



SETON

MONTESSORI

SCHOOL



We welcome you to Seton Montessori School, a Lab School of the Seton Montessori Institute teacher education program. As parents, you make up an essential one-third of the educational triangle of students, teachers, and families. This handbook and the information it contains should help you support your understanding of this important relationship.

At Seton Montessori we believe that parents, and the environment they create at home, are the primary educational influences in the life of the child. As a school, we want to be with you in your work as a parent and help you in discovering who your child is, and what your child needs as the adventure of life begins. It is our goal to help your child become a creative, competent human being, who is fully aware of him or herself, of others, and of the world around him or her. Other goals include a love of learning, self-motivation, confidence, social responsibility, persistence and concentration, development of global citizenship, and habits of inner discipline, resilience and order.

To realize these goals, we have thoughtfully created an authentic Montessori school reflecting Dr. Maria Montessori’s design of a place where children can be themselves in an atmosphere of freedom and responsibility. It is a place where children will come joyfully and become absorbed and interested in their learning and “becoming.”

Parents are brought into this atmosphere as much as possible through a host of community activities and opportunities for involvement. Often friendships made in this “family” will last a lifetime. We extend an invitation for you to join us in this educational journey.

For your child to benefit most fully from the years spent at Seton, we suggest you become familiar with the Montessori philosophy. Throughout the year we will present parent education programs aimed at increasing your understanding of Montessori philosophy, education, and parenting in general. We strongly recommend that both new and returning parents attend these programs. We are eager and committed to supporting your wonderful journey of parenting!

Seton Montessori publishes frequent electronic newsletters with information concerning the academic and social events of the school. Please read each newsletter for information about all school functions. Additionally, program-specific weekly electronic newsletters, called “Montessori Moments” will share highlights of the week as well as details about upcoming events and reminders.

We also have a collection of reading material, audiotapes, and videos concerning Montessori education and parenting available through our parent lending library located in the school office.

Please read this handbook carefully and keep it for future reference. We encourage you to share any concerns, ideas or questions. Your understanding of why we do what we do is an important part of your child’s education. We are looking forward to many happy and productive years!

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Philosophy

Seton Montessori School subscribes to a pedagogical philosophy created and developed by Dr. Maria Montessori. On January 6, 2007, the world celebrated the centennial anniversary of the first Montessori school in Rome, Italy. Today Montessori education continues as the product of its long history and careful hours of ongoing research. Given a carefully prepared learning environment, children work toward perfecting their concentration and inner control. Montessori is a personalized educational approach designed to help each child reach their fullest potential. The Montessori Method is education for life.

Each classroom is completely outfitted with carefully prepared and sequenced materials. Children perfect their natural skills and abilities for learning by working with a variety of materials. The Montessori materials are designed to help cognitive development, as well as concentration, coordination, independence, and socialization. The children learn how to learn in a Montessori school through interaction with materials, peers, and adults. In other words, intelligence is built through work and experience. The materials change as the children develop and all materials are carefully constructed to present specific concepts at each level.

The child is the core of any Montessori school. Dr. Montessori believed that no human being is educated by another person. In reality, the child educates themselves. The child has a natural desire to learn. The Montessori environment cultivates this natural desire and builds within the habits of lifelong learning.

All programs have a three-year age span. Mixing ages is an important component of Montessori philosophy. It allows for more individualized work and for students to move through the curriculum at their own pace in a non-competitive environment. Older students have a chance to be role models, while younger students have the benefit of a more stimulating environment. A Montessori education allows each child to develop their natural talents to the fullest. Most importantly, each individual receives the fullest respect and regard.

We are confident you will find in Seton Montessori a place where children will effectively develop their potential with joy and satisfaction.

Mission Statement

Seton Montessori prepares children and adults to become thoughtful, effective agents for peace and progress in themselves, their communities, and the world.

Accreditation

Seton Montessori School holds accreditations from, or is recognized by, the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), the Illinois State Board of Education, the American Montessori Society and American Camp Association. In addition, Seton holds a professional membership in the Association of Illinois Montessori Schools.

Our Goals for Your Children

(Based on American Montessori Society Learner Outcomes)

Academic Preparation: Academic preparation entails providing students with skills that allow them to become independently functioning adults and lifelong learners. As students master one level of academic skills, they are able to go further and apply themselves to increasingly challenging materials across various academic disciplines. Students recognize that there is always room to grow in their abilities to read, write, speak, and think clearly and thoughtfully. Children learn by doing. They are encouraged to explore materials, integrate new concepts, analyze data, and think critically. Academic skills are essential to the process of learning and knowing.

Intrinsic Motivation: Intrinsic motivation is the innate desire that drives a child to engage in an activity for enjoyment and satisfaction.

Ability to Handle External Authority: The student is able to accept the ground rules established by external authority as appropriate boundaries in interactions within the school community. These ground rules are internalized, enabling the student to function with or without the presence of the external authority.

Creativity and Originality of Thought: Students use the knowledge and skills they have acquired to express their own ideas and creativity with confidence. They recognize the value of their own ideas, respect the creative process of others, and are willing to share regardless of risk. Students find joy and satisfaction in self-expression.

Social Responsibility: Social responsibility requires awareness that one's actions have an impact on the welfare of the group and that one cannot attain complete independence and autonomy until one contributes constructively in a group process. Individuals are able to make a positive contribution to his or her community and groups within that community.

Autonomy: The autonomous child is self-directed, composed, and morally independent.

Confidence and Competence: The confident and competent child perceives himself or herself as being successful, has a realistic understanding of accomplishment, and has the ability to learn from his or her mistakes. Competence is the capability for success through risk-taking, reflection, and self-correction.

Spiritual Awareness: Spiritual awareness is embodied in the child who is compassionate, empathetic, and sensitive to the natural world and the human condition.

Organization

Seton Montessori is a non-profit organization with tax-exempt status. A Board of Directors, who gives their services without remuneration, supervises the organization, including the School. While the Board is responsible for the business and financial affairs of the school, the operation of the school is under the direction of the Executive Director, Head of School and Director of Finance and Planning. Seton Montessori School is registered with the State of Illinois Board of Education, is accredited by the American Montessori Society (AMS), and is a full-member school of the Association of Illinois Montessori Schools and National Association of Independent Schools. The Infant-Toddler programs are licensed by the State of Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS).

Seton Montessori School offers these programs: Parent-Child, Infant-Toddler, Early Childhood (including Kindergarten), Elementary, After-School Programs, Discovery Camp and Summer Camp.

Board of Directors

Anna Perry	Director and Chair
Desmond Perry	Director and Vice-Chair
Stephen Snyder	Director, Secretary/Treasurer
Shirley Morganthaler, PhD.....	Director
Pedro Soares	Director
Jennifer Nolan.....	Ex-Officio Member
Eva Parrucci	Ex-Officio Member

Administrative Staff

Anna Perry	Executive Director, Seton Montessori Institute and Schools
Jennifer Nolan.....	Head of School
Liz Celistan	Director of Accounts
Elena Pappas Bordoshuk.....	Director of Admissions
Stephen Snyder	Director of Finance and Planning

Coordination Staff

The educational policies of the school are the responsibility of the Executive Director and Head of School, along with the Program Coordination Team. It is their task to give guidance and inspiration to the faculty in maintaining a fully implemented Montessori environment where children actively live and learn to their highest potential.

Ashley Buntrock	Elementary Coordinator
Miriam Audino.....	Assistant Head of School, 0-6 Coordinator
Eva Parrucci	Director of Pedagogy, Seton Montessori Institute

Admissions

Seton Montessori School provides a quality Montessori experience for as many children as possible. Admissions are not limited for reason of race, color, creed, sex, national origin, or religion.

