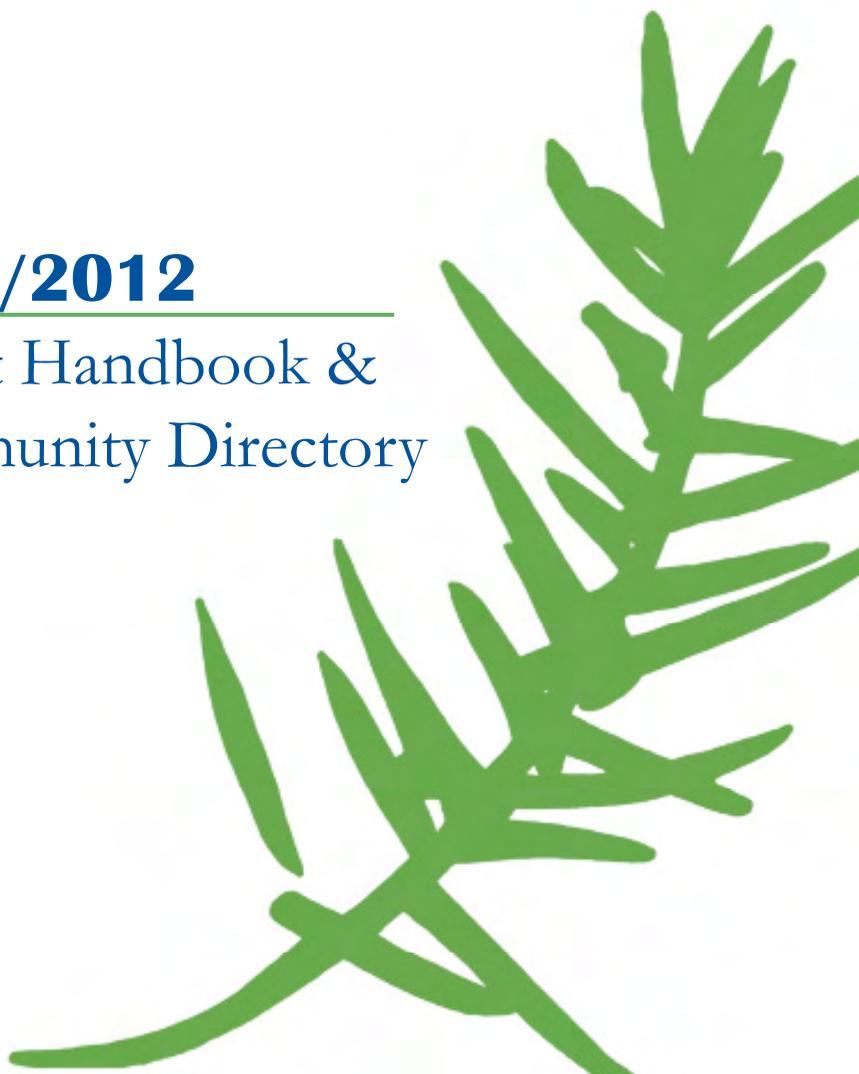


Stoneridge Children's Montessori School

**2011/2012**

Parent Handbook &  
Community Directory



## School Calendar

The full school calendar can be found online at [www.stoneridgecms.org](http://www.stoneridgecms.org). Click on “VIEW THE CALENDAR” at the top of the page. This calendar is kept fully up-to-date and is the single best place to go to learn about events for your child’s class as well as for parents. Each event has a description that can be viewed by clicking on the event.

Your view of the online calendar can be customized. One simple way is to use the “Featured Calendars” menu. For example, to see dates for CH children only, click on Featured Calendars, then Children’s House. The only dates you see will be those that apply to you and your CH child – much simpler than having to sort through many events that only pertain to families at other levels.

There are other ways to customize the online calendar for your family, and there will be opportunities to learn about the online calendar this fall.

## Faculty & Staff Directory (and Biographies)

The staff directory and biographies can be found online at [www.stoneridgecms.org](http://www.stoneridgecms.org). Click on “OUR SCHOOL” then select “FACULTY & STAFF DIRECTORY.”

You can also find the Faculty and Staff Directory on page 89 of this Handbook/ Directory.

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*The information contained in the Parent Handbook and Community Directory is for school use only. Please communicate any Directory changes to the School Secretary. Additional copies of this publication are available for purchase in the School Office. An electronic version (pdf) of the Handbook (not the Directory) will be emailed to families upon request to the School Office.*



PARENT  
HANDBOOK

## Incorporation

Stoneridge Children's Montessori School is incorporated in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as a non-profit educational institution overseen by its Board of Trustees. The School is tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of the Internal Revenue Service.

