

Parent Handbook and SURVIVAL GUIDE 2017-2018



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Welcome

We are honored that you have chosen Montessori in Redlands for your child.

This handbook will help guide you through your and your child's journey at Montessori in Redlands (MIR). It outlines school procedures, rules, and policies. If you have questions about any part of this handbook, feel free to ask our office staff.

Quick Reference: What has changed for 2017-2018

We updated the following policies and procedures this year. **<to be updated>**

We added new information this year to the following:

- Making Changes to Childcare Programs—Updated due to full programs (page 13)
- Chaperone Guidelines—Drivers require DMV records, and overnight chaperones require fingerprints (page 28)
- Integrated Pest Management Plan—Notification about all chemicals used on the campus for weed and pest control (page 39)

Right to Revise Parent Handbook

The parent handbook contains the policies and practices of MIR in effect at the time of publication. All previously issued handbooks and any inconsistent policy statements or memoranda are superseded. **MIR reserves the right to revise, modify, delete, or add to any and all policies and procedures stated in this handbook, at any time.**

Overview of the School

MIR, Inc. is a non-profit, 501 (c)(3) corporation headed by a Board of Trustees. The Board includes parents of enrolled children, alumni parents, and members of the community at large.

Funding for the school comes from tuition, fees, donations, and grants. Donations to MIR may be tax deductible.

Mission

MIR is an environment where children begin a life journey of self-realization, love of learning, and global responsibility.

Vision: Living the Montessori Journey

MIR strives to exemplify Dr. Maria Montessori's holistic vision of education, from birth to adulthood.

We believe that children possess a natural desire to learn and have the ability to absorb all aspects of their culture and civilization without effort or fatigue.

We also believe that, if given the freedom to explore and make choices, children will be self-motivated to learn. This desire to learn through self-discovery will continue through their lifetime.

Trusting in the child's abilities to develop to their full potential through activities that support physical, intellectual, and emotional growth, the school provides an educational program to support its community of students, families, staff, board, and alumni in understanding and respecting the needs of the child.

Through our core values, the school community, both students and adults, fosters the development of global citizens aimed at creating a peaceful world.

The school provides carefully prepared environments in which the academic, social, and spiritual needs of children are fulfilled. Through purposeful activity, students are encouraged to follow their inner rhythms and thus enhance their capacity for exploration and learning. With this learning experience, children become individuals who are more responsible, caring, and respectful.

We call our community's work to achieve this vision "Living the Montessori Journey."

CORE VALUES

The school has three core values through which we "Live the Montessori Journey." These values are the Whole Child, the Prepared Environment, and the Community.

Whole Child

MIR prioritizes the development of the whole child—body, spirit, and mind. The whole child focus allows us to follow the child throughout the developmental continuum from infancy through emerging adulthood.

We foster habits that will promote healthy nutrition and physical activity to maximize the development of the growing body.

We promote the development of a strong sense of self and personal responsibility toward oneself, others, and the environment for success as an adult citizen of the global community.

Our students will be independent, responsible, self-motivated learners with the intellectual abilities outlined in our Student Learning Outcomes outlined below.

Prepared Environment

MIR carefully constructs a learning environment that supports the growth of the whole child. Our prepared environments consist of the outdoor and indoor physical spaces as well as the pedagogical structure, which includes the development of the adult and the implementation of Montessori principles.

Both the indoor and outdoor spaces on our campus will be functional, beautiful, and sustainable aspects of the learning environment. The school will maintain the highest possible standards of authentic Montessori practice by encouraging and supporting an educational continuum of life-long learning opportunities for students and staff.

Community

MIR works to create strong home, school, local and global communities through education and participation. Parents and teachers work together so that children develop themselves as global citizens. From the first point of contact throughout their child's educational journey, parents at the school will be nurtured in their understanding of the Montessori Journey, their participation in their child's education and healthy development, and contribution to the sustainability of the school.

The board, administration, faculty, staff, and students will be connected in their work to create a safe, rich environment in which to grow physically, intellectually, and spiritually.

MIR will be exemplary in its outreach to the community, fostering collaborative relationships with other institutions dedicated to the healthy development of the child and peaceful relations among all peoples.

Student Learning Outcomes

The Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) at MIR are defined within the context of the Montessori Curriculum, as directed by Association Montessori Internationale (AMI). It forms the basis of the

educational program for every student at MIR. The overall purpose of the MIR program is to build independent, self-motivated learners.

- **Sensorial:** MIR students will have the ability to use their senses to understand their abstract and concrete experiences in the world around them.
- **Practical Life:** MIR students will have the ability and the desire to care for themselves, others, and their environments.
- **Language:** MIR students will be competent in expressing themselves in written and spoken language and competent in their understanding of the written and spoken words of others.
- **Mathematics:** MIR students will be skillful in abstraction and reasoning. They will be able to use deductive and inductive methods to solve symbolic and practical problems.
- **Science:** Students will have a conscious awareness and understanding of the natural world and its order. They will have the ability to recognize and use the basic methods of scientific inquiry.
- **Cultural Subjects:** MIR students will create a foundation for the appreciation of the humanities and the arts. They will have a sense of historical perspective, an understanding of one's place in the world, and gratitude for the accomplishments of those who came before them.
- **Moral and Character Development:** Students at MIR will possess a strong sense of self. They will be capable, responsible, and accountable to themselves and others.

These SLOs form the basis of the educational program for every student at MIR.

Accreditation

MIR is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) and follows the principles and practices of the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI). It is also licensed as a childcare facility by the State of California Community Care Licensing Agency.

AMI was founded by Dr. Maria Montessori in 1929 to ensure the integrity of Montessori education and holds its schools to the highest standards of authentic Montessori practice. AMI provides internationally recognized teacher training to that end, and lead teachers at MIR hold current AMI teaching diplomas. All classrooms are equipped with approved Montessori apparatus.

WASC is the primary accrediting agency for public and private schools in the western United States. WASC and State Licensing consultants visit the school periodically to ensure its adherence to their standards. MIR is listed in the Private School Directory for the State of California.

Non-Discrimination Policy and Diversity

We follow the Montessori tradition of fostering ethnic, economic, and intellectual diversity. Our students and staff come from many countries and walks of life. MIR admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, activities, and programs generally accorded

or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, sex, or religion in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, and athletic or other school-administered programs. MIR is an equal opportunity employer.

Enrollment Procedures

Admissions

ADMISSIONS PRIORITIES

Children are admitted based on a balance of available spaces for each age, program level, and the child's readiness for the level of independence required in a Montessori classroom. Admission preference is given in the following order:

- Children currently enrolled at MIR (re-enrollment paperwork must be received by the deadline).
- Siblings of current students, if they apply during the re-enrollment month (February).
- Children with a minimum of one full school year of previous Montessori experience.
- New applicants.

STUDENT PAPERWORK

We must have the following paperwork on file for each student for them to attend school:

- Identification/Emergency form with Consent to Treat and Allergy List—due no later than the first day of school.
- Physician's report
- Health history form
- Current copy of immunization record
- Personal rights form
- Parents' rights form
- Prior school records, if applicable

It is critical that all emergency information be kept up-to-date. This is how we reach you in case of an emergency. Please include mobile numbers and a street address when filling out emergency forms. You will be required to sign off on this form annually. **State licensing prohibits MIR from having a child at school without this documentation.**

Re-Enrollment of Continuing Students

Re-enrollment for current families begins in February. Re-enrollment forms for the next school year will be available via the online Parent Portal in late January.

To ensure continued enrollment, all forms must be submitted with the non-refundable re-enrollment fee by the February deadline. The re-enrollment fee is discounted for families that re-enroll by the deadline.

Due to limited space, re-enrollment of all continuing students is on a first-come, first-served basis and cannot be guaranteed after this date.

Enrolling Siblings

If you have any inkling that you will enroll a younger sibling at any time during the school year after the current one, please let the Admissions Office know during the re-enrollment month. You will be able to apply to put them on the waiting list for a reduced fee during the re-enrollment month. Siblings get priority consideration for new enrollments.

Application and enrollment fees may be paid via electronic check, Mastercard, Visa, Discover, or American Express cards via the online parent portal.

Financial Policies

Tuition Payments

Tuition for the academic school year is an *annual* fee. You have three options to pay:

- in one annual installment,
- in two semi-annual installments,
- or in 10 equal installments paid August 1 through May 1.

The first payment for ALL payment options is due by August 1 of the academic school year. The second installment of the semi-annual payment is due by January 15.

All invoices for tuition and childcare for the current academic year will be posted to your online account under the “BillPay” tab of the Parent Portal on July 1. An email with instructions and due dates will be sent out notifying you that the invoices are ready for viewing and payment. For families who choose the 10-installment payment plan, as each installment payment becomes due, it will appear under the “Make a Payment” tab in BillPay. If a payment is not made by the 1st of the month, any unpaid balance will be added to the next month’s total.

COSTS NOT INCLUDED IN TUITION

Additional costs not paid through tuition include, but are not limited, to the following:

- Lunches (paid monthly, see page X)
- PTM dues (paid in September). To support the work of PTM throughout the year, a \$40 membership fee is billed to every family account. See page 30 for more information about the activities funded by this fee.