Seton admission requirements include, but are not limited to:

- Application/Re-enrollment forms and applicable fees
- Physical examination and immunization records as required by the State of Illinois and/or The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services
- Tuition payment
- Completion and submission of applicable school forms and/or waivers as deemed necessary by school administration
- School transcripts and teacher recommendation forms (Elementary only). In the case of special needs, students may be accepted for a four-week trial basis. At the end of that period, the teacher and Head of School will determine if the student's needs will be met by the program. If it is determined that either the child and/or Seton will not benefit from continued involvement, a conference is scheduled between the parents or legal guardians, the teacher and the Head of School. If the child is disenrolled at the request of the school, or withdrawn at the request of the parents within the trial period, all prepaid tuition will be refunded. Further explanation is offered in the "Tuition & Fees" section of this Handbook.
- Priority for admission is given to five-day applicants; however, three and four-day schedules are offered in some programs. A minimum of four days per week is required for four-year-olds and five days per week is required for students five years and older.

Age guidelines for Seton's programs are as follows:

Infant	2 months–15 months
Young Toddler	15 months–2 years
Toddler/2s and 3s*	2 years–3 years
Early Childhood*	3 years–6 years
Lower Elementary*	6 years–9 years
Upper Elementary*	9 years–12 years

*Based on child's age as of September 1st

Tuition & Fees

As an independent school, Seton Montessori relies exclusively on tuition and private contributions. To accommodate annual increases in operating expenses, Seton Montessori and its Board of Directors reserve the right to implement annual tuition rate increases. Historically, increases have averaged 5% or less each year. Tuition is based on a full school year and payment schedules are based on the total tuition. A \$100 non-refundable fee is due at the time of application, and an enrollment deposit equal to 10% of the academic year tuition is due when placement is made. The deposit will be applied to the school year tuition.

Tuition and applicable fees are to be paid in full by April 1st of each year.

Prompt payment of tuition installments enables us to maintain a high-quality program and a beautiful environment for the children. A late fee is charged if tuition is more than five days late. There is no reduction in fees due to illness or absence, and there are no substitutions for missed days.

If withdrawal is necessary, the option of canceling the enrollment contract with the school is provided with written notice to the school 30 days prior to the effective withdrawal date. Unless otherwise specified, any tuition paid in advance of the 30-day withdrawal date will be refunded in full. The last day for withdrawal before the start of the school year is July 15th for Infant and Early Childhood programs. The last day to withdraw before the start of the school year without forfeiture of the 10% tuition deposit for Elementary Programs is May 15th. After the start of the school year, the last effective withdrawal date with a refund of tuition is March 1st (30-day notice must be received by February 1st). Adjustments and refunds of tuition payments are made according to the practices and policies of the school.

Re-enrollment

In order to reserve placement for the following school year, parents must complete a re-enrollment application and submit a 10% deposit by the February deadline assigned by the Lab School. After that date, new and returning (Infant-Toddler and Early Childhood) or lottery (for Elementary) students will be placed as space becomes available. Applications for siblings of current students should be submitted by the end of February in order to receive priority enrollment.

A copy of Seton's Enrollment Policies can be obtained from the school office.

Tax Credit for Daycare/Educational Expense or Flexible Spending Accounts

Tax credits for qualifying educational, childcare, and other expenses may be available. Information regarding eligibility can be obtained through your tax preparer. Statements can be provided for your use upon request. Please allow a minimum of three business days for preparation.

Financial Assistance

Seton Montessori School is committed to need-based financial aid in order to provide access to high-quality Montessori education for families of all socio-economic levels. Financial aid applications are available to parents/guardians of admitted students, are reviewed confidentially by an independent financial aid service, scholarship committee, and approved by the Executive Director. Additionally, tuition assistance is open to Seton families experiencing an unexpected and temporary hardship. Contact the school office for further information.

Financial Aid Information for Multiple-Household Families

Seton requires both parents to complete an application for financial aid. Our financial aid software allows each parent to complete one application with a “Family 1” and a “Family 2” component. The determination of aid for the student(s) will be based on a review of the combined total resources available from Family 1 and Family 2 applications. The award, if any, will be presented as a grant per student, reducing the tuition that will be charged for that student. The determination of who pays what portion of the net tuition is to be determined by the parents without involvement from the School (see Financial Obligations and Multiple Households, above.)

Student Records

Children’s summary records are stored for two years past the age of majority. Records are only released directly to parents or custodial guardians or to schools or specialists after written consent has been received from parents or custodial guardians.

Records are considered confidential and, except to the extent required by law, staff members may not under any circumstances disclose any individually identifiable information about any child, absent the written consent of the parent as applicable. Under no circumstances may current children’s records be removed from the office.

Attendance

Every effort should be made to have your child in attendance and on time for all regularly scheduled school days. As an experiential and collaborative learning approach, children gain the greatest exposure, as well as the opportunity to practice and master concepts through their interactions in the classroom. Please plan to schedule vacation or appointments outside of regular school time whenever possible. If your child will be absent due to illness or otherwise, we ask that you contact the School Office at (630) 655-1066 to notify the school. There are no substitutions or refunds for days of school that are missed.

School Closings

In case of an emergency closing, there are a variety of ways to verify the closure:

Emergency School Closings: Seton will post on the Emergency School Closure website and, as a result, an announcement will be broadcast on radio and TV stations listed on their website. Alternatively, you can go online to www.EmergencyClosings.com or enter our facility phone number (630) 655-1066 when you call the emergency closing center hotline at (847) 238-1234. Please note: you can register your email with this service and an electronic message when Seton is closed.

Constant Contact email blast: An email will be sent directly to the email address provided to receive the school's weekly updates. If the weather is questionable, check your email for more information.

Voicemail message at Seton: The voicemail message at school will include information about any closures due to weather. When in doubt, call the school at (630) 655-1066 before heading out.

Community Consolidated School District 181: Seton often follows the closure decisions of District 181. If you see notification for District 181 closure, please confirm with one of the additional notification sources above.

In the case of inclement weather situations, it is up to the discretion of parents to determine if their children can be safely transported to school. Tardiness or absences under these circumstances are excused.

In the event that the weather becomes bad during the day, we hope you will make every effort to pick up your child at the earliest possible time.

Emergency Cancellations

In the case of emergency cancellations during the course of the school day (i.e. facility or operational malfunctions, etc.), we will notify parents of the cancellation or dismissal via email or phone. It is imperative that each student has current local emergency contact information on file listing home, work, cellular, and other emergency numbers. Under these circumstances, extended hours will also be cancelled.

Scheduled School Closings

Please refer to the school calendar for a listing of scheduled school closings and holiday dates. Seton offers Discovery Camp (childcare) on several of these dates for students currently enrolled in a program. Daily rates will apply for students enrolled in Discovery Camp and advance registration is required. Please be aware that registration is limited. Discovery Camp is not offered during Thanksgiving Break, Winter Break and Spring Break, scheduled days for facility maintenance, Parent-Teacher conferences and Institute Days.

Health Policies & Procedures

Statement of Concern

Seton Montessori School recognizes the importance of the physical well being of its students and will do everything possible to aid the student in the maintenance of good physical health.

Cleanliness

We recognize that an important part of health is cleanliness; therefore, all of the tables, sinks, countertops, etc. in our classrooms are cleaned on a daily basis using approved environmentally-friendly germicides and disinfectants in all classrooms.

The teaching materials in the infant and toddler rooms are wiped clean on a daily basis. The materials are cleaned in the preschool classrooms on a weekly basis.

Pest Control

No pesticides are used at Seton Montessori; however, in the event that we find it necessary to use any chemicals for pest control, we will choose the least environmentally harmful that shall be applied in minimal amounts. Pesticide application shall not be used when children are present in the facility, and children will not return to the treated area within two hours or as specified on the pesticide label, whichever time is greater. Toys and other items handled by children will be removed prior to application. Parents will be notified in writing at least two days before application.

Water Testing

Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) licensing standards require all licensed day care homes, day care centers, and group day care homes serving children under six years of age and built on or before January 1, 2000, to test their sources of drinking and cooking water for lead and take action when lead is detected over 2.00 parts per billion. As a licensed DCFS program, the Infant and Toddler building is exempt from this testing as it was built after January 1, 2000. The water in the Early Childhood building is regularly tested by the Clarendon Hills Water Department.

Health Examination and Immunizations

Seton Montessori follows the immunization and health examination guidelines established by the State of Illinois Department of Health and the State of Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. Each student must have a complete immunization history before the first day of school.

