plan to walk to pick up your child/ren. Picture ID will be required by our staff and volunteers from individuals who are picking up children, including parents.

If evacuation is necessary, the evacuation pack and emergency supplies will be taken to the meeting place and we will proceed to the designated emergency shelter. A note will be left on the office door stating where we have relocated.

Please keep our phone lines clear for the initial period. Sometimes local calls don't connect but long-distance ones will. **Be sure a third party outside the area has our telephone number.** By calling our number they can access our voice message and pass on information to you.

#### **Personal Emergency Kit**

Students are required to provide supplies in preparation of an emergency. Most of these can be found at home or at the dollar store. Please package them in a large zip lock bag clearly marked with your child's name.

- Silver safety solar blanket
- Small flashlight with batteries
- 1 personal size package of Kleenex
- Travel size packages of wet-wipes
- Personal comfort letter, written by Mom or Dad to reassure their child. Include a family photo.
- 1 small comfort toy (teddy, doll etc. no bigger than a beanie baby.)
- Small note pad and pen or pencil.
- 3 nutrition bars & 3 Juice boxes.

#### **Infant Toddler Program - please add to the above:**

- 3 diapers
- 3 food / snack items; & 3 juice boxes. Include a spoon.  
(When choosing snack/food consider packaging shelf life).

## **Appendix IV**

### **Communicable Disease & Pandemic Policy**

Childcare programs in BC are licensed and regulated through the Ministry of Health and Fraser Health Child Care Licensing. As a result, Emerald Hills Montessori may be directed by Fraser Health to temporarily close operations during a pandemic or other communicable disease outbreak. Emerald Hills Montessori will follow all directives provided from the Ministry of Health and/or Fraser Health. The legal authority to close a child care program for public health reasons falls under the purview of the local Medical Health Officer and the Provincial Health Officer. Their decision overrules any decision to stay open that an individual daycare or parents may wish to make.

Childcare ratios are required during daily operations, regardless of a pandemic or communicable disease outbreak. In the event that employees are unable to come into work, due to being in quarantine and/or ratio is not able to be met, Emerald Hills Montessori may have to reduce operating hours for period of time as directed by the authorities. This decision will be made as required, and will be communicated with parents in writing, via email.

#### ***Health and wellness policy***

Our health and wellness policy continues to apply during a pandemic or communicable disease outbreak, however, additional restrictions may apply, based on government / licensing officer directives. This may include, but is not limited to, extending our required at-home “symptom free” time period following any symptoms or requiring students with symptoms - *even if they are feeling well and have plenty of energy* - to remain at home. Any temporary changes to our health and wellness policy during a pandemic / outbreak will be communicated in writing, via email, and will link to the authorized source of information that our temporary change is based on.

#### ***Additional cleaning***

In the event of a pandemic or communicable disease outbreak, Emerald Hills Montessori will follow additional cleaning measures. This includes:

- Using a Ministry of Health-approved sanitizing solution within the program twice a day, to sanitize the facility and all equipment.
- Increasing hand washing and using social stories and direct teacher instruction with students to promote healthy hand washing habits
- Child will only consume foods brought from home. Group or open snacks will not be served. Families must send a pre-cut fruit / vegetable in 2 clearly marked containers with

child's name and AM snack and PM snack. Families must not send pastries, sweets, and cookies as snack. Snacks must be nutritious. Please refer to the Centre's lunch guidelines. All lunch bags must include an ice pack.

- Parents will not be allowed in the classrooms. They must drop-off and pick-up their child from the doorway and in a timely manner. All adults entering the facility must maintain social distancing and wear a mask.

### ***Fees during pandemic / communicable disease closures***

In the event of a short-term closure due to a pandemic or communicable disease outbreak (less than 30 days), fees are due and payable as per usual operations. Fees payable during closures exceeding 30 days will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

### ***Individual exclusions***

In the event that the Ministry of Health and / or Fraser Health provides a regional or provincial quarantine recommendation for individuals, either due to international travel, including the United States, linked to potential exposures, or linked to individual symptoms, Emerald Hills Montessori will require all families and students to comply with this recommendation. In the event this occurs, the Ministry of Health and / or Fraser Health will inform Emerald Hills Montessori, which will be shared with the families in writing, via email. These exclusions will apply equally to all students, families and employees.

### ***Authorized sources of information***

A pandemic or localized communicable disease outbreak is subject to governance by official sources: Fraser Health Licensing officers, the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Children and Families, and the federal government. While we appreciate that social media and news sources provide an extensive amount of information, we will respond to official, authorized sources of information only.

### ***A non-biased, inclusive approach***

Fear-based responses in times of pandemic or communicable disease, have historically led to actions stemming from bias and self-protective measures. Not only can these measures lead to conflict between parents, childcare educators, and community members, but they can also lead to inappropriate actions. Emerald Hills Montessori has an inclusive-based approach and works to be a safe environment for all families and students. We will not tolerate acts of racism or bigotry towards any parent, child, employee, or community member. Any such acts may be subject to an immediate dismissal from our program.

**The parent handbook will be sent to enrolled families via email. We expect that all parents will adhere to the outlined policies and procedures. Please note that the content of this handbook is subject to revisions aimed at upholding our standards and ensuring compliance**

**with licensing regulations. Should any changes occur, parents will be promptly informed through monthly newsletters distributed via email.**