- Drop-in childcare and non-school childcare (will be charged the month of use)
- Late fees (if applicable)
- Holiday Sing DVDs (if ordered; billed in January)
- Overnight (mandatory) trips for Elementary students (costs will vary yearly and will be billed the month of the trip)

Invoices for these incidental charges will be posted to your account at the end of each month. **Even if you pay tuition annually or semi-annually, you must review your account each month to pay incidental charges and avoid late fees.** You will receive an email notifying you that invoices have been posted to your account and are available for you to view and make a payment.

All installment payments and incidental charges are due by the 1st of the month and considered late after the 15th. Payments can be made via e-Check (EFT) using the online Parent Portal, or in the MIR office by check, money order, or cashier's check. **If any of the due dates fall on a weekend or holiday, payments made in the office are due by the close of business the Friday before.**

PAYMENT FORMS ACCEPTED

Accepted forms of payment for tuition and incidentals include electronic check (EFT) via the online parent portal or paper check or money order made payable to MIR. MIR does not accept credit cards for tuition and incidental payments or cash payments of more than a \$100.

MIR will charge a \$15 fee for any payments returned for “non-sufficient funds.”

Donations to the School

If you wish to donate or provide additional financial support to the school or your child's class, we ask that you do so through our two official fundraising campaigns:

MIR FUND

MIR is a private, non-profit school. Like all independent schools, our goal is to make our programs as affordable as possible without sacrificing value. Providing individualized teaching for every student at a consistently high quality requires that we must ask families, alumni, and friends to make a generous gift to the MIR Fund each year. Donations are voluntary.

SPRING GALA & AUCTION

MIR's Spring Gala & Auction is a significant fundraiser for the school. It's a fun event for parents, staff, and community members, the highlight of which are live and silent auctions. Contact Jill Huff in the office to volunteer, donate, or for more information.

Application and Enrollment Fees

APPLICATION FEE

When you are invited to submit an application to be added to the wait pool for the current school year, you will pay a \$500 application fee. The fee reserves your student's place in the wait pool.

Once you are notified that space has become available for your student, you will be obligated to accept the space or forfeit the application fee. If a space does not become available within the school year, you will be contacted and given the option to either roll over the application fee to the following school year or receive a refund.

ENROLLMENT FEE

The \$500 enrollment fee is a non-refundable fee collected at the time a new student has been admitted into the school and is ready to enroll. The enrollment fee is applied to the costs of the enrollment process, paperwork, interview and/or orientation with the student's teacher(s), an MIR t-shirt, a photo packet, and the MIR annual yearbook.

Re-Enrollment Fee The fee for re-enrollment is \$350 if you complete your enrollment forms for the upcoming school year by the February re-enrollment deadline. After February, the fee is \$500. This fee is non-refundable and is applied to the costs of the enrollment process, paperwork, interview and/or orientation with the student's teacher(s), an MIR t-shirt, fall photo packet, and the MIR annual yearbook.

Sibling Application Fee

The application fee for siblings is \$350 if you apply during the re-enrollment month (February). After February, the fee is \$500. *Applying during the re-enrollment month does not guarantee a space for the sibling. Siblings are given priority consideration for enrollment.*

Financial Assistance

MIR offers a financial aid program that is intended to offer partial tuition assistance to current families with a short-term, temporary financial need, such as in the event of a job loss. It is not a scholarship program.

MIR works directly with an outside financial aid service agency, School and Student Services for Financial Aid (SSS), which helps the MIR Financial Aid Committee assess a family's financial need for assistance. Each family is evaluated individually. Once financial need is established, a family's commitment to the school, length of enrollment, future enrollment, and the impact the child has on their program and classroom environment are all considered.

It is the responsibility of the parents to communicate with the school administration if a financial hardship occurs during the school year that will impair their ability to meet payment obligations.

Financial aid is not available for children enrolled in our Toddler or Primary half-day programs.

Receipt for Dependent Care

Receipts for all payments will be emailed to you once your payment has been posted to your account. MIR is a licensed dependent care center. For parents wishing to claim dependent care on their taxes or participate in a flexible spending plan through their employer, these receipts are the records you need to keep and use for those purposes. MIR does not provide an end-of-year a cumulative report of childcare fees for the year. Please consult with your tax preparer to determine what expenses are deductible on your tax return.

Policies for Late Payments

A \$30 late fee will be assessed if payments are received after the established due date. Accounts are considered delinquent when 30 days past due. Delinquent accounts will be referred to the Finance Committee for collection processing, and this may result in student dismissal and delay of student records. Your child's account balance must be current in order to enroll for a new term. In the event the account falls delinquent after you enrolled for a new term, the enrollment fee and class placement may be forfeited.

Refund Policy

If a student withdraws voluntarily from the school by 5 PM, July 1, you forfeit the enrollment fee but will be released from all other financial obligations pertaining to the Contract. After 5 PM on July 1, your obligation to pay all tuition for the full academic year becomes unconditional and absolute due to the cost and expense that MIR must incur to reserve space and plan for enrollment. This is written into your contract.

If written notice of request for cancellation of the contract is received after July 1, and the reason for cancellation is 1) medical necessity of the student; or 2) permanent relocation of the student more than 30 miles from the school, reduction of tuition obligation will be considered. Reasons for withdrawal must be verifiable through documentation. All other requests for withdrawal may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

If you qualify for a release from your contract, MIR must receive a 30-day written notice of intent to withdraw. You will be responsible for tuition through the end of the month in which your 30-day notice ends. Fees cannot be prorated for that final month.

Academic Programs and Hours

Academic Calendar

The 2017-2018 school year extends from August 21, 2017 through June 1, 2018. Please review the MIR school calendar, available on the website, for a complete schedule of holidays, staff in-service days, school closures, and childcare dates.

There are scheduled staff in-service days throughout the school year when there is no school and childcare is *not* available. In-service days provide MIR staff the opportunity to meet as a group, to participate in necessary training workshops, and to work on the classroom environment. These days are necessary for providing the highest quality Montessori education. They are excellent days on which to schedule your child's appointments.

Toddler Program

Children ages 18-36 months join the Toddler community, where motor coordination, gross and fine motor skills, independence, and language development are fostered and the individual personality is respected. Children are guided through potty-training in this environment.

Enrollment options for the Toddler program include 2 (Th, F), 3 (M, T, W), or 5 (M-F) days a week. They may also be enrolled for half-, full-, or all-day programs. The Half Day program meets 9-11:45 AM. The Full Day program meets 9 AM-3 PM. The All Day program meets 9 AM-5 PM. *Please note, children must be enrolled in a 3- or 5-day program before moving up to Primary.*

Early morning childcare is available 7:15-9 AM. There is limited childcare available until 5:30 PM or 6 PM for families enrolled in the All Day program. Families must sign up for these extended times. **Availability is subject to state-mandated ratio requirements.**

Primary Program

Between the ages of 3 and 6, children continue their work of constructing themselves through practical life and sensorial activities. Through a variety of activities, children begin to read and write. They learn about their world by studying continents, animals, plants, and other cultures. They work with concrete materials to learn mathematical concepts including the decimal system, geometry, and fractions. Arts, languages, and music are fully integrated into this program.

Children must be fully potty-trained to enter the Primary program. Enrollment options include half-, full-, and all-day programs. The Half-Day program meets 9 AM-12 PM. The Full Day program meets 9 AM-3 PM. The All-Day program meets 9 AM-5 PM. Consistency in routine is important at this age, and all programs are 5 days a week.

Early morning childcare is available 7:15-9 AM. There is limited childcare available until 5:30 PM or 6 PM for families enrolled in the All-Day (9 AM-5 PM) program. Families must sign up for these extended times. **Availability is subject to state-mandated ratio requirements.**

Elementary Program

The Elementary Program, 1st-6th grade, is centered on children's desire to understand the universe and their place in it. Applying a research style of learning, Elementary students work in small groups on projects that spark the imagination and engage the intellect. Elementary studies include art, the sciences, geography, history, language, music, mathematics in all its branches, and Spanish.

Exploration of each area is encouraged through trips outside the classroom to community resources, such as libraries, museums, planetariums, botanical gardens, farms, and more. This approach to education fosters a feeling of connectedness to humanity and encourages the children's natural desire to make contributions to the world.

The Elementary program hours are 8:30 AM-3:30 PM. Early morning childcare is available 7:15-8:30 AM. Childcare is available in the afternoon from 3:30 to 5 PM, 3:30 to 5:30 PM, or 3:30 to 6 PM. Families must sign up for these extended times. **Availability is subject to state-mandated ratio requirements.**

Transitioning to the Next Program

Transition periods are an especially important time in a child's life and parents are involved in the process. At each level, the transition process is designed to be developmentally appropriate.

When a student is ready to move to the next program level (Toddler to Primary, Primary to Lower Elementary), MIR starts the process by arranging for parents to attend an introduction or orientation. Before your child starts full-time in their new program, you will meet with your child's new teachers.