All newly-enrolled students need to provide a health examination form completed by a medical doctor, regardless of age. Families must provide an updated health examination form prior to each Summer Camp season. Additionally, per State guidelines, an updated immunization record, health examination, eye and dental examination are required for kindergarten students; a dental examination is required for second grade students; and updated health and dental examinations are required for sixth grade students.

The State of Illinois requires immunization against the following communicable diseases: Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Pneumococcal, HIB, Varicella, Hepatitis A and B and Polio. Per the State of Illinois guidelines, if a family is claiming a religious exemption then both a completed Religious Exemption Form signed by a medical doctor and a statement of religious beliefs must be provided prior to the child starting school.

Illness

When we send a child home from school with fever, vomiting or diarrhea, parents are required to keep their child at home until he or she is unmedicated and free of symptoms for 24 hours. If there is any doubt whether the child is feeling well before returning to school, he or she should remain home. If your child is too ill to participate in all school activities, including outside play, he or she should remain at home. Please call the school and leave a message when your child will be absent.

The DuPage County Health Department has provided guidelines regarding children's illness and school attendance. Your child should remain home if experiencing any of the following:

1. Upper respiratory infection, cough, sore throat
2. Any gastrointestinal upset, including abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea
3. Temperature elevation of greater than one degree
4. Severe pain (including injury)
5. Any rash or skin eruption, until diagnosed
6. Any eye inflammation or infection, until treated
7. Head lice until treated and ALL nits removed

A child can return to school 24 hours after beginning antibiotics or is fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication. Please use these guidelines when you have any questions about whether or not to send your child to school.

Communicable Diseases

The school has the authority to temporarily suspend students from school when a contagious disease threatens the health and well-being of other students and staff. The suspension will remain in effect until the student is no longer contagious or has the written permission of a physician to return. All communicable diseases should be reported to the school; we, in turn, notify parents when a contagious disease is present in their child's classroom.

Medications

Our staff will administer prescription medication at school only when requested by parents and authorized by a physician. Parent permission and physician instruction forms are required and medication must be provided with the prescription label affixed (forms are available at the school office). The school should be notified of all medications a student is taking, even those not administered during school hours. Under no circumstances may a student medicate him or herself. This includes cough medicine, cough drops or analgesics.

Accidents

At the discretion of the teacher and/or Head of School, parents will be notified in the event of an accident. It is imperative that each child has up-to-date contact information on file listing home, work, cellular, and other emergency numbers. If this information changes during the year, please provide the school office with updates. If parents cannot be reached, the Head of School or Seton staff member has the authority to take students to the hospital or arrange for emergency transport or medical assistance.

Hearing & Vision Screening

The DuPage County Health Department conducts hearing and vision screening for preschool and elementary students on-site at Seton Montessori. This is a screening only and does not take the place of a medical examination. Notification of screening will be provided to parents/guardians prior to testing.

Food Allergies

Seton strives to provide our students and staff with a safe, clean and toxic-free environment. Our classrooms contain mostly all natural materials with many live plants to help “purify” the air. Non-toxic cleaning products are used when students are present and non-chemical pest control measures are taken by keeping food stored in airtight containers, daily cleaning of all floors and rugs and frequent changes of animal bedding in classrooms. When necessary, more toxic chemical cleaners and sprays are used by trained personnel when students will not be present in school for 48 hours.

Many students suffer from food allergies that may cause severe discomfort or even be life threatening. Seton Montessori will make diligent efforts to minimize students’ risk of exposure to food allergens; however, it takes the trio of all - parents, the School and the student - to work together to help provide a safe environment. The School cannot guarantee that a student will not be exposed to allergens.

Parents and students are requested to assume the following responsibilities:

Parent/Caregiver Responsibilities

- Notify the School of the student’s allergies and symptoms of exposure.
- Provide the School with a written plan of action should the student be exposed to allergens during school. This plan should include information about medications, as directed by a physician. It is helpful to include a photo of the student with this information.
- Provide the School with properly labeled medications and replace medications after use or upon expiration.
- Educate students in the self-management of their food allergy including: 1) safe and unsafe foods, 2) strategies for avoiding exposure to unsafe foods, 3) symptoms of allergic reactions, 4) how and when to tell an adult that the student may be having an allergy related problem, and 5) how to read food labels (when age appropriate).
- Provide the School with emergency contact information and remember to update as necessary.
- Review all policies and procedures with the School staff, student’s physician and the student after a reaction has occurred.

Student Responsibilities

- Do not trade food with others.
- Do not eat anything with unknown ingredients or known to contain any allergen.
- Be proactive in the care and management of food allergies and reactions based on the student’s developmental level.
- Notify an adult immediately if a student eats something that a student believes may contain the ingredient to which the student is allergic.

Allergic-Food Free Zones

Allergic-food free zones may be established in some classrooms when a student with a life threatening allergy is present. The decision to move to an allergic-food free zone will be discussed by the allergic student’s “core team.” The “core team” is defined as the teacher, Program Coordinator, Head of School, and parents. In general, all classrooms are nut-free. Parents and students in the classroom will be notified of an “allergic-food free zone” policy. Parents and students in the classroom are expected to respect this policy and cooperate with any necessary restrictions. The School cannot guarantee that shared spaces (i.e., playground, Community Room) will be allergen-free.

Curriculum

We strive to prepare our students for life by offering them a rigorous academic program that aims to develop important skills for success, such as creativity, communication, critical thinking, independence, confidence and resilience. Dr. Montessori referred to this approach as “Educating the Whole Child,” that is, catering to each student’s academic, physical, emotional, spiritual and moral development. Montessori’s developmental approach recognizes that each student reaches certain milestones at different stages. As such, the Montessori lessons are presented to students when they are developmentally ready and have mastered certain prerequisite activities.

Montessori education is structured around four distinct planes of development:

First Plane of Development covering ages 0 to 6;

Second Plane of Development covering ages 6 to 12;

Third Plane of Development covering ages 12 to 18; and

Fourth Plane of Development covering ages 18 to 24.

At Seton, we focus on the first two planes. Students in each “plane” share similar physical and cognitive traits. The classroom environment, curriculum and instruction are specially designed to meet these developmental stages.

Parent-Child Community*

The Parent-Child program is available to children pre-birth through three years of age. The child’s parent or caretaker attends the class with the child to learn more about the Montessori method and philosophy. With guidance from the teachers, parents and caregivers are encouraged to learn alongside the child, gently fostering the child’s independence, curious nature, and desire to explore within this safe and engaging space. Children at this young age need abundant practice developing their large and small motor skills as well as numerous opportunities to continue expanding their language. The classroom materials and layout are designed with this young child in mind. Companionship adults generally gain many practical skills and tips from observing the teachers, the environment, and how the child interacts with the materials. Classes meet once a week on Thursday mornings, from 9:30 am -11:00 am. Class sizes are limited to 12 children per class.

*Classes have been paused during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Infant Community

Our Infant Community is a first home away from home, offering a loving and peaceful environment that fosters the physical, social, and psychological development of infants between the ages of two and 15 months of age. At this young age, the development of a warm and secure bond with caring adults is an essential component of development. The adults in this community support language development through immersion in conversation, facial response, singing and echoing of the young child’s efforts to make meaningful sound. Gross and fine motor development are also key at this age, and ample space and engagement with items to draw the child’s interest is provided for the child to move, explore and coordinate their body as they move from rolling over to sitting up to walking. Healthy sleep patterns and a progression toward self feeding are a focus during a child’s time in the Infant Community. Parents and educators form a critical partnership in communicating and supporting the ongoing development of the infant child.

- One classroom with a blend of half day (8:45-11:15 a.m.) and all day schedules (9 a.m.-4 p.m.)
- Available to students 2-15 months of age
- Class size limited to 9 students; 1:3 ratio

Toddler Community

The Toddler Community is a bridge between home and school. The classroom is home-like in its appearance and feel, yet provides students ample opportunities to develop the foundations of their Montessori education. The Toddler Community provides students the opportunity for social interactions and to develop their physical and psychological competencies outside of the home. At this level, students work on developing greater independence and confidence through working with materials that are sized for this age group. As toddlers learn through their senses, Seton offers them exercises to heighten and refine the senses. Seton strives to develop students' language skills through direct instruction and vocabulary building as well as through the casual social conversations that go on daily between the students and the teachers. Students also develop and refine fine and gross motor functions while working with the many activities in the class. Toilet learning is an additional focus during time in these programs.