## Non-Discriminatory Statement

Stoneridge Children's Montessori School is a nonsectarian Montessori school that does not discriminate against individuals on the basis of race, creed, religion, national origin, cultural heritage, age, sex, marital status, or sexual orientation in the administration of either its admission or employment policies or procedures.

## Accreditations

Stoneridge is accredited by the Association of Independent Schools of New England (AISNE) and the American Montessori Society (AMS).

## From the Head of School

August 2011

Dear Stoneridge Families,

At the heart of good education is clear and honest communication between families and the School. This *Handbook* is designed to foster just this kind of communication. Please take the opportunity to read the *Handbook* carefully, refer to it during the year, and discuss the relevant parts with your children. Since the School serves children from toddler through grade 8, your family may find some sections more applicable than others.

The *Parent Handbook* is just one part of the School's effort to communicate with families effectively. More timely information can be found on the school's calendar; in our monthly publication, *This Month at Stoneridge* (you'll find a link to both these important resources at the very top of the School's homepage, [stoneridgecms.org](http://stoneridgecms.org) – be sure to bookmark them); and in our bi-weekly messages, *Updates and Reminders*. Making frequent use of this *Handbook*, as well as these other resources, will ensure that you are fully up-to-date on school policies and events. When the need arrives, we will also send you letters – most often, via email sent by Valerie, our Publications Coordinator.

The *Community Directory* lists information about your family. If there are any changes, please let us know right away. It is essential that you keep us informed of changes in key information (phone numbers, email addresses, etc.) so that we can contact you when needed.

I am looking forward to another wonderful school year for your family at Stoneridge.



Alan Feldman  
Head of School

P.S. Special thanks to Kathy Videtta for her careful work in producing this important school resource.



## **Part I: Key Procedures & Policies**

Arrival & Dismissal  
General Policies & Procedures  
Health Policies & Procedures  
Code Of Behavior & Discipline



## ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

### Daily Schedule

TH and CH: Children should arrive and settle in between 8:15 and 8:35.

LE, UE, and MS: Children should arrive and settle in between 8:15 and 8:30.

Toddler House	8:30 – 11:30
Toddler House Extended Day	11:30 – 3:00
Children’s House	8:30 – 11:30
Children’s House Lunch Bunch	11:30 – 1:00
Children’s House Extended Day (includes Lunch Bunch)	11:30 – 3:00
Kindergarten	8:30 – 3:00
Elementary (Lower and Upper)	8:30 – 3:00
Middle School	
(Monday through Thursday)	8:30 – 4:15
(Fridays)	8:30 – 3:00
Early Morning Care (CH-UE)	7:30 – 8:15
After-School Care (CH-UE)	3:00 – 5:30

### Promptness in the Morning

TH and CH: Children should arrive between 8:15 and 8:35. This arrival time allows children to go to their lockers, put away their belongings, change footwear, and say good-bye to their parents.

Teachers will greet children until 8:35, at which time the class routines will be fully underway.

LE, UE, and MS: Children should arrive between 8:15 and 8:25. This arrival time allows children to go to their lockers, put away their belongings, change footwear, and get themselves ready for the day. Teachers will greet children until 8:30, at which time the class routines will be fully underway.

Please be prompt in arriving each morning! While we encourage timely arrival for all children, this is especially important for children in LE, UE, and MS. When a child arrives late, he or she misses morning greeting, possibly group circle, the introduction of new materials, and most significantly, enters a classroom that is already buzzing with activity. One child’s late arrival also detracts from the experience of the other children in the class; when a teacher helps settle a late child individually, time is taken away from the other children during what is the best instructional time of the day.

The School tracks tardiness and records it on each child’s progress reports and in the permanent record. *For children who are in LE or older levels, when a child is late more than twice in any calendar month, or more than nine times during the school year, parents may be asked to meet with a member of the Administrative staff.*

### *In Case of Occasional Lateness*

TH and CH: Children who arrive at the School's front door after 8:35 should proceed directly to their classroom. Starting at 9:00, parents are requested to sign in at the Front Desk to ensure that the School knows their child is in the building.

LE, UE, and MS: Children who arrive at the School's front door after 8:30 are late and must sign in at the School Office and get a Late Pass before going to their classrooms. After 8:30, teachers at these levels will not admit a child to class without a Late Pass from the School Office.

### *Early Morning Care*

If your CH, LE, or UE student arrives regularly at school before 8:15, please register for Early Morning Care. He or she will be greeted by the Early Morning Care teacher and, after enjoying quiet early morning activities, will be walked to his or her classroom. Parents will be billed monthly for this service. Early Morning Care is available starting at 7:30 each day.