From Toddlers to Primary, teachers will arrange for your child to have periodic visits to his/her prospective class. This allows him/her to grow comfortable with the new environment and to get excited about the new work s/he will be engaging with at the next level. This is a gradual process and the transition time will vary depending on the individual student's needs.

From Primary to Lower Elementary, students will visit one or two half-days, just enough to get a sense of the work and a feel for the social atmosphere. From Lower to Upper Elementary, students do not visit classrooms but parents have an orientation meeting with the Upper Elementary teachers.

MIDDLE SCHOOL AT THE GROVE SCHOOL

Elementary students transitioning to middle school follow the process appropriate to their chosen school. Many MIR students choose to continue their Montessori education at The Grove School, a

Montessori middle and high school program. Grove operates under the Redlands Unified School District as a public charter school. MIR shares its campus with Grove.

Middle school at Grove begins with 7th grade and MIR students may apply to Grove starting in winter of their 6th year at MIR. Admission to Grove starts with a public lottery. Information regarding the Grove and the admission process is available at thegroveschool.org or by calling the Grove office at 909-798-7831.

Although we are partners in Montessori education, MIR and the Grove School are separate entities, and MIR staff is not able to help with the admission process at Grove. **Enrollment in Grove is not automatic for MIR families. You must enter the lottery if your child wishes to be enrolled at Grove.**

Childcare Programs and Hours

Childcare on School Days

There are childcare options for all three programs. For specific hours, please refer to the appropriate section under “Academic Programs and Hours.”

There is no “grace period” beyond the stated drop-off and pick-up times. Families who drop off or pick-up children before or after the times outlined on page 16 will be charged for drop-in childcare without 24-hour notice. This fee is \$14.50 per hour, with a 1-hour minimum.

The school closes at 6 PM on most days, with the exception of a few days when the school closes earlier (see school calendar for exact dates). Any pick-up after school closes incurs a \$20 late charge for the first 15 minutes. An additional charge of \$1 per minute will accrue after the first 15 minutes.

Drop-In Childcare

Drop-in childcare is available; however, it is not intended to be a long-term solution to childcare needs. **Drop-in childcare before and after class requires 24-hour notice, space permitting.**

Because MIR must comply with state-mandated adult-to-child ratios, **you must call the office first to inquire about drop-in childcare availability every day that you require it.** It is your responsibility to notify the office if your children are being dropped off early or are staying beyond their regular pick-up time.

The drop-in childcare rate is \$9.50 per hour (1-hour min.). If you require drop-in childcare and provide less than 24-hour notice, the rate is \$14.50 per hour (1-hour min.), space permitting.

Morning drop-in childcare is available between 7:15 AM and 9 AM for all Toddler and Primary students, and 7:15 AM and 8:30 AM for all Elementary students *as space permits*.

There is no drop-in childcare 11:45 AM-5 PM for Toddler or Primary students. Afternoon drop-in childcare is available *as space permits* from 5 PM to 6 PM for Toddler and Primary students **enrolled in an all-day program (9 AM-5 PM)**. Changes to a Toddler or Primary student's schedule between 11:45 AM and 5 PM are considered *program changes* and require a meeting with the teacher and processing through the office.

Drop-in childcare is available for Elementary students between 3:30 PM and 6 PM *as space permits*.

If you find that you need drop-in childcare more than 4 times a month, we recommend that you sign up for monthly childcare. This will secure a space for your child and help MIR plan staffing and space accordingly. It is also generally less expensive for you.

Occasionally parents have the opportunity to chaperone a class field trip, resulting in a need for childcare for siblings enrolled in other classes. **If the field trip is scheduled to return to school beyond the sibling's regular program time, and that program is not All-Day, you must make alternate arrangements to have the sibling picked up.** If the trip departs early or the sibling is in an All-Day program, you may request drop-in care following the protocol noted above.

Childcare on Non-School Days

MIR offers childcare for select non-school days, which include some holidays and Parent/Teacher conference days. Advance registration is required for these days and there is an additional charge for this service.

Reservation forms for non-school childcare days will be made available online several weeks in advance. Forms must be completed by the deadline to ensure space for your child.

Non-school day childcare hours are 8 AM-4 PM. For Elementary and Primary students, childcare days are divided into blocks of time (8 AM-12 PM and 12 PM-4 PM). If your children are normally at school until 5 PM, you may extend the second block of childcare to 5 PM at no additional charge.

Toddlers may sign up for morning childcare (8 AM-11:45 PM) or all-day childcare (8 AM-4 PM). If your toddler is normally at school until 5 PM, you may extend the day to 5 PM at no additional charge.

MIR plans and budgets for the number of non-school childcare staff based on reservations. If you cancel without notifying us (by not showing up), we still must pay for employee time. Because of this, **your account will incur the full childcare fee if you cancel non-school childcare less than 24 hours in advance.**

Making Changes to Your Childcare Program

Childcare at MIR is full and there is a wait list. If you elect to drop childcare, we will fill the space with the next child on the wait list. Your ability to rejoin childcare is subject to availability, and

your child will go on the wait list. Childcare is first-come, first-served and we are not able to “hold” a space open. *This does not affect students who require changes due to moving up mid-year.*

Drop-in childcare is still an option, provided space is available. You will need to call in advance to check availability and secure a space per the process outlined previously.

Summer Program

MIR offers summer programs for Toddlers through Elementary. The Toddler and Primary summer programs give children a chance to continue their Montessori education in a consistent atmosphere, integrating thematic indoor and outdoor experiences. Swimming lessons are a part of the Primary Full- and All-Day programs. The Elementary program offers a series of two-week classes covering a range of interesting activities and subjects. Swimming may be offered for Elementary students for an additional fee.

Summer Program Fees

There is a separate registration process for the MIR Summer Program, and the fees are separate from annual tuition. Fees will be billed and are due the Friday before the start of each session your child attends.

A \$100 deposit is required to register for the Summer Program. This deposit is non-refundable and can only be applied toward summer school.

SUMMER REFUND POLICY

If you request to cancel a summer session prior to the cancellation date, your deposit will be applied to the next applicable session. If you cancel all sessions prior to the cancellation dates, you forfeit the \$100 deposit and will be refunded any fees paid. If you request to cancel a session after the cancellation date, you will be held responsible for all program fees for that session.

Student Support Services

MIR is dedicated to meeting the individual educational needs of all students including those who may require additional support to achieve their academic potential. Support services are available in areas of academic, speech and language, motor development, and emotional challenges. MIR can assist families with referrals to outside professionals when a student’s challenges fall beyond the scope of school-based intervention.

MIR recognizes the importance of the “least-restrictive environment” concept and will continue to serve these students in our classrooms when appropriate. While considering the needs of all

students, MIR reserves the right to decide whether or not a Montessori environment is the best learning environment for a student.

Identifying Students Who Need Support

Identification and concern for a child with possible special needs may come from a

- Screening
- Parent
- Teacher
- Concerned individual (physician, assistant, etc.)
- Student

SCREENING

MIR administers the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) to all students 18 months–5 years old. This tool helps parents provide information about the developmental status of their young child across five developmental areas: communication, gross motor, fine motor, problem solving, and personal-social. The teacher will communicate the screening results with parents through a written response.

If the screening indicates that a child may display developmental challenges or delays, the teacher will communicate with parents and arrange for a meeting to discuss the results.

PARENTS

When parents have a concern about their child's development, they may request to meet with their child's teacher to discuss student progress or concerns. The Head of School or Assistant Head of School may also attend a student progress meeting upon request from the parents or the teacher, based on availability.

TEACHER, INDIVIDUAL, OR STUDENT

When a teacher, concerned individual, or the student him/herself has a concern about how a child is progressing, the teacher may communicate and monitor the specific concerns in the following manner:

- Invite the Head of School or Assistant Head of School to observe the child in the classroom or playground,
- Talk to the child's previous teacher and/or review prior progress reports,
- Ask a peer teacher or learning specialist for input,
- Initiate strategic academic, physical and/or behavioral interventions to accommodate the child's needs in the classroom,
- Gather data on student performance,
- Keep documentation of any and all of the above actions, and
- Set up a meeting with the parents to share observations and concerns.

At this meeting, both the teacher and the parents will have an opportunity to share their observations and concerns in the classroom and in the home. Parents can communicate what the child might be expressing about school. Teachers may also gather data about any possible contributing factors, such as diet, sleep patterns, or changes in home or school environment. They may discuss strategies to assist the child, and arrange a next meeting to assess progress, or they may decide that a referral to student services would be the next step.

Referral Procedures

The child's teacher will inform a student's parents prior to a referral to Student Services. MIR takes the following steps to identify specific needs, determine if referral to a specialist is recommended, and create a learning support plan for the student.

1. Teacher fills out a "Request for Observation" form. This request includes:
 - a. Reason for referral
 - b. Parent contact information
 - c. Prior interventions
 - d. Background information
2. The appropriate specialist (OT, SLP, Educational Consultant) will conduct an observation or informal screening of the student and confer with the rest of the Student Services team. A written summary of this observation or information screening will be available.
3. Parents and teachers will be contacted about the observation, and a Student Study Team (SST) meeting with all parties will be set up to discuss services that might be required, and to develop an intervention plan.
4. A follow-up meeting will be scheduled after 3 months of following the intervention plan. At the meeting, the team will review success and progress of the plan and make necessary adjustments and recommendations. If necessary, the team will refer the family to their public school district for further evaluation. Further SST meetings will follow as necessary.