Young Toddler Program

- One classroom with a blend of half day (8:45-11:15 a.m.) and all day schedules (9 a.m.-4 p.m.)
- Available to students 15-24 months of age
- Class size limited to 15 students; 1:5 ratio

Toddler/2s and 3s Program

- Two classrooms; one is offered as a half-day class (8:30-11:30 a.m.) and the other is offered as a full-day class (9 a.m.-4 p.m.)
- Available to students 24 months of age, but not yet 3 years old by September 1 of the year of entry.
- Class size limited to 16 students; 1:8 ratio

Students in all classrooms are offered a morning snack. The School serves students in the full-day program a hot lunch and an afternoon snack. Lunch is catered by Gourmet Gorilla. Students in our all day programs are required to nap/have downtime and are provided nap cots. See addendum for details on what items to send to school for nap.

Early Childhood (3 to 6 Year Old)

At the early childhood level, classrooms are divided into mixed-age groups of students between the ages of 3 and 6 years old. The School strives to balance each class in the number of students' ages and sex. The goal of this mixed-age grouping is to foster opportunities for collaborative work, social engagement and peer mentorship. Each 3-6 classroom has a selection of activities of daily life that aid in the development of coordination, concentration, order and independence. There are manipulative materials that engage the student in the study and exploration of numbers, counting, mathematical operations, phonetics, spelling, writing, pre-reading and reading skills. The cultural subjects of geography, history, science, art and music are all offered to the students through the Montessori materials as well as through their own explorations and creative expression.

- There are four Early Childhood classrooms (Two All Day classrooms [9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.], one School Day classroom [8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.] and one Half Day classroom [8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.]
- Classes typically have 30-32 children with three adults (During COVID-19 this number is currently 24 students with two adults)

- Available to students 3-6 years old (Three years old by September 1 of the year of entry)
- All students enjoy time outdoors daily, typically 30-45 minutes depending on program length
- Students ages 3 and 4 who are in All Day or School Day programs are encouraged to nap or have rest time
- Students ages 5 and 6, or in their third year in the class, are not required to nap, but instead take part in a quiet time called “Siesta” as well as additional classroom work time
- All students eat lunch in their classroom, outside, or in an appropriate space that allows for required social distancing
- Students should bring a nut free lunch from home using reusable bags and containers. See program level addendum for more detail about lunch.

Opportunities for parents to learn about Montessori philosophy, curriculum and student progress abound.

For this school year, various events will be held virtually. A few examples:

- Parent Information Meeting: Held in August for parents to get to know each other, and for teachers to share important classroom information.
- Parent-Teacher Conferences: Formal and informal parent teacher conferences are held several times throughout the school year.
- Parent Education Workshops: Approximately every other month throughout the school year, the School offers workshops, either in person or online, to familiarize parents with the curriculum and how it can be supported at home.

Elementary - 6 to 12 Year Olds

The fertile imagination of the 6-9 student is fired through the exploration of the mysteries of our universe. The new 6-year-old considers the origins of our planet on their first days in Elementary. The classroom combines students of three grade levels to promote leadership, collaboration, student modeling and mentoring. The environment allows for movement and group work. The teacher presents lessons to small groups and individuals across the curriculum including mathematics, language, geography, botany, zoology, history and physical science. The Montessori method of teaching, which employs small group lessons, allows the teacher to easily observe what the student is learning. The goal is for a student and a teacher to have a dynamic relationship that encourages inquiry and discussion. Weekly individual teacher-student conferences allow students to choose their work with adult guidance aiding this process. Independent learning is cultivated through student work plans, where the student records the student’s activities throughout the day. Learning takes place in many locations including frequent small field trips in the surrounding area (when we resume pre-COVID-19 protocols). Spanish classes are offered two times a week to expose students to the diverse Spanish-speaking cultures as well as an introduction to the fundamentals of the Spanish language.

Opportunities for parents to learn about Montessori philosophy and curriculum and student progress abound: For this year, various events will be held virtually.

- Parent Information Meeting: Held in August for parents to get to know each other, and for teachers to share important classroom information.
- Parent-Teacher Conferences: Formal and informal parent teacher conferences are held several times throughout the school year.
- Parent Education Workshops: Approximately every other month throughout the school year, the School offers workshops, either in person or online, to familiarize parents with the curriculum and how it can be supported at home.
- Demonstration and Student Showcases: The student is the teacher and parents watch students demonstrate what they have learned.
- Guest speakers lend outside expertise and focus on topics of specific interest.

- Performances are part of the Elementary level and are opportunities to see learning in a non-traditional format

Special Overnight Trips

Both 6-9 and 9-12 students take a week-long trip to Nature's Classroom Institute, an outdoor educational institute in Wisconsin. Students in 9-12 visit Nature's Classroom for one school week in November and students in 6-9 attend in February or March. In general, the students depart from school on a Monday morning and return to School the following Friday afternoon. Please consult the calendar for the dates assigned to your child's class. Packing lists and permission forms will be shared as the trip approaches. For specific questions, please contact the student's classroom teacher or Elementary Coordinator.

Homework

At 0-6, assigned homework is not given to students. After their time at school, we believe it is important to give young students unstructured free-play time. The best work for young students to do at home is to be a part of daily life with their family in a comfortable and inviting manner. Having children help prepare meals, set the table, clean up after themselves and be responsible for keeping their things in their place are just a few ways young children can be a purposeful member of the family.

In 6-9, homework is designed to provide practice for rote skills and the development of time management skills. It should be work that can be managed independently by the student. Homework should also include chores at home and reading practice.

In 9-12, homework incorporates both the continued practice of rote skills with independent work stemming from classroom lessons. The aim is for students to build skills in time management, personal goal setting and responsibility.

Assessments

Observation of the student by the teacher is the cornerstone to effective assessment. Teachers make many formal and informal observations of each student throughout the day. These observations allow the teacher insight into the student's work habits, academic progress, interests and social interactions. Early Childhood level teachers informally guide the work of their students based on observations and record-keeping of individual lessons. Elementary level teachers conference with the student to review completed work and discuss progress and future goals. Elementary students also keep a work planner to record their school day activities. Montessori lessons are generally given to individual or small groups of students. This practice helps the teacher to ascertain quickly how much the student comprehends the concepts presented. Instruction can be differentiated based on the needs of the small group or individual student. Repetition or increased instruction is implemented as needed.

Moving Up Readiness

A child's emotional and social maturity, along with skills in independent learning and academic readiness, are key factors to be considered when determining if a student is ready to move up to the next level. This is an ongoing conversation between teacher, parents and Head of School, but the ultimate decision rests with the School, in its sole discretion.

Standardized Testing

Testing at Seton is offered as a life skill experience rather than a single evaluative measure of a student's progress. Teachers use data gathered from these tests as one indicator of a student's development over time. These tests are only one of the many assessment tools available to our teachers. Although we realize the importance that is sometimes placed on these tests, the tests alone cannot portray an accurate or complete picture of the whole child.

For the purpose of standardized testing, the School recognizes students by traditional grade level. In the spring, students at the kindergarten level and 3rd through the 6th grades take the Terra Nova standardized test, which is a nationally normed test. Results are shared with parents/guardians and recorded in the student's school record.

Discipline

The philosophy of discipline at Seton Montessori School is one of positive reinforcement and redirection; therefore, it is our belief that adults model the behavior they wish children to learn. Important goals for students include independence and self-discipline. Teachers work with all children to establish ground rules and to solve conflicts peacefully.

We ask the support of parents in monitoring and limiting their child's viewing of violent programs, movies, and video games. As always, any approach to discipline is successful only if everyone involved works together.

Patterns of behavior that are deemed harmful to self and/or others may be resolved by asking the student to leave school for the remainder of the day. This is a drastic but effective method of solving some behavioral difficulties. If limits are repeatedly tested, parents are again requested to take the child home. To return to school, the student, parents, teacher, and Head of School must agree on a plan of action. If discipline problems persist, Seton Montessori may ask the student to leave our community.