For students in the MS, the Middle School Coordinator should be notified of the need for early arrival. MS students who arrive early should go directly to the Library, where they will be able to work independently until one of their teachers arrives and opens the classroom. (There is no additional charge for MS students arriving early.)

### *After Care*

If parents know that their child will require after-school care on a regular basis, they should register for After Care. Students enrolled in CH through UE may enroll in After Care, Monday through Friday, 3:00 – 5:30. Snack is provided. With 48 hours advance notice, we will endeavor to accommodate additional children on an occasional basis. Parents must call the School Office to inquire about spaces available. Parents will be billed monthly for this service.

Children who attend After Care may not leave and then return, with one exception: children who have permission may leave to attend activities at the school, e.g., instrumental music lessons.

During the normal hours of operation for the school (3:00 to 5:30 pm), the After Care program has priority for use of the playground and Multi Purpose Room. Children who are waiting with their parents (e.g., for a sibling to finish music lessons) are asked not to use the playground or Multi Purpose Room while they are in use by the After Care program.

### *Promptness at Dismissal*

Children are dismissed by class under the supervision of their teachers to ensure that each child reaches his or her pick-up vehicle safely. If a parent or care-giver arrives more than ten minutes past dismissal time, the student will be walked to the Extended Day or After Care room, greeted by a faculty member, and properly supervised until the parent or caregiver arrives. Toddlers will be brought to their classroom to wait in their locker area. Parents are charged per hour (a minimum of one hour) and will be billed monthly for this service.

### *Inclement Weather, Delay of School, and Close of School*

To learn if the school is closed due to bad weather:

- Check your email.
- Call the main phone number and listen to the recording.
- Turn your television to channel 4 (WBZ).
- Turn your radio to am 1030 (WBZ).

The decision to close school will be made by 6 a.m. If you have not received an email message by 6:15, School will be open. Because our students live in many different communities throughout the North Shore, parents must exercise their final judgment about the safety of traveling on roads. The highest priority is always the safety, health, and well-being of our students and families.

### *Authorization to Transport Your Child*

Parents must provide the School with a list of people authorized to pick up their child. No child will be dismissed to anyone other than the parents or guardians without written permission. This rule is designed for your child's protection. To avoid both frustration and inconvenience, please provide the School with an accurate list of people authorized to pick up your child at dismissal.

### *Parking Lot and Traffic Flow*

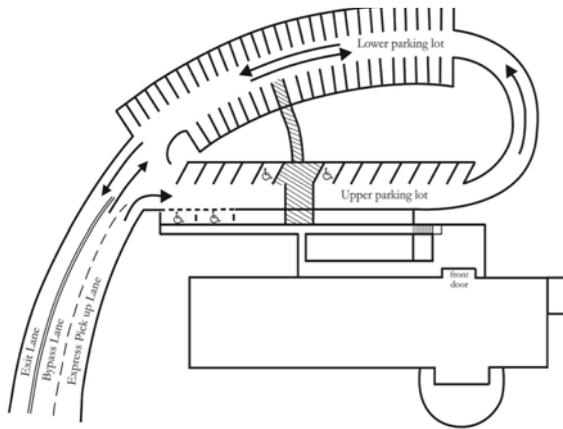
Drop-off and pick-up times are busy and potentially dangerous. Please drive slowly and observe established traffic patterns. In the School parking lot, pedestrians have the right-of-way at all times, and drivers should take care to defer to anyone, especially children, walking in the parking lot. When children are present, cell phones may not be used in the school parking lot (see page 24.) **The safety of our children depends on all drivers driving slowly and being vigilant.**

### *Pick Up Procedures*

The road that leads to the School's parking area has three lanes: two lanes entering the school parking area and one exiting it. Most families will continue to use the lane to the far right to enter the "express pick-up lane" in order to collect their children at the side of the curb. Parents who prefer to walk into the school to meet their children, meet with teachers and/or administrators, etc. should use the middle lane to by-pass the vehicles that are waiting on the far right and park in either the upper (close to the building) or lower (far from the building) parking lot.

### *Drop Off Procedures*

Please respect the spaces reserved for Handicapped Parking. **There is no parking along the sidewalk in front of the school.** This lane is reserved for cars that are dropping off older students and immediately exiting the parking lot. Please do not allow your child to go into the "water retention basin" between parking lots.



## GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### Attendance and Absences

Please respect the School calendar and your child's educational process by honoring arrival and dismissal times and periods when School is in session.

Daily attendance is necessary to ensure that each student has an opportunity to gain a thorough understanding of subject areas and to benefit from continuity of program. While absence due to illness is advised, absence for other reasons is strongly discouraged.