School Logistics

MIR staffs its programs to maintain a safe and inspiring environment for our children. Students are under our care until they are signed out and leave the school grounds.

Drop-off and Pick-up Times

To ensure we remain compliant with California labor laws as well as licensing and insurance requirements, MIR strictly enforces its drop-off and pick-up times.

Drop-off and pick-up times are outlined below. **There is no "grace period" beyond the stated drop-off and pick-up times.**

Families who drop off or pick-up children before or after the times outlined below will be charged for drop-in childcare without 24-hour notice. This fee is \$14.50 per hour, with a 1-hour minimum.

Drop-off times (unless signed up for early morning childcare):

- Elementary children can be dropped off between 8:15 and 8:30 AM.
- Primary and Toddler children *with Elementary siblings* may be dropped off as early as 8:30 AM.
- Primary and Toddler children with a start time of 9 AM may be dropped off in the classroom as early as 8:50 AM.

Pick-up times (unless signed up for all-day programs or Elementary childcare):

- Elementary children must be picked up between 3:30 and 3:45 PM.
- Primary and Toddler children *with Elementary siblings* must be picked up no later than 3:30 PM.
- Primary and Toddler children with programs ending at 11:45 AM, 12 PM, 3 PM, or 5 PM must be picked up on time.

Please understand that when children are picked up late, MIR must keep staff beyond their scheduled work hours to comply with state-mandated adult-to-child ratios. This places a burden on them and their families.

Once you have picked up your children, you are asked to leave the campus promptly for liability reasons and so that our outdoor facilities can be used for childcare and other school programs.

Signing Your Child In and Out

The state of California and Community Care Licensing requires MIR to keep accurate, up-to-the-minute sign in/out records. Your signature on your child's class roster transfers physical responsibility for your child from you to the school. **To be able to account for all students in the event of a disaster or emergency, it is vital that all students be signed in and out accurately.**

Classroom sign-in sheets are used to take roll by staff and emergency personnel.

State licensing requires that parents provide a full signature (no initials) and that times are signed accurately to reflect classroom attendance at any given time. Please make every effort to accurately record the time your student arrives and leaves along with your full signature. Staff members are not permitted to sign out for parents unless they are specifically on that child's pick-up list.

Because the accuracy of this information is so important, failure to sign your child in or out will result in a \$9.50 "failure to sign-in/out" charge. In the event that a child is present who has not been signed in, MIR staff will indicate that the child is present by writing "here" in the appropriate space, but you will still be responsible for this fee.

Authorizing Others to Pick Up Your Child

You will receive an Identification and Emergency Information form on which you may list adults other than parents/guardians who are authorized to pick up your child from school. No child will be released to anyone other than a parent or person whose name appears on the pick-up list, unless specific temporary arrangements have been made with the office. In the presence of office staff, you may give written notice stating the name of the person to whom the child is to be released. The person picking up the child will need to present valid photo identification.

Children in the Toddler and Primary programs fall under our licensing regulations at all times during the day and must be picked up and signed out by a parent/guardian or other authorized adult age 18 or older. Older siblings who are younger than 18 may not sign out Toddler or Primary students.

Elementary students may be picked up at the end of the school day (between 3:30 and 3:45 PM) by older siblings only if authorized by parents and listed on the pick-up list. After 3:45 PM, students move to our childcare program and must be picked up and signed out by a parent/guardian or other authorized adult age 18 or older. Elementary students may not sign themselves in or out.

Please be aware that MIR staff may be legally responsible if they knowingly release a child to a parent/guardian or other authorized adult who seems incapable of driving safely due to medications, intoxication, or similar impairment. Anyone in this condition arriving at school to pick up children will be asked to find an alternate method of transportation.

Curbside Service and Parking

Curbside sign-in/out service is provided by MIR staff to help relieve traffic congestion during our busiest times. This service is offered for:

- Primary drop-off (main campus only): 8:50–9 AM. There is NO afternoon curbside pickup for Primary students.
- Elementary drop-off (both campuses): 8:15–8:30 AM
- Elementary pick-up (both campuses): 3:30–3:45 PM. Students who are not picked up by 3:45 PM will be taken to childcare.

There is no “grace period” beyond the stated drop-off and pick-up times.

Please follow traffic patterns indicated on the parking lot maps on pages 20 and 21. **During these times, parents may NOT park or leave their car in any curbside area.** When you do so, you block the other parents trying to get through the drop-off and pick-up line and you increase the chances of accidents in the parking lot as other cars move around yours.

If you find it necessary to leave your car for a short period of time to walk your child to class or to deliver snack, please park in a designated parking space or on the street.

PARKING FOR FIELD TRIPS

Parents participating as chaperones for field trips or participating in extended classroom events during school hours are asked to park on the street, not in the lot. Doing so frees parking spaces for parents picking up and dropping off students in the Toddler and Primary half-day programs.

ELEMENTARY CURBSIDE PICK-UP ON THE NORTH CAMPUS

Elementary pick-up on the North campus is safest when all parents use the curbside service. Please be patient with the pick-up line as all staff members are making every effort to maintain the safety of the children.

Please do not line up for curbside pick-up before 3:20 PM. The Grove School and two of our Primary classes dismiss at 3 PM, and if you line up early, you block their ability to get in and out of the parking lot.

Parking Lot Safety

The speed limit in all MIR parking areas is 5 MPH. Your cooperation is essential to keep children safe in the MIR parking lots. **Children sometimes dart away from adults and cross the parking lot unexpectedly and unattended.** Please drive slowly and use extreme caution. If applicable, parents are encouraged to use the curbside sign-in/out service to increase parking lot safety.

It is unlawful to leave a child unattended in a parked car. Always turn off your engine, remove your keys, and take your children and personal belongings with you.

California law requires children to ride in the back seat in a properly secured child passenger safety restraint until they are at least 8 years old or until they are at least 4 feet 9 inches in height.

Campus Map



Drop-off and Pick-up Maps

SOUTH CAMPUS

The south campus driveway is **one way**. The flow of traffic moves from the east entrance on Orange Avenue towards the west exit on Nevada Street. (See diagram below.) All Toddler classes, Jean and Maryhelen's class, Sara's class, Maria's class, Emily's class, and Teesie's class are on the south campus.



Curbside drop-off will be available for Primary students on the south campus and for all Elementary students only. For curbside drop-off, please stay in your car and have staff take your child to their class.

For curbside drop-off and pick-up, please form one line at the curb. **Parents who choose to walk their child into the class need to use the parking spaces. *Please do not park at the curb between the no-parking signs.*** This will provide a safe and efficient flow of traffic and limit congestion. All yellow and "visitor" parking spaces are open to parents who are dropping off or picking up.

NORTH CAMPUS

The driveway for the north campus is **one way**. The flow of traffic moves from the north entrance on Nevada Street towards the south exit on Nevada Street. (See map on next page.) Kelly's class, Nikki's class, Venus's class, Kara and Jenny's class, Whitney's class, and Kristen's class, and Student Services are on the north campus.



- **Parents of Primary students in Kara and Jenny’s class and Nikki’s class** must park and sign their children in and out in their classrooms. Curbside drop-off is not available for these Primary classes.
- **For Elementary morning curbside drop-off**, please form one line on the left-hand side of the parking lot.
- **For Elementary afternoon curbside pick-up**, parents of students in Venus’s class and Whitney’s class should form a line on the left-hand side of the lot. Parents of students in Kelly’s, and Kristen’s classes should form a line on the right side.

Please leave room in the middle for cars to get through. Please do not line up before 3:20 PM. This will block the flow of Primary families leaving the parking lot.

Parents are asked to remain in their cars in the designated line in the parking lot. Staff will bring the sign-out sheet and your child to your car. Elementary families with students in more than one Elementary class on the north campus should meet their children in the *youngest siblings’* Elementary line.

Attendance and Tardiness Policies

Attendance

Montessori philosophy insists that we respect the child's need for consistency. The children who benefit most from the prepared environment are those who attend regularly. For all students at every level, each day "counts." Excessive and unnecessary absences can hinder their ability to focus and progress.

MIR specifically requests that every effort is made to schedule family vacations and trips to coincide with school holidays. Whenever possible, appointments with a doctor, dentist, orthodontist, or other professionals should be made outside of classroom hours. If you are planning a trip during the school year, please speak with your child's teacher as soon as possible.

As an educational institution in the state of California, MIR is required to offer a minimum number of school days in the academic year. It is our duty to abide by the attendance requirements that are imposed on students age 5 and older. We are obligated to report, if necessary, students who are considered truant.

For these reasons, MIR tracks attendance for students ages 5 and older each day and will post that information for you on the Parent Portal (you will only see your child/ren's absences). Absences for vacations or for "reasons unknown" will be marked as unexcused.

Please email attendance@mir.org or call the MIR office to report an absence to ensure we track it correctly, even if you have already talked with your child's teacher.