Bullying, Harassment, Discrimination, Hazing, Sexual Assault And Sexual Harassment

The School does not tolerate verbal or physical behavior that constitutes bullying (including cyber-bullying), harassment or discrimination, hazing, sexual assault and sexual harassment (also referred to as "interpersonal misconduct"). The School is committed to promptly addressing any behavior that impedes the learning of any student or interferes with the experience of any other member of the school community. Bullying, harassment, discrimination, hazing, sexual harassment and sexual assault are prohibited on the School's campus and the property immediately adjacent to School grounds, and at School-sponsored events, activities, and off-campus trips. School-owned technology may not be used to intimidate, harass, threaten or bully another student.

In addition, interpersonal misconduct is prohibited at a location, activity, function or program that is not School-related or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by the School, if such conduct: (a) creates a hostile environment at school for a student, (b) infringes on the rights of a student at the School, or (c) substantially disrupts the educational process or the School's orderly operations.

Definitions

Aggressor: A student or faculty/staff member who engages in bullying (including cyber-bullying),

harassment, discrimination, hazing, sexual assault, sexual harassment or retaliation towards another person.

Bullying: Bullying is prohibited under the laws of the State of Illinois and is defined as unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. In order to be considered bullying, the behavior must be aggressive and include:

- **An Imbalance of Power:** Kids who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- **Repetition:** Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

The School recognizes that certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming targets of bullying or harassment based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics.

Cyber-Bullying: Cyber-bullying is bullying through the use of technology or electronic communication, including, but not limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writings, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying includes, but is not limited to: (a) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person, and (b) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation constitutes bullying conduct as defined above. Cyber-bullying includes, but is not limited to, the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person, or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions included in the definition of bullying.

Faculty/Staff: Faculty/staff members include, but are not limited to, educators, administrators, custodians, support staff and paraprofessionals.

Harassment Or Discrimination: Harassment or discrimination is behavior that is pervasive or severe and has the purpose or effect of: (a) creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment; (b) interfering unreasonably with a student's academic performance; or (c) creating a situation where academic decisions of a student depend on the student submitting to and/or not objecting to the behavior. Harassment and discrimination can take many forms. Examples include limiting opportunities to participate in certain clubs, teams or activities based on certain characteristics, as well as slurs, jokes, statements, remarks, questions, gestures, pictures, emails, texts or cartoons regarding a legally protected status that are derogatory or demeaning to an individual's or group's characteristics or that promote stereotypes. Harassment also includes sexual harassment (as defined below).

Hate speech: verbal or non-verbal communication that expresses prejudice against a particular group especially on the basis of race, religion, or sexual orientation, including but not limited to racial slurs or gendered derogatory terms.

Hazing: Hazing means knowingly requiring the performance of any act by a student or other person in a school for the purpose of induction or admission into any group, organization or society associated with that school if the act is not sanctioned or authorized by the school and, the act results in bodily harm to any person.

Hostile Environment: A hostile environment refers to a situation in which certain misconduct causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive so as to alter the conditions of a student's education.

Retaliation: Retaliation is any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment directed against a student who reports misconduct (including, but not limited to, bullying, harassment, discrimination, hazing, sexual assault or sexual harassment), provides information during an investigation, or witnesses and/or has reliable information about such misconduct.

Sexual Assault: Sexual assault occurs when a person is forced or coerced into sexual activity without giving consent. Sexual activity includes, but is not limited to, touching or fondling, either directly or through the clothing, of another's intimate areas or any contact, intrusion or penetration of another's sex organs, anus or mouth.

Sexual Harassment: Sexual harassment is a type of harassment (as defined above). Sexual harassment includes unwilling and unwanted sexual attention, regardless of gender, from anyone with whom a person may interact in the course of attending the School or being present at school-sponsored activities. Examples of behavior that may constitute sexual harassment include (regardless of whether the intent or consequence of such behavior is to make the target feel uncomfortable): a) offensive body language (staring and/or leering at a person's body or standing/brushing too close); b) offensive or unwanted sexual comments, abuse, jokes, insults, delivered orally or in writing, including but not limited to requests for inappropriate or sexual photos; c) derogatory or pornographic posters, cartoons or drawings; d) pressure for sexual activity (such as hazing or threats as well as repeated requests after rejections); e) offering favors or benefits in exchange for sexual acts, or threatening mistreatment if one does not engage in sexual acts; and f) offensive or unwelcome physical advances (including kissing, hugging, pinching, grabbing, groping, "playful" slapping, etc.).

Target: Any student against whom bullying, harassment, discrimination, hazing, sexual assault or sexual harassment has been perpetrated.

Legal Definitions And School Policies

In accordance with the School's mission, values and standards of conduct, the School has, at times, supplemented and/or provided broader protections against bullying, discrimination, harassment and other inappropriate conduct than may be required under applicable laws. In essence, the School's standards may be stricter than the law and the School may impose discipline accordingly. The School's efforts to enhance its protection of students in no way expand an individual's rights under the law and other applicable laws may supersede this policy. Further, the School may modify and amplify the standards set forth above and use its discretion in the interpretative enforcement of all ideals and standards of conduct.

Reporting Complaints

A student who is the target of bullying, harassment, discrimination, hazing, sexual assault or sexual harassment, or who has witnessed such an incident or any incident of retaliation, or who otherwise has relevant information about conduct prohibited by the School, is strongly encouraged to report the matter promptly (either orally or in writing) to the Head of School, or to any other administrator or faculty member with whom the student is comfortable speaking. If a student is uncomfortable contacting one of

these individuals, the student may ask another adult or a classmate to help. Oral reports made to a member of the faculty/staff will generally be memorialized in writing. With respect to reporting sexual assault in particular, students are strongly urged to speak to a trusted adult on campus or at home. When making such outreach, students may share as little or as much information as they would like.

Parents/guardians of a student who is the target of interpersonal misconduct, or of a student who has witnessed or otherwise has relevant information about such misconduct, are urged to immediately notify the Head of School or a Program Coordinator. Furthermore, any parent/guardian who has witnessed interpersonal misconduct, or has relevant information concerning such an incident or any incident of retaliation, are strongly encouraged to contact one of these administrators immediately. The School urges students and parents/guardians not to make anonymous reports. Although there are circumstances in which an anonymous report can be better than none at all, it is far more difficult to determine the facts of what occurred if complaints are made anonymously and disciplinary action will generally not be taken against an individual solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

The School cannot promise absolute confidentiality to those reporting bullying, harassment, discrimination, hazing, sexual assault or sexual harassment, as there may be a need to share information during an investigation or otherwise; however, the School will disclose such information with discretion, on a need-to-know basis.

False Complaints

All persons involved in a complaint or investigation should understand that false or exaggerated accusations can be extremely damaging to innocent persons; therefore, the School expects and requires the honest and full disclosure of facts, taking into account the ages of the individuals, by all involved. Any person who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying, harassment, discrimination, hazing, sexual assault, sexual harassment or retaliation may be subject to disciplinary action.

Responding To Complaints

The goals of an investigation, and any supportive, disciplinary or other remedial process that is imposed following that investigation, are to correct the situation to the extent reasonably possible and to take steps to prevent repetition of the incident and retaliation. The School strives to make all reasonable efforts to complete an investigation in a prompt manner. When a complaint is brought to the attention of the Head of School or the Head of School's designee, an assessment is made to determine the initial steps appropriate to protect the well-being of the students involved (including both the alleged targets and aggressors) and to prevent disruption of the learning environment while the investigation is undertaken. The School may use strategies, such as increased supervision, stay-away mandates and personal safety plans, as may be appropriate to prevent further misconduct, witness interference and/or retaliation during the course of and after the investigation.

The Head of School or Head of School's designee will conduct an impartial, fact-finding investigation of the complaint. This investigation may include (but is not necessarily limited to) interviews with the complainant, alleged target(s), alleged aggressor(s) and any other witnesses or parties who have information relevant to the alleged incident. The School may consult with faculty, the School's healthcare providers, the parents/guardians of the alleged target(s) and/or the alleged aggressor(s), or any other person deemed to have knowledge about, or circumstances surrounding, the complaint.