Parents are asked to plan family vacations in alignment with the School calendar so their children are present when school is in session. We recognize that family vacations can be educational; however, students (particularly those in UE and MS) who are absent while School is in session fail to benefit from important group and individual study. Further, when a child has been absent for a family vacation, catching up with classroom work places additional demands on both student and teachers and takes precious teacher time away from other children in the classroom.

We recognize that family emergencies can occur while school is in session (e.g. the illness of a grandparent) which may require some days of absence. In this case, please contact your child's teachers who will discuss with you how to minimize the impact of your child's absence on his or her work.

### Promptness in the Morning (please see page 9)

### Lunch

The School does not maintain a cafeteria and is not licensed to provide food to its students. All full-day students bring their own lunches. We ask that parents provide a well-balanced meal that minimizes salt, sugar, and additives such as artificial colors and flavorings. **Soft drinks, candy, and gum are prohibited.** Fresh fruits, vegetables, and unprocessed foods are encouraged. Good health, proper nutrition, and food preparation are a part of our practical life curriculum at all levels of program. Please check with your child's classroom teacher regarding the availability of a microwave oven for re-heating or warming student lunches.

### Snacks

In the Toddler House and Children's House Programs, snack is offered each day during the morning. Parents of children in each class take turns providing simple, nutritious snacks for their child's class throughout the school year. Food preparation and practical life skills are a part of our curriculum. We ask that Toddler House and Children's House parents provide the makings for a healthy, well-balanced snack that provides students with an opportunity to assist in preparation. Classroom teachers plan the snack schedule and notify parents in advance. Teachers discuss the specifics of their Snack Program and distribute guidelines at Back-to-School Night. Any special snack arrangements should be made directly with the classroom teacher. *Note: in a classroom where a child/ren have multiple or life-threatening allergies, teachers will provide parents in that classroom with detailed guidelines for "safe" snacks.*

Lower Elementary, Upper Elementary, and Middle School students are encouraged to bring their own nutritious snack in their lunch boxes; soft drinks, candy, and gum are prohibited. Fresh fruits, vegetables, and unprocessed foods are encouraged.

### Peanut Policy

Stoneridge is a "peanut safe" school with some classrooms designated as "peanut and nut-free." The teachers of every classroom will work with their children and parents to understand nut-safe practices throughout the school; these include: (a) washing hands after eating, and (b) wiping down tables and counters before and after eating snacks and lunches. Teachers in nut-free classrooms will work with their children and parents to understand nut-free procedures; these include screening ingredient labels. For the school policy on life-threatening allergies, see page 20.

The designation "peanut and nut-free classroom" is posted prominently at the entrance to these classrooms; there is also a poster in the lobby that states which classes have this designation.

### Dress and Footwear

In general, students' clothing should be comfortable, allow freedom of movement, and enable the wearer to engage fully in daily outdoor activities in all but the most extreme weather conditions. We strongly suggest foul weather gear in the rain, layers of clothing, and hats and mittens in the winter, and extra clothing for the changeable weather in fall and spring.

Toddler House and Children's House students are required to keep a complete change of clothes (two complete sets for the Toddler House student) at school, beginning the first day of school. Soiled clothes will be sent home for laundering and must return to school the following day. Slippers are required footwear in the classroom for all students (optional for Middle School). Slippers should have a sturdy sole that will protect the child's foot outdoors in the case of emergency or fire drill. Open backed, clog-type slippers and slippers with big, floppy decorations are strongly discouraged.

All students (Toddler House through Middle School) are required to keep a pair of sneakers at the school for our Physical Education Program. The sneakers remain at school in the classroom bin outside the Multi Purpose Room.

Students are required to wear footwear (shoes, sneakers, or slippers) at all times.

### *Clothing Considerations for Younger Children*

Please encourage your child to choose clothing that he or she can easily manage. Beltless pants are appropriate for children under four years old. Snaps may be easier to manage than buttons; velcro may be easier to manage than laces. Care of self and independence in toileting and dressing are curricular goals in many of our programs. Please support our effort to help your child to do it him- or herself.

### *Clothing Considerations for Older Children*

While Stoneridge does not have a formal dress code, parents should help students to use their best discretion in choosing clothing that is and is not appropriate for school. For our oldest students, dress should be modest and in keeping with the purposes of a school (e.g., very short skirts or shorts are not appropriate). Clothing should be in good repair. Commercial advertisements on t-shirts are discouraged. Hats may be worn to school, but not in school. When clothing is deemed inappropriate, the classroom teacher will talk to the child or call the parent to discuss the issue.