Tardiness

Respect for the child's need for consistency applies to the child's daily schedule. Concentration is extremely important for your child to make steady progress in achievement, to be settled at school, and to support a positive attitude toward school.

One way we foster your child's concentration is by providing an uninterrupted three-hour work period in the classroom every morning. Tardy children lose out on some of this time and often miss important group lessons and activities. Their late arrival can also disrupt the work of the other children in class.

Children who are consistently late do not have adequate time for full participation and development. They can have difficulty feeling a sense of belonging in the community. *This is especially true for very young children, who have an even greater need for consistent routine.* Please make every effort to have your child at school on time.

Elementary begins promptly at 8:30 AM. The Toddler and Primary programs begin promptly at 9 AM. Elementary students who arrive after 8:30 AM and Primary students ages 5 and older who

arrive after 9 AM will be marked tardy, and the number of times they are tardy will be available to you on the Parent Portal (you will only see your child/ren's tardy record). Please note that tardiness due to "overslept" or "running late" will be marked as unexcused.

Leaving early for appointments or family activities is just as disruptive as arriving late. Children who leave before the end of the work day miss out on end-of-day class rituals and activities that bring closure of their work cycle and their social interactions. The number of times an Elementary student leaves early will be marked and that information made available for you on the Parent Portal.

Reporting Absences/Late Arrivals

Please email attendance@mir.org or call the MIR office to report an absence or if your child will be late to ensure we track it correctly, even if you have already talked with your child's teacher.

Excessive absences, tardiness, or early departures in the Elementary program hurt your child's social and academic progress and will result in a meeting with the Head of School.

Classroom Life

Snacks and Lunch

Parents of Toddler and Primary children are asked to provide a morning snack for their child's classroom. You will receive a monthly snack schedule from the class. The school will provide a snack for children enrolled after 4 PM.

You must provide lunch for children who stay past noon, or order lunch through the hot lunch program. Please work with your child to pack a nutritious lunch in a lunch box clearly marked with his/her name. **Please send nutritious foods that serve your growing child.**

State licensing prohibits storage of children's lunches in classroom refrigerators, so include an ice pack in your child's lunchbox if needed.

Your child will enjoy lunch more and will handle it better if it is packed in easily managed containers. MIR suggests using reusable containers and drink bottles to reduce trash and recycling.

MIR offers lunch through The Grove School's hot lunch program, which is available Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. MIR offers pizza lunches on Wednesdays. Vegetarian options are available daily. All lunch orders, including pizza, must be made online. Hot lunches are \$3 each for Toddlers and \$4 each for Primary and Elementary students. The cost will be billed to your account.

Quiet Time/Naps

A quiet environment will be provided for those children who nap in the afternoon. We will provide a mat and sheet for your child. We ask that you send a small (crib-sized) blanket. Please make certain it has your child's name on it.

Birthdays

All classes celebrate birthdays in their own way. Please check with your child's teacher for the policy on the celebration of birthdays in their class.

Bringing Items from Home

Please do not send candy, gum, soda, toys, money, or anything dangerous to school with your child. Children may bring music, books, flowers, rock or butterfly collections, or other educational materials to school to share in group. These should be cleared with the teacher. Please stress to your child the idea that these are brought to school to be shared and if he or she does not wish to share something with the other children, it should be left at home. Keep in mind that there may not be time for sharing on any given day, and that we value a child's verbal sharing as much, if not more, than any sharing items.

If you find a tiny block or other school material in your child's pocket or lunch box, please return it the next day. Younger children often take things home. This behavior is not unusual, and is an indication in young children that they are integrating school and home environments.

Use of Cell Phones and Other Mobile Devices

MIR recognizes that some of our older students leave school to go to athletic team practices, dance or music classes, circus, or other after-school activities. Many carpool with other families, spending much of their time away from their parents, who provide them with a cell phone for emergency situations. **Cell phones should be brought to school only when absolutely necessary.**

Students who bring a cell phone to school are not permitted to use it during school hours. All student cell phones must be turned off and may not be on their person during class hours. If students use their cell phones during class, teachers reserve the right to secure the phones in a classroom cabinet until the end of the day.

We also ask that you refrain from talking on your cell phone when picking up your children.

For smaller children especially, your child has been eagerly anticipating your arrival and is looking forward to having your full attention. For all children, the teacher may have important information about your child's day to share with you.

Parents may not use their cell phone, except in an emergency, while chaperoning children on an MIR field trip. (See "Guidelines for Field Trip Chaperones," pp. 28.)

It is not necessary for children to bring other mobile devices to school, such as a tablet or laptop computer. MIR provides classroom computers for Elementary students who require them for schoolwork. Children in Upper Elementary who wish to bring devices from home should check with their teacher on appropriateness of use. MIR is not responsible for loss or damage of devices brought from home.

Clothing

CLOTHING FOR TODDLER AND PRIMARY STUDENTS

Children will grow in independence and self-esteem if they can dress themselves. Clothing should allow for freedom of movement and should be easy for young children to take on and off. It is easier for young children to use the restroom without adult help if they wear two-piece garments, preferably without belts, snaps or buttons that are difficult for them to handle.

Toddler and Primary students should have an extra set of clothes at the school “just in case” in addition to emergency clothing. Mark your child’s name on each item. Names should also be put on all coats and sweaters.

While we use painting aprons and take reasonable care to keep the children clean, children engaged in creative activities will get dirty. It would be unusual if your child came home at the end of every day as spotless as when you brought him or her in the morning. In light of this, it is a good idea not to send your child to school in anything that you wish to remain perfectly clean.

CLOTHING FOR ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

Students should wear clothing and shoes that allow for freedom of movement and physical activity. It is highly recommended that students wear closed-toe shoes suitable for lots of active play and physical education. Students who arrive at school in clothing that is inappropriate or distracts from the learning environment may be asked to change, or parents may be called and asked to provide a change of clothing.

Field Trips

There are times when the best way for students to learn is to go on an outing. All classes go on field trips, and Elementary students often organize small trips to visit local community resources. We prepare our outings carefully and always with the idea of providing the children with a valuable, age-appropriate lesson.

Field trips are more frequent in the Primary and Elementary programs. Toddler students only take a couple of field trips a year. The following policies apply to field trips at every level, but some of them will be adjusted for the Toddler program. Your child’s Toddler teacher will give clear instructions for each field trip.

Field Trip T-Shirts

Every student is provided a school shirt to wear on school outings to help teachers and chaperones identify and track MIR students more easily. Further clothing guidelines based on the location of the trip will be provided as needed.

Medical Release and Permission Forms

The Medical Release and Field Trip Consent portion of the enrollment contract covers all outings off the school premises. You will be informed of upcoming field trips via classroom communication. Some field trips may require additional forms provided by the location.

Fees

Costs of field trips are included in your tuition, with the exception of Elementary overnight field trips (Pali Institute, 6th year Washington, D.C. trip, and camping). Overnight trip costs vary and parents will be informed of the approximate cost ahead of time.

Overnight trips for Elementary students provide valuable experiences in independence, planning, and responsibility. **All students are expected to attend.** Parents who may not be able to afford the fees should inquire in the office about financial assistance.

Elementary Local Trips

Elementary students take frequent small trips into the local community that are specifically related to a subject of study. These trips are called “goings out” and are organized by the students themselves. Children typically travel in cars with parent volunteers; the students often need parent drivers or other assistance with these trips. Ask your child’s teacher about opportunities to help.

Transportation

We use buses as transportation for the majority of classroom field trips. Statistics show that buses are the safest transportation choice. Hiring a school bus ensures that the driver of the vehicle has one and only one job: to drive the bus safely.

Transportation for Elementary overnight and local trips is usually provided by teachers and parent volunteers.

Who May Go

MIR is responsible for and insured to cover only the children enrolled in our program; therefore, **no other siblings or young relatives may attend our field trips.** When a parent signs up as a chaperone, he or she is agreeing to watch his/her child, plus someone else’s child(ren). Having to care for a baby or a toddler at the same time takes away the focus needed to do the job.

Guidelines for Field Trip Chaperones

We often enlist the help of parent chaperones to add to the supervision and safety of the trips. For some trips, we only allow a limited number of parents to chaperone.

We ask that only one parent per family sign up for each field trip. The limited number of parents provides safety for the children without overwhelming the group with adults, thus interfering with the lesson we want the children to learn. One parent per family gives other parents the opportunity to attend.

We thank all the parents who, at one time or another, make the effort to come with us. We understand that it is not possible for most parents to come to every trip, and in fact ask that you refrain from signing up more than once or twice each year. Taking trips without you gives your child the chance to become more independent and learn to respect and listen to other adults in a safe environment. It will also give other parents the opportunity to experience the joys of chaperoning.

At Back to School Night, we hand out Chaperone Guidelines appropriate to each age level along with a Parent Chaperone Agreement form. We must have the signed Parent Chaperone Agreement Form on file in the office for you to participate on a field trip.