The School neither tolerates nor engages in retaliation against an individual for filing a complaint about interpersonal misconduct or cooperating in an investigation of such a complaint. The School will not take adverse action against a student for making a good faith report of interpersonal misconduct. An individual who is found to have engaged in retaliation against a student for filing a complaint, or participating in the

investigation of a complaint, may be subject to disciplinary action. Upon completion of the investigation, the Head of School (or the Head of School's designee) will generally make the following determinations:

- Whether and to what extent the allegation of bullying, harassment, discrimination, hazing, sexual assault or sexual harassment has been substantiated.
- Whether any disciplinary action and/or other remedial action is appropriate and, if so, how it will be implemented.
- Whether counseling, or a referral to appropriate services, should be offered to targets, aggressors, or family members of the affected students or targets.

The Head of School (or the Head of School's designee) will determine any appropriate disciplinary action for a student who is found to have committed an incident of bullying, harassment, discrimination, hazing, sexual assault, sexual harassment or retaliation. Information about consequences or other corrective action may be shared with the School community as deemed appropriate by the Head of School. Such announcement may be made in person, by electronic communication or otherwise. Resources such as counseling or referral to appropriate services are available to all students – including the alleged aggressor(s) and the alleged target(s) – during and after an investigation.

Notification To Parents/Guardians

The School will generally notify the parents/guardians of the alleged target(s) and the alleged aggressor(s) promptly after a complaint has been filed, upon completion of the investigation and to report the results of the investigation. Parents/guardians of the target(s) will generally also be notified of any action to be taken to prevent further acts of bullying, harassment, discrimination, hazing, sexual assault, sexual harassment or retaliation. In all situations, the amount of information shared by the School may be limited by confidentiality laws protecting student and employee records, other confidentiality or privacy considerations and/or concerns regarding the integrity of the investigation processes.

Notification To Government Authorities

In appropriate circumstances, such as when a crime may have been committed or a child may have been subjected to abuse or neglect of the type that is reportable under Illinois law to DCFS, law enforcement or other appropriate government agencies may be notified. At any point after receiving a report of misconduct, including, but not limited to, bullying, harassment, discrimination, hazing, sexual assault or sexual harassment, the School may notify local law enforcement or other government agencies.

Sanctuary Policy Applicable To Sexual Assault

Student health and safety are more important than discipline. Therefore, a student should not refrain from seeking help for fear of discipline by the School. If a student is violating a School rule when the student needs to call for help due to a sexual assault, the student will generally be granted sanctuary from discipline for the rule violation (unless, for instance, the student perpetrated the sexual assault). We reiterate that we strongly encourage students to promptly report to a School employee any incident where the health or safety of a student may be at risk.

Child Abuse And Neglect Reporting

The School is committed to the highest standards of care for its students. Under Illinois law, all professionals responsible for the care of children (including, but not limited to, teachers, school administrators, psychologist, etc.) are required to make a report to the Department of Children & Family

Services (“DCFS”) when, in their professional capacity, they have reasonable cause to believe that a child under the age of eighteen (18) is suffering from abuse or neglect. DCFS defines “child abuse” as the mistreatment of a child under the age of 18 by a parent, caretaker, someone living in their home or someone who works with or around children. The mistreatment must cause injury or put the child at risk of physical injury. Child abuse can be physical (such as burns or broken bones), sexual (such as fondling or incest) or emotional. “Neglect” happens when a parent or responsible caretaker fails to provide adequate supervision, food, clothing, shelter or other basics for a child.

Clothing & Personal Belongings

Infant

The teacher of the Infant Program will offer specific guidelines.

Toddler/Early Childhood

Toddlers and young preschoolers wear comfortable, loose-fitting, non-restrictive clothing, which allows them quick and easy access to the toilet. Clothing managed without adult assistance is best for toilet learning and teaching independence. Belts, buttons, and buckles often prove troublesome and may be a source of frustration for young children.

Seton has a lovely outdoor environment, and we take advantage of it by going out *every day*. Please dress your child appropriately to play outside. Boots are necessary in the fall, winter, and spring. During the cold weather your child will need: heavy insulated boots, a one-piece snow suit or snow pants and a jacket, waterproof mittens that are *attached together with elastic*, a warm hat and short scarf. PLEASE be sure to LABEL ALL ITEMS.

Each Toddler and Early Childhood student must have a complete change of clothing to be kept at school. Additionally, each toddler is required to have a set of diapers clearly labeled with the child’s name. Parents are required to replenish their child’s diapers regularly. Please label all belongings, including shoes, clothing and outerwear.

We ask you to provide your child with a pair of shoes that he or she can put on and take off by him or herself, which will be kept at school for use there. We are recommending ballet slippers for Early Childhood students and soft leather moccasins for toddlers to be worn in the classroom. These provide support; yet also allow sensitivity for physical movement. *Please do not send bedroom slippers or Crocs.* Also be certain that the shoes fit well. Boots are a necessity during the winter and rainy seasons. For outdoor shoes when boots aren’t needed, we recommend a sturdy closed-toe shoe that allows plenty of support for running and climbing activities—*please, no flip-flops or Crocs.* Be sure to label all items with your child’s name, as there are often many pairs of identical shoes of the same size in a given classroom.

Elementary

Elementary students’ clothing should be simple, comfortable, and non-offensive while reflecting good judgment. Gym shoes are required for physical education for all students, along with appropriate clothing for outdoor activities. Students should not wear hats inside while classes are in session. Jewelry, purses, makeup, and toys do not belong in school, nor do hand-held electronic games, and cellular phones. Students are required to bring a pair of shoes that he or she can keep at school. These shoes should have a rubber sole that provides plenty of support. *Please do not send bedroom slippers or Crocs.* Specific field trips and special days may require “dressing up.” We always give advance notice.

Naps

If your child naps at school he or she will need a *small* crib blanket or something similar in size and a

crib-sized sheet labeled with the child's name. If your child likes to sleep with a small stuffed animal, feel free to send it. All items should be sent in a small tote bag labeled with the child's name on it. These items will be stored at school during the week and sent home on the last day your child attends each week for laundering and return the following week.

Lost & Found

Items left at school will be held for a brief period, then discarded or donated to charity. We encourage everyone to track his or her personal possessions.

Lunch

Lunch is a special time for children at Seton Montessori and should consist of nutritious food choices. Lunch is provided for students enrolled in Infant-Toddler programs. Children enrolled in Early Childhood or Elementary programs should either bring a lunch or be enrolled in the catered lunch program (see details below).

If meals are sent from home, no sweets, beverages, chips or dessert items should be included in school lunches. We encourage families to choose organic and locally grown items whenever possible. Please **ONLY** send a protein food, fruit and/or vegetable. We suggest items such as: eggs, cheese, chicken or other cooked meats, yogurt, raw vegetables with a dip, orange segments, applesauce, whole grain bread or crackers, bread sticks, etc. We will repack any items other than these—uneaten—in your child's lunchbox to be consumed at home.

Please pack lunches in insulated lunch boxes or bags. No refrigeration is available for storage of lunches. To discourage food waste, we will have the children rewrap any uneaten food to return home. In this way, you will know what and how much your child has eaten. A small portion is more likely to be completely eaten and enjoyed. Warm food should be sent pre-heated in a thermos. Milk and water will be provided in the Toddler classrooms. Early Childhood and Elementary students should bring water bottles.

Our goal is to have “waste free” lunches and we ask that lunch items be packed in reusable containers. No paper products (i.e. paper napkins, plates or cups, etc.) should be included as the school provides plates, silverware and napkins for lunch. These items are washed here at school with the students' assistance.

Some children have dietary restrictions and **SEVERE FOOD ALLERGIES**. Products containing peanuts and tree nuts are prohibited from being brought into all Seton classrooms and Seton events. **Please also consult with your child's teacher for any other restricted foods that cannot enter the classroom.**

Catered Lunch Program

Children enrolled in the All Day Young Toddler/and All Day Toddler/2s and 3s program will have hot lunch provided daily. As an infant is ready to eat the catered meal, they will also begin receiving hot lunch at school. An optional catered bag lunch program is available for students in the Early Childhood and Elementary programs through Gourmet Gorilla. Lunches must be preordered and prepaid directly to Gourmet Gorilla. Early Childhood and Elementary lunch orders must be placed by week online at www.GourmetGorilla.com by midnight on the Tuesday before the start of a new week. No refunds or credits are given in the event of student absence, field trips, or school cancellation.