### *Potty Training for Children's House*

All children are expected to be potty trained when they enter Children's House. (With our youngest children, the teachers understand that occasional accidents may occur.) During the summer, parents of three-year olds receive a note asking them to let the CH teachers know if they anticipate that their child may experience a problem with toileting. If a family anticipates this problem, they are asked to talk to the teacher in advance of the opening of school. Teachers will work with the family to support the child in making the transition to potty training.

### *Lockers*

Each student at Stoneridge has a locker outside his or her classroom for the safe storage of personal items such as clothing, books, and lunch.

### *Lost and Found*

We strongly suggest that you label all of your child's clothing. When identified, a labeled piece of clothing can be placed back in the student's locker and returned home. Lost and found items are kept temporarily in a basket underneath the family mailboxes. Please check this basket regularly. When items accumulate, they will be displayed for one week on tables in the lobby. Items that are unclaimed after that week will be donated.

### *Birthday Celebrations*

Birthdays are landmarks to be cherished as special days for each child. Most classrooms have time-honored birthday customs already in place. Please check with your child's teacher for details and to avoid conflicts with previously scheduled activities. Classroom teachers will also give you guidelines for food brought into the classroom for parties.

We also request your cooperation in sending invitations to off-campus birthday parties through the mail and not through school mailboxes. We ask that parties always be inclusive.

### *The Birthday Book Tradition*

Stoneridge has a school tradition whereby students donate a book to our Library as a part of their birthday celebration. The Stoneridge Parents Association (S.P.A.) established this Birthday Book Tradition many years ago to help children learn the value and pleasure of giving and to enrich our Library's collection. Each donation is recognized through a bookplate that is attached to the inside front cover of the book. If you'd like to donate a book to our Library, contact our Librarian who will be happy to provide some recommendations from the Library "wish list."

### *Gifts for Faculty and Staff – Classroom Gifts*

Our goal is to encourage our students' natural inclination towards kindness and generosity without families feeling guilt, obligation, or competitiveness around the best way to say thank you.

1. *Holiday gifts for teachers:* If a family wants to express appreciation for a teacher, we welcome them to do so with a simple present (e.g., a handmade card, child's drawing, or note). Class Parents are asked not to organize gifts at the winter holidays for teachers.
2. *End-of-year classroom gifts:* At the end of the year, Class Parents may ask teachers if they have a request for their classroom. They will pass this information to the other parents in the class, affording them the opportunity to contribute. When informing parents, a low-key email is preferred over face-to-face or telephone solicitation.

### *Application to Other Schools*

In the fall of the eighth-grade year, our oldest students will visit secondary schools. Some families visit only their local public high school, and others will visit independent day schools and/or boarding schools. One member of the school staff, designated as Secondary School Advisor, will work with all the families during the year to ensure that this process happens smoothly for everyone. The Secondary School Advisor will send information starting and then meet with families to assist in this process. The Secondary School Advisor will also coordinate the School's part of the application process. Reference forms should be given directly to the Middle School teachers, usually in early December. Please allow sufficient time for teachers to complete these forms.

While the program at our School is designed to serve children through Middle School years, we recognize that some families may also want to consider other schools prior to eighth grade. Just

as with our eighth graders, we view the process of “applying out” to other schools as an opportunity for the School to support all families in considering these options. If you decide to pursue an application to another independent school or transfer to a public school, we ask that you make an appointment to talk with the Head of School or Assistant to the Head. This meeting will be an opportunity for us to talk about your child and your educational choices, and for us to learn about the School from your perspective. Please call the School Office to set up this appointment.

If you have forms from other schools for teachers to complete, bring them to this meeting or drop them off at the School Office after the meeting. The teachers (up through Upper Elementary) request that they not receive school forms directly, but rather receive them through the School Office. After the faculty fill them out, the School Office will track the forms and ensure they are returned on time to the schools to which you are applying or transferring.

When you are applying for your child to attend other schools, you must request in writing the release of school records to the other schools. Our School will send written assessments from the last two semesters and results of standardized testing, unless specifically requested otherwise.

### *Confidentiality of Records and Procedures*

Information contained in a child’s record is privileged and confidential. The School will not distribute or release information in a child’s record to anyone not directly related to implementing the program plan for the child without the written consent of the child’s parents or guardians. The School will notify the parents or guardians if a child’s record is subpoenaed.

The child’s record shall be available to the child’s parents at reasonable times upon their written request, and the School will respond to the request promptly. Upon such request for access, the child’s entire record, regardless of the physical location of its parts, shall be made available. The child’s record shall be available only to his or her teachers and the administrators of the School without parental consent. A child’