Parents traveling with **Elementary** students will be required to provide

- A copy of your current driver's license
- Current evidence of automobile insurance
- Your DMV record (instructions on how to obtain this will be handed out with the guidelines at Back to School Night)
- Fingerprinting (only for overnight trips; MIR will pay for this expense)

Primary and Toddler students travel by bus to field trips, and parent driver information is not required.

Adherence to the following general guidelines helps ensure a safe and memorable trip for everyone.

OVERALL GUIDELINES

- We will assign your child and one or two other children to your care. You will be responsible for the children assigned to you for the entire length of the trip. Be close to them while walking from place to place. If you need to leave the group for a moment, ask another adult in the group to watch your children in your absence.
- If a child from another group asks you to take him/her to the bathroom, let his/her chaperone know you are taking them, but don't leave your group un-chaperoned to do so.
- We want you to enjoy the day with your child and their friends. If you are having trouble with a child's behavior, or the number of children in your group, please let us know so we can make the necessary changes.

- Be attentive and respectful toward our host and help the children follow the rules set by the host.
- We serve snack to the children either before leaving the school or as soon as we arrive at our destination. **Do not share snacks, candy, or bubble gum with the children in your care.** Some children have allergies and any of those foods, their ingredients, or the machines they were manufactured on could be a trigger. Water is OK.
- Gift shops are very tempting, but we will not shop during school outings. Please do not buy treats or toys for the children in your group.
- The children's safety is our main concern. Do not be afraid to intervene if you see a child in need, even if s/he is not in your group.
- Although these outings are a great opportunity to get to know other parents, we ask you to keep the visiting to a minimum. This way we ensure proper supervision of the children in our care.
- Except in an emergency, parents may not talk on their cell phones or conduct business on their cell phones during a field trip. Your attention needs to be fully on the children in your care.

WHEN TRAVELING BY BUS

MIR books buses for most field trips. The only exceptions are Elementary overnight trips and goings out. Toddler and Primary parents who wish to drive to a field trip destination may only transport their own students.

- **Arrive at school 10 to 15 minutes before departure time.** Please park on the street to leave school parking spaces open for parents picking up other students at lunch time.
- Gather your assigned children and help them board the bus. Sit with them and assist them as needed. Remind them to be in their seat at all times and encourage proper manners.

WHEN TRAVELING BY CAR

For Elementary trips only. Primary and Toddler students travel exclusively by bus for fieldtrips.

- California Law requires children to ride in the back seat in a properly secured child passenger safety restraint until they are at least 8 years old or until they are at least 4 feet 9 inches in height.
- Parents must obey all traffic laws while driving MIR students. This includes the law prohibiting cell phone use while driving.
- No videos or DVDs are allowed to be played for the students while driving.
- Your vehicle must be filled up with gas before the trip. Stopping at a gas station (or making any other unscheduled stops) with a car full of MIR students is prohibited.
- The children in your car group are under your immediate supervision when walking to and from the destination and in the parking area. It is best for the children to wait until you open the door for them before they exit the car.

ELEMENTARY GOINGS OUT

Teachers will provide individual training for parents supporting Elementary goings out.

ELEMENTARY OVERNIGHT TRIPS

Training for Elementary overnight trips will be held early in the school year with the Head of School or Assistant Head of School for all parents interested and willing to chaperone.

Parent Involvement

Parent participation is vital to your child's educational experience. Attending parent education programs, volunteering in the classroom, and participating in PTM (Parents and Teachers of Montessori) meetings and activities will greatly enhance your family's experience at MIR.

Visits and Observations

MIR is a licensed childcare facility in the state of California. Parents of enrolled students have the right to access the facility and their children at any time. MIR encourages you to observe your child's classroom throughout the year.

Parents are welcome to observe their child's classroom. Due to the number of prospective parent observers, we ask that, when possible, you schedule your classroom visit through the office. If your child is just starting at MIR, it is our experience that children adjust much faster if you wait to observe until they have settled into the classroom. This may take a few days.

In case of an emergency such as a fire, earthquake, or health emergency, it is essential that we know who is on campus at all times. Please stop by the office and let us know if you are visiting.

Contractors and other workers must wear a yellow visitor badge while on campus.

Parents and Teachers of Montessori

PTM promotes collaboration with, and contribution to, the MIR community by acting as a support to the parents, teachers, and administration of the school.

PTM sponsors several community-building events every year, run by parents and staff volunteers, to encourage parent and student involvement in the school-wide community. PTM also holds regular meetings to coordinate the work of the PTM and provide a forum for the community. PTM provides financial support for Parent Education Nights.

To support the work of PTM throughout the year, a \$40 membership fee is billed to every family account.

Volunteering in the Classroom

The PTM Room Representative (“Room Rep”) for your child’s class publishes a monthly newsletter that includes volunteer opportunities for the classroom. You are also free to ask your child’s teacher if they may want volunteers or assistance with specific activities.

Volunteer opportunities in the classroom are greatest in number for the Primary classrooms. As your child reaches Elementary, their developmental need for independence is much greater, and to support that need, teachers rely on the students to support the work of the classroom. At this age, they are the ones who become the volunteers: they assist in the Toddler and Primary classes and participate in community volunteer activities like book drives, hygiene kit drives, volunteer work at outside organizations and so on.

Parent Education

Montessori U

Montessori U is MIR’s program for parent education. Our goal is to help you understand your children’s development, and share how we educate your children according to their development.

Take advantage of Montessori U to

1. Understand the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive milestones your child will reach at each stage of development.
2. Gain a clear picture of how your children are growing and thriving in their time at MIR.

Montessori U classes are designed to fit the style and schedule of as many parents as possible. They include:

- Seminar-style classes
- Discussion-based classes
- Hands-on classes and events
- Guided observations –*This is a new program we will be piloting with our Lower Elementary classes this year.*

MIR publishes the Montessori U program and schedule at the beginning of the year. You can view the schedule on the MIR website at <https://www.mir.org/community-life/parent-education>.

Parent participation in two or more sessions is expected. Classes include the following.

COFFEE, TEA, & M.E. (MONTESSORI EDUCATION)/LUNCH WITH THE TEACHER

Hosted by a teacher several times throughout the year, Coffee, Tea, and M.E. and Lunches with the Teachers are discussion-based classes covering child development and Montessori theory and lessons.

NEW PARENT ORIENTATION

New Parent Orientation includes a discussion of basic principles of Montessori education as well as ways to implement those principles in the home. In addition, it serves as an introduction to the history and structure of the school and events during the year that would be of interest to parents. The intention is to provide new parents with information to help make their child's first experience with the school as comfortable and successful as possible.

PARENT EDUCATION NIGHTS

These evening sessions are seminar style or hands-on and cover a variety of broader educational topics. Most Parent Education Nights take place on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday evenings starting at 7 PM, and childcare is provided at no cost for enrolled Primary and Elementary students.

BEGINNINGS

This Parent Education Night is designed specifically for parents of children 18 mos.-3-4 years (Toddlers and 1st year Primary students). Beginnings focuses on early childhood development and milestones, how you can support that development, how Montessori education supports that development, and how our Student Services team helps students who may need help reaching milestones. Childcare is provided at no cost for enrolled Toddler and Primary students.

PARENT-INFANT CLASS

Each year MIR hosts a Parent-Infant Class for children from six weeks to 17 months old and their parents. The goal of the class is to assist with the child's development through small-group interaction. Parents learn how to observe, support, and encourage the child's natural development.

GUIDED OBSERVATIONS

These observations let you watch your child at work in their classroom. Observations are followed by in-depth discussion with a teacher or administrator about what was observed in the classroom. This is the closest experience to going to school with your child. (Please note, if your child is easily distracted by your presence, you may be asked to observe in a different classroom from theirs.)

JOURNEY & DISCOVERY

This special event is designed to give adults first-hand experience with the Montessori curriculum in its totality. The program includes a silent journey in which participants are guided through the prepared environments at all levels. The journey is followed by a "discovery" session where parents are encouraged to participate as a student at each level. Through individual and joint exploration, adults can truly discover the Montessori experience. A catered luncheon and discussion group completes the day. This event is strongly encouraged for new parents.

PARENT-CHILD NIGHTS

These events, held twice a year, provide an opportunity for you to be guided *by your child* through classroom activities, with teachers on hand to assist the children as necessary. This is one of the

children's favorite activities. It is their opportunity to show you the work they do each day, and they do so with great pride.

Communications Procedures

Photo Release & Permission

Montessori in Redlands welcomes and appreciates contributions of photographs and schoolwork from MIR staff, students, and parents, as well as the press, to help illustrate and confirm the value and benefits of a Montessori education. Photos and schoolwork may be used in print or online for publications for the MIR community or for promotional material.

The MIR Photo Release Form that you sign as part of your enrollment packet gives the school permission to use photos of your child or his/her work and outlines where these images may appear. Children in photographs are not named unless permission has been explicitly requested and/or granted at the time the photo was taken/submitted.

We require that the form be signed each school year. A form must be completed for each student.

Many MIR parents take pictures of school events and of children other than their own for personal use. MIR requests that parents taking photos use them appropriately and offer parents a choice about the use of pictures of their children. It is MIR's expectation that you will ask permission of other parents before posting pictures of children other than your own on the internet or via mobile apps.