Before and After School Hours*

General Information

Seton Montessori offers before and after school care for students enrolled in All Day programs from Infants through Elementary. Care is available beginning at 7:00 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. and is contracted separately. A minimum of a half hour per day will be charged.

Before and after school hours are not available for students enrolled in the Half Day or School Day programs.

Arrival & Dismissal

Please sign your child in and out and be certain to greet the teacher upon your arrival or departure to assure he or she is prepared to receive your child. It is imperative that Seton Montessori staff knows who is in the building and their whereabouts at all times; therefore, any child arriving prior to the scheduled start of class time must be signed in. When no departure time is recorded, we will assume your child remained at school until 5:30 p.m. and you will be charged accordingly.

Please refer to the Parent Information Letter for your child's program for specific times when arrivals and dismissals are limited or restricted.

Breakfast

A limited breakfast menu is available for students arriving prior to 8:30 a.m.

*Before and After School Hours are temporarily suspended due to COVID-19 mitigation procedures.

Entering and Exiting School Grounds

For the safety and well being of the children, we have developed the following arrival and dismissal procedures. **Please refrain from using your cell phone during arrivals and dismissals.** Your child and our staff deserve the safety and welcome of your undivided attention. Additionally, **Seton Montessori is a designated school zone, and cell phone use in this area is prohibited by law.** In the best interest of everyone involved in the arrival and dismissal process, please attend to these requirements of safe action.

Please remember to always put pedestrians and safety first.

PLEASE drive **SLOWLY** in and out of the driveways. The street speed limit is 20 mph in this school zone. Please **DRIVE ONLY SOUTH** on Virginia (the Toddler House and the Early Childhood buildings) to eliminate congestion and avoid accidents. Please do not block any driveways, including the area between the Toddler House and Main Building and please be courteous to our neighbors!

When leaving your car, **turn off** the engine and take the key with you. **Do not leave any children unattended in the car.**

To maintain the flow of traffic, please move ahead promptly when waiting in line to drop off or pick up your child, and pull up as far forward as possible.

Remember that the drop-off/pick-up area is NOT the time to have a conversation with your child's teacher.

Arrivals

Please stay in the arrival and dismissal lines and drive slowly up to the front entrance. A teacher will take your child from the car and walk him or her to the class. If you are late, a parent or an adult **must walk his or her child into the class.** There is parking in the lot between the Toddler House and Main Building for children in the Toddler or Early Childhood programs and in the Elementary lot for Elementary families. **No parking is allowed in front of the buildings.** Please be aware of other cars that might be in line dropping off or picking up children. Always hold your child's hand when walking through the parking lot. Make sure the teacher has greeted your child before you leave. All families are asked to have their children at school **no later** than 8:45 a.m. for the School Day/Half Day, 9:00 a.m. for the Elementary, and 9:30 a.m. All Day Programs. Children in the Toddler House will not be received after 10:30 a.m. without prior arrangements with the Program Coordinator.

Dismissals

Please pull your car up to the front entrance. A teacher will bring your child out to the car. If you are late for your dismissal time, please park in the lot between the Toddler House and Main Building or Elementary lot and walk to the front of the building. Please be aware of other cars that might be in line dropping off or picking up children.

When leaving, please have your child walk **with you** out the adult door. The child-sized door is for **entering only.** Please hold your child's hand as you move toward and through the parking lot. Children need adult supervision in the parking area. This is for the safety and well-being of your child!

Only parents or authorized persons will be allowed to pick up a child. A written note is needed from the parents or legal guardian and given to the classroom teacher or school office if someone else is picking up a child. Identification will be requested. All adults entering our buildings must sign in at the front desk before entering the classroom.

Late Pick Up Policies

Seton Montessori opens at 7:00 a.m. and closes promptly at 5:30 p.m. Late parents will be charged a late fee at a rate of \$2.00 for every minute after their scheduled pick-up time. The parent or guardian is responsible for contacting authorized emergency pick-up person or persons in order to have the child picked up by his or her scheduled dismissal time.

In the event of an **extreme emergency situation** where the school has **not** been notified of a plan for the child's pick up, the school will:

1. Make at least three attempts to contact the parent(s)/guardian(s) or one of the emergency contacts listed on the contact permission form to make arrangements for pick-up. The first attempt will be made five minutes after the designated pick up time with two subsequent attempts within the first half hour.
2. If contact and a pick-up plan is **not** established with the parent(s)/guardian(s) or emergency contact 30 minutes after the scheduled pick-up time, staff will notify a school administrator and then the appropriate outside authorities (i.e. local police, DCFS etc.) who will make arrangements for the well-being of the child. The child will be cared for at the school until emergency contact or authorities arrive.

Communications

Reminders and flyers will be communicated predominantly in electronic format. Any paper forms will be sent home with students weekly, typically on Wednesdays. If a caregiver picks up your child, please be sure to ask for these important notes.

Seton Montessori will email a school-wide E-update regularly, which contains updates and reminders, a calendar of events, and other newsworthy articles. You can request a hard copy if desired. Classroom programs will also send weekly "Montessori Moments" specific to your child's program.

Teachers and administration can be contacted in person, via the main school phone number and classroom email addresses.

Additional information can be obtained by visiting our website at www.setonmontessori.org.

Communication with Teachers

Teaching faculty work to be available to parents as much as possible; however, during the school day their full attention is focused on the children so there will be times they are unavailable to speak in person. If you have information to relay to the teachers, please send a note with your child. Phone messages can be relayed through the school office at (630) 655-1066. Teachers are not permitted to provide their personal cell phone numbers. Teachers can also be emailed at the classroom email address (see full list below). Teachers will check email after school and will respond with a phone call. If your communication is of a time-sensitive matter and you need a quick response, please call the school office rather than sending an email.

Classroom email addresses:

infants@setonmontessori.org

youngtoddlers@setonmontessori.org

halfday2and3@setonmontessori.org

allday2and3@setonmontessori.org

purpleroom@setonmontessori.org

blueroom@setonmontessori.org

greenroom@setonmontessori.org

yellowroom@setonmontessori.org

lowerelementary@setonmontessori.org

upperelementary@setonmontessori.org

Social Media

Seton Montessori School does post to a variety of social media outlets such as Facebook and Instagram. Please follow Seton Montessori! Images for use will be selected from children with a completed “Photo/Video Permission and Release” form on file. Images selected will never include identification of children by name.

School Directory

In mid-September of each new school year, Seton Montessori families will be provided access to family contact information via an online school directory provided by DirectorySpot. Each Fall an email invitation will be sent to parents/guardians prompting them to visit DirectorySpot and will include instructions to set your password. Contact information will be included according to access given by each family on the completed “Contact Permission” form.

Families are able to update contact information directly in DirectorySpot, but we ask that you also be sure to update the school office at Admissions@SetonMontessori.org should any information change so we have the most current contact information on file.

Professional Relationship with Seton Montessori Staff

Seton Montessori School staff, including substitute teachers, may not be hired by currently-enrolled families to provide services outside of their employment with Seton. This includes, but is not limited to, after-hours childcare, babysitting, house cleaning, and transportation services. We understand that you place a great deal of trust in the staff at Seton Montessori, and we are proud to employ dedicated, trustworthy and highly-qualified individuals; however, this policy safeguards our staff and reduces the risk of creating a conflict of interest. Additionally, this policy protects the confidentiality of Seton Montessori children, families, and staff members, and ensures the highest level of professionalism and integrity in the family-teacher-child partnership that is integral to our school culture.

Conference Days and Reports

Formal Parent-Teacher Conferences will be held twice each year, once in October and again in February. Both parents or guardians are expected to meet with the staff to discuss your child's progress and share your observations and goals for the year. Additionally, written progress reports will be provided in February and end-of-year for Early Childhood and Elementary students. Through informal contact, conferences and progress reports, you will be regularly informed of your child's development. Additional conferences may be scheduled on request.