Yearbooks and School Photos

Each student will receive a yearbook and fall school photo package as part of the enrollment fee. Additional photographs can be ordered from the photographer. Spring photo packages are available for a fee, with a percentage of the proceeds donated back to MIR. Consult the school calendar for photo days.

Students who start MIR after the fall photos have been taken will receive a \$20 credit toward their spring photos should they choose to order them. See the Admissions Office for more details.

Communications to Parents

Toddler and Primary classes provide a "parent folder" or drawer, which is used to post important school and class notices as well as student work. Parents should check the parent folder regularly or as suggested by your child's teacher. Also, parents who have provided an email address will receive weekly bulletins as well as other notifications via email. MIR also posts notices to the school website, the Parent Portal, on Facebook, and on bulletin boards located throughout the campus.

Some Elementary classes do not have folders but use different methods appropriate for the age and class schedule for sending home notices. Teachers will inform parents of the class communications process at the classroom orientation in early September.

The school calendar is posted to the MIR website, with a link from the Parent Portal. The calendar is posted in a variety of formats including PDF for printing and as a Google calendar that you can subscribe to or download to import into your own calendar app. The weekly bulletin and monthly newsletter include important calendar updates as well. In addition, each classroom shares class calendars via email and other means.

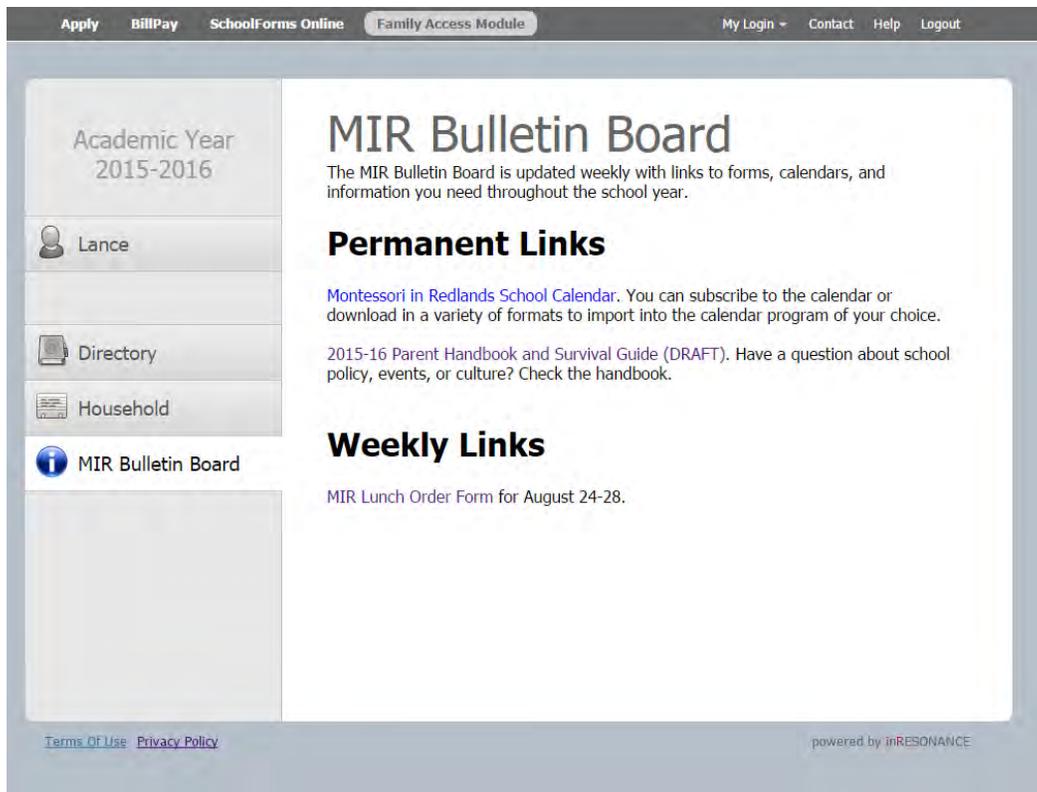
Parent Portal

MIR has a password-protected online Parent Portal from which you can view and pay your invoices, access important links, and view a school directory. You used this portal when you enrolled your child for the school.

To access the portal, go to mir.org and click the Parent Login link at the top right. Use the username and password you used for enrollment to sign in to access all the functions of the portal. To view your bill, click on Pay My Bill button. To access important links and the school directory, click on the Family Access Module button. To view and fill out online forms for enrollment, click on the SchoolForms Online button..

FAMILY ACCESS MODULE OF THE PARENT PORTAL

The Family Access Module looks like this:



Within the Family Access Module of the Parent Portal, you can click the MIR Bulletin Board tab on the side to access important links and see notices and other information that will be posted.

Click on the Directory tab on the side to find a directory of MIR families. **This directory is for your convenience and is intended for personal use only. It may not be used for solicitation or advertisement.** You may sign in to the Directory at any time and update your preferences on what information to display in the Directory. You may also opt in to the directory at any time, or opt out of it.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-Teacher conferences are held two times a year. Conferences provide you with an opportunity to discuss your child's progress one-on-one with teachers without distractions. You will receive a written conference report at the conferences. Attendance at these conferences is required for all parents at MIR and is crucial to your child's success.

Childcare is available to make it possible for you to attend. Please make every effort to attend on these days, as they have been set aside on the calendar well in advance for this purpose. If you are unable to attend during the scheduled conference days, you may make special arrangements with your child's teacher for an alternate meeting time. Teacher availability may be limited.

Contacting Your Child's Teacher

Teachers value frequent, timely, and open communication with you about your child. Each teacher will let you know how best to contact her or him.

For matters concerning your child's progress, please avoid making direct phone calls to the classroom during the school day; dropping by the classroom to speak to the teacher during the school day; holding extended conversations with the teacher in the car line; or sending oral messages to the teacher via the classroom assistant or your child. You are welcome to schedule an individual meeting with teachers for this purpose.

Contacting the School for Business Matters

If you need to reach MIR administration for matters related to school business, use this list to help you find the right contact. All administrative personnel can also be reached through info@mir.org.

If you need to contact the school regarding

- Admissions or enrollment, contact Jacqueline Chandler at jchandler@mir.org.
- Your bill, or to inquire about financial assistance, contact Lisa Oliver at loliver@mir.org.
- Donations, fundraising, or other development questions, contact Jill Huff at jhuff@mir.org.
- Emails or other communications from the school, contact Lisa Kensok at lkensok@mir.org.
- PTM events or related questions or the Frugal Frigate book fairs, contact Jean Bonner-Drinkwine at jdrinkwine@mir.org.

To notify the school of your child's absence or late arrival, send an email to attendance@mir.org.

To notify the school that someone who is not on your authorized pickup list will be picking up your child, send an email to info@mir.org with the date, person's name, and time they will be picking up. You can also fill out a temporary authorization form in the office.

To update your contact information, sign in to the Parent Portal, click on Family Access Module, and click on the Household tab. You can also email updates to info@mir.org or come to the office.

For all other questions, feel free to call the office (909-793-6989), send an email to info@mir.org, or respond directly to an email you've received from the school.

Grievance Policy

Parents who have a grievance or concern relative to the school should use the following grievance procedure. This procedure allows MIR to deal with grievances fairly, consistently, and quickly.

Step 1: The first route to resolve the difficulty is through direct verbal communication with the staff parties involved. Often this type of communication clarifies and resolves the situation immediately.

Step 2: If this does not bring closure, you should take the problem to the teacher for resolution. This may be done in written form with the knowledge that any such documentation may come before the administration.

Step 3: If you are still dissatisfied, you should submit a written account of the grievance to the Head of School. The Head of School will meet with all the parties involved and determine the best solution to resolve the matter.

Step 4: If the situation is unresolved after approaching the involved party, the teacher, and the Head of School, you are directed to call upon the services of the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees. The Executive Committee will schedule a meeting to hear the situation and receive written communication. All written communications will be treated with strict confidentiality. **The Board maintains final responsibility for all grievances. Their decisions are final and binding.**

Health and Safety

Illness

California State law requires that MIR shall be responsible for ensuring that children with obvious symptoms of illness do not attend school. Obvious symptoms include: productive cough, runny nose, sneezing, fever, rash, eye inflammation, vomiting, diarrhea, or sore throat.

We cannot admit your child to school if one or more of the following exists:

- Illness that prevents the child from participating comfortably in normal school activities including outdoor play.
- Illness or injury that results in a greater need for care than teachers can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of the other children in the class.
- A temperature of 99.9 (under the arm) or 100.4 (oral or in the ear) degrees or higher.
- Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness such as lethargy, abnormal breathing, uncontrolled diarrhea, vomiting, rash with fever, mouth sores with drooling, or behavior changes that indicate severe illness.
- A communicable disease without medical documentation to indicate that the child is no longer contagious.

Parents will be called if a child develops symptoms of illness at school, and we will require that you pick up your child(ren) immediately. Sick children will be kept comfortable until you or your authorized representative comes to pick them up.

Children who have had a fever must be kept out of school until they have been fever free without the use of medication for 24 hours. This policy dramatically reduces the incidence of illness in

children schoolwide. Your cooperation with this policy is appreciated. Please note, children who have been given medicine at home to control a fever will often tell their teachers at some point during the school day. You may then be called to pick up your child and asked to keep them home until they are fever free without medication for 24 hours.

If your child will be absent from school or has any type of contagious disease, such as chicken pox, strep throat, head lice, pink eye, etc., please call the office immediately. Parents of other children in the class will be notified of all communicable diseases (confidentiality will be maintained).

Medications

For medication to be administered to your child, you must sign a medication form in the office. Under no circumstances should medication be sent to school with a child.

All prescription and over-the-counter medication, including vitamins, supplements, cough drops, etc., must be in their original container with label. This policy applies to diaper cream and to sunscreen for Toddlers and Primary students as well. Prescription medication must have the original pharmacy label with the student's name.

The dosage you list on the medication form must exactly match the dosage prescribed on the container and the time the medication is to be administered. Authorization expires upon the end date listed on the medication form. A new authorization form is required for any extension or refill. You must pick up any unused medication on the end date or it will be discarded.

First Aid and Medical Response

All staff members are CPR and First Aid certified and are prepared to perform basic first aid. In the case of a serious injury, the fire and rescue squad or an ambulance will be called. The school will notify you, the person you have given us permission to call, or your child's physician. **It is vital that you keep the consent to treat form you signed at registration up-to-date with all phone numbers, so that you can be reached in the event of an emergency.** This form also provides us with written authorization to get medical treatment for your child if you cannot be reached.

Disaster Preparedness

MIR has a detailed plan for handling disasters, which is practiced annually by the staff during in-service days. The children practice fire and earthquake drills regularly. MIR has arranged an alternate site plan in the event we need to evacuate our premises.

The staff at MIR have been specifically instructed as to their responsibility toward the children in situations that might necessitate caring for the children's needs for an extended period of time. Designated staff will remain at the school until all children are reunited with their families. Parents will be asked to provide an extra set of clothing, food, and other items each year to help stock our emergency supplies.

Visitor Safety

For fire, earthquake, and safety reasons, it is essential that we know who is on campus at all times. Please stop by the office and let us know if you are visiting. Visitors will receive a nametag before proceeding to the classroom(s). Student visitation is allowed only when students are considering enrollment or on a case-by-case basis with teacher permission. All non-enrolled students who visit the campus unaccompanied by a parent or guardian must have a signed release form on file in the office.

Smoking and Alcohol Policy

In accordance with state law, MIR maintains a smoke-free campus. Smoking by parents, employees, guests or anyone else is prohibited on the campus at all times. Alcohol is also strictly prohibited at any MIR event *when children are present*, whether on or off campus.

Integrated Pest Management Plan

The Healthy Schools Act of 2000 was signed into law in September, 2000, and requires that all schools provide staff and parents or guardians of students with annual written notification of expected pesticide use on school sites. The annual notification will identify the active ingredient(s) in each pest control product. MIR adopted a green school plan in 2011 and pesticide use is informed by that plan.

MIR has contracted Craig & Sons Termite & Pest Control, Inc. to provide our pest control services. Craig & Sons is a locally owned business that has been providing quality termite and pest control since 1991. They are licensed by the State of California and their technicians participate in continued education to renew their licenses and deliver state-of-the-art pest control. Craig & Sons is a member of many professional pest control organizations, such as PCOC, NPMA, and EVAOR.

THE GRAPEFRUIT GROVE

A campus located in a citrus grove presents some unusual challenges for pest control. MIR has made a concerted effort to control pests using alternative methods. As you may be aware, the citrus industry in the state of California is threatened by a disease spread by the Asian Citrus Psyllid. The Psyllid has been identified in our grove, and thankfully, **there is no evidence of the disease.**

To save the rich citrus heritage of our city, the City of Redlands has mandated all citrus groves within the city limits be treated to prevent the spread of this disease. MIR has partnered with Larry Jacinto Farming to spray our groves with organic pest control products. The groves will be sprayed at least 4 times a year, but if the disease becomes more wide spread, the number of applications will increase to possibly 12 times a year. The groves will only be sprayed on the weekends, using a solution of 1% Supreme spray oil (1.5 gallons) and Entrust SC (10 oz) per acre. If you would like to see the progress of the efforts to control this pest, a map is available online at ucanr.edu/sites/ACP/Distribution_of_ACP_in_California.

WEED CONTROL

Throughout the year it is necessary to control weeds in the exterior landscape around the buildings and in the citrus grove. Our maintenance person applies a weed control product on the weekends and after school hours. Most of these applications occur during the months of February, March, May, June, August, September, and October. These products, known as Round-Up and Honcho Plus, contain glyphosate, N-(phosphonomethyl) glycine, isopropylamine salt of glyphosate (active ingredients), ethoxylated tallowamine surfactant, related organic acids of glyphosate and isopropylamine.

RODENT CONTROL

Craig & Sons provides and maintains outdoor bait stations to control unwanted rodents on campus. These bait stations are designed to prevent rodents from coming into the buildings and children from coming in contact with the bait. The bait, Contac All-Weather Blox Rodenticide, comes in the form of a block and contains Bromadiolone .005%, an anticoagulant that disrupts the recycling of vitamin K in the body. Preventing the blood from clotting in the rodent leads to death by internal hemorrhaging. Contac is less toxic to non-target animals (pets and beneficial wildlife) in both primary and secondary poisoning situations. An antidote, Vitamin K1, is readily available and there is a time factor (within 1-3 days) for treatment.

For gopher control, we use carbon monoxide fumigation and repellent bait blocks placed in the gopher tunnels. The bait blocks contain Diphacinone .005%, another anticoagulant. This product is authorized for use in a school setting by the State of California.

PEST CONTROL

Pests will always find a way into our classrooms and offices, especially with all the food and crumbs in the classrooms. MIR is making every attempt to control these common pests with minimal chemical pest control. Craig & Sons uses Tengard SFR, a broad range insecticide as well as a very effective termiticide. Tengard SFR is safe for children and pets as soon as it has dried after application. Tengard SFR contains Permethrin. Permethrin is an insecticide in the pyrethroid family. Pyrethroids are synthetic chemicals that act like natural extracts from the chrysanthemum flower. Permethrin affects the nervous system in insects, causing muscle spasms, paralysis, and death. Permethrin is more toxic to insects than it is to people and dogs. Some head lice medications and flea collars for dogs contain permethrin.

The school does not treat the interior areas of campus while school is in session. The interior areas are treated when the school is closed prior to the beginning of each school year and, when necessary, during holiday breaks. The exteriors are treated once a month on a Saturday.

If you are interested in reviewing the MIR Integrated Pest Management Plan and copies of the Material Data Sheets for the pest control products, as well as the training certifications for the technician, they are available at the front desk of the main office.

Withdrawal, Dismissal, and Refund Policy

Withdrawal Policy

You have until 5 pm on July 1 of the contract year to withdraw from the school or make changes to your child's program. You will forfeit the enrollment fee but will be released from all other financial obligations pertaining to your contract.

After 5 PM on July 1, your contract and obligation to pay all tuition for the full academic year becomes unconditional and absolute, with the following exceptions:

- 1) Withdrawal due to medical necessity of the student.
- 2) Withdrawal due to permanent relocation of the student more than 30 miles from the school.

Reasons for withdrawal must be verifiable through documentation. All other requests for withdrawal may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

In the event that you qualify for a release from your contract, a 30-day written notice is required upon leaving the school within the contracted year. You will be responsible for tuition through the end of the month in which your 30-day notice ends. Fees cannot be prorated for that final month.

Student Records

Student records are available to you upon request. All requests not made in person require your signature. If you have an outstanding account balance, this may delay the release of student records.

If you are withdrawing your child from the school, records are released after you meet with school administration and pay any outstanding balance.

Student Dismissal

MIR provides an authentic Montessori environment that meets the needs of a wide variety of children's learning styles and personalities. Still, some children may have a more difficult time in a Montessori classroom. In those cases, we work hard to make sure that accommodations are made within the Montessori context to ensure success.

Occasionally, a child does not thrive in a Montessori environment. In these cases, where an alternative placement is in the best interest of the child, the teachers, student service professionals, administration, and parents will meet to discuss the student's dismissal from school.

Discipline

Montessori philosophy regarding discipline is based on the concept of *freedom with responsibility*. Students are allowed as much freedom as they are developmentally ready for, with the expectation that they will act responsibly. Children are guided to develop an inner discipline so that they need less and less external authority.

Throughout this process, children learn to make appropriate choices and learn from the natural and logical consequences of inappropriate choices. Guidelines for behavior in the classroom are set with the greater good of the community as a focus. The physical and emotional safety of the children is always protected and behavior that threatens this is unacceptable.

Expulsion Policy

In the interest of creating a safe, non-threatening environment, possession of drugs, alcohol, or weapons at MIR is grounds for immediate expulsion. Other grounds for expulsion include aggressive or violent behavior, or any behavior that distracts the student, or other students, from making progress. These behaviors will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.