Observation

Classrooms begin welcoming observers after the first three to four weeks of school. One of the best and most delightful ways of learning about the Montessori approach to education is to observe a class in session! We recommend that when you come to observe, you come seriously to learn about your child as well as to watch him or her in contact with the prepared environment and other children. You can gain insight into his or her personality if you observe with purpose. We always encourage either speaking to the teacher or calling the Front Desk *before* coming to observe so we can confirm that the children will be indoors working and/or that there are no special events scheduled during the time you are hoping to observe. It will be most beneficial to observe during the morning work period, typically about 30 minutes after arrival.

Volunteering/Parental Involvement

Throughout the school's history Seton parents have been involved in workshops and committees in the school. Building the environment and creating classroom materials contribute to a warm family atmosphere where children grow. Volunteering at Seton also helps parents to gain deeper insight into Montessori philosophy and into their whole task of childrearing and early childhood education. Your involvement is needed!

Gift Giving

The holidays are a popular time for parents and students to show their appreciation for a teacher, assistant or other School staff member. However, the spirit of the holidays can easily be overshadowed by materialism and stress. We recommend expressions of appreciation in the form of a thoughtful note, homemade gift or small personal gift. The collection of money for individual classroom teachers as a holiday or end of year gift is not permitted. Collections for a staff member or teacher are permitted for such occasions as a wedding celebration or the birth of a child. Parents should check with the Head of School before starting a cash collection for a faculty or staff member. Usually the school office can help facilitate such a collection approved by the administration.

Each spring, parents are invited to show their appreciation for all staff by contributing to the Teacher/Staff Appreciation Fund typically in early May.

Background Checks

In accordance with Illinois law, the School conducts fingerprint-based criminal history checks and statewide sex offender background checks on all applicants for employment, current employees and contractors who have direct, daily contact with students. In addition, the School conducts similar background checks on any parent volunteers who will be spending time with students without the

supervision of School personnel. The School also checks the driving records of any parent volunteers who will be driving students (other than the parents' own children) for School-sponsored activities.

Multiple Households

In order for the School to most effectively communicate with parents and support each student, it is important for teachers and administrators to be aware of students who spend time in multiple households. Please be sure to communicate to the School about primary caregivers in the event of an emergency, and whether special co-parenting arrangements exist. If there are court-ordered guidelines regarding visitations, picking up a student from School, parent involvement in field trips or other issues, please include the School in your communication loop. These situations can be stressful for parents and confusing for students, and your help in minimizing the School's phone calls to you for clarification is very important. Unless otherwise specified, each parent for whom the Main Office has current contact information will receive information regarding the student as well as other informational mailings, fundraising solicitations and electronic communications during the year.

Communication with Teacher

The School will assume both parents/guardians will be in attendance at parent-teacher conferences; however, parents are welcome to request separate conferences with adequate notice for scheduling purposes. Parents must make it clear to teachers whether the primary parent, both parents or the parent in whose care the child will be that day, is to be contacted regarding incidents in school that day.

Financial Obligations and Multiple Households

When parents have separate households or when more than one party is responsible for paying for tuition or other school expenses, each party is jointly and separately liable for all charges incurred due to the student's enrollment in Seton Montessori school. Arrangements can be made to provide separate invoices and receive separate payments and payment instructions based on the information provided in a written form signed by the parties responsible for the payments. The School will not negotiate the agreement as to who pays what; that must be determined by either a court decree or by private agreement between the parties. If one party does not make the required payment, both parties are considered responsible.

Policy Regarding the Release of Information

Seton may release information regarding tuition payments and other payments made on behalf of a student(s) attending Seton Montessori only to the parent/guardian who makes those payments, unless the School receives a signed Release Form (provided by the School) from the paying parent granting Seton permission to release the requested information to the non-paying parent/guardian. The signed form needs to be received by the school office before any information will be released.

Rev. 8/21

Addenda

2021-2022 COVID-19 Mitigation Protocols

COVID-19 Symptoms as of 10/2021, (As delineated by Illinois Department of Public Health):

Fever

New onset of moderate to severe headaches

Shortness of breath

New cough

Sore throat

Vomiting

Diarrhea

New loss of taste or smell

Fatigue from unknown cause

Muscle or body aches from unknown cause

*This list does not include all possible symptoms. CDC will continue to update this list as more is learned about COVID-19. (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms)

Exclusion

Seton Montessori will fully adhere with the Exclusion Guidance of the Illinois Department of Public Health. (<https://dph.illinois.gov/covid19/community-guidance/school-guidance/covid-19-interim-exclusion-guidance-for-schools.html>) Any child suspected of having COVID-19, diagnosed with COVID-19, or having been in contact with persons suspected of or diagnosed with COVID-19 shall be excluded from school as outlined by IDPH.

If a child develops a fever and/or COVID-19 symptoms during the school day, the child will be isolated from the rest of the group. The parent will be notified and be responsible for immediate pick-up and follow up with a medical professional. For children with COVID-19 systems to return to school, the school will need to receive documentation of a negative RT-PCR COVID-19 test result; or written documentation from a health professional which includes an alternative diagnosis and clearance to return to school; or a note from parents/guardian that the child is symptom-free following a 10-day period of home isolation.

Health and Safety Considerations

Children grouped in static cohorts

Following the guidance of DCFS, children will be assigned to stable cohorts. The children will be kept in the same group for all indoor activities. Classroom interchanging or mixing adds increased risk for exposure and quarantine requirements. Staff members may only move between two set groups. The only exception to this static group framework would be if a staff member becomes ill and a substitute teacher is employed. At this time, non-essential visitors, including parents, will not be allowed in the buildings while class is in session.

Outdoor Classroom Use

Outdoor classroom spaces will be a primary environment as weather permits. Our spacious and beautiful campus will facilitate greater social distancing, provide fresh air and plenty of opportunity for movement and meaningful engagement with the natural world. Our intention is to be outdoors as much as possible. Masks will be allowed to be lowered or removed when social distancing is possible, and it remains in compliance with the current IDPH guidelines.

Sanitizing

Seton will increase sanitizing materials used, utilizing disinfection solutions as defined by DCFS. Cleaning all high-touch surfaces including doorknobs, touched materials, and other items identified as “frequently handled” will occur throughout the day. We will also clean and disinfect classroom areas, equipment and materials used at the end of each day. Our janitorial services will follow the cleaning recommendations from the Illinois Department of Public Health and the CDC.

Hand Hygiene

Staff and children will wash their hands following the CDC recommended handwashing procedure and all will wash their hands immediately upon entering the classroom space. The COVID-19 emergency demands a continued vigilance in adhering to these guidelines. Additionally, staff members will clean their hands before and after contact with individuals, and after contact with contaminated surfaces or equipment. Alcohol-based hand sanitizer shall be placed in every room and at the entrance to every classroom, to be used only as a precursor to washing hands or if soap and running water is not immediately available.

COVID Communication

Families must immediately notify Seton if someone in their home tests positive for COVID-19 or if the child has been in close contact with a positive case. If a child or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, then families from that group will be notified in writing immediately.

Additionally, Seton will complete required notification to DuPage County Health Department and DCFS immediately upon being informed of exposure to COVID-19.

Quarantine After Travel

For the safety and well being of all, Seton strongly encourages families to adhere to the CDC recommendations for unvaccinated people (as long as children remain unvaccinated) regarding quarantine after **domestic travel** that involves mass transit and lodging in public places.

(<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-during-covid19.html>)

These recommendations state that after travel the unvaccinated person:

- Get tested with a [viral test](#) 3-5 days after travel **AND** stay home and self-quarantine for a full seven days after travel.
 - Even if you test negative, stay home and self-quarantine for the full 7 days.
 - If your test is positive, [isolate](#) yourself to protect others from getting infected.
- If you don't get tested, stay home and self-quarantine for 10 days after travel.
- Avoid being around people who are at [increased risk for severe illness](#) for 14 days, whether you get tested or not.
- Self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms; isolate and get tested if you develop symptoms.
- Follow all [state and local](#) recommendations or requirements.

In the instance of international travel, Seton requires that the above guidelines be followed and unvaccinated students quarantine for a minimum of seven days upon return to the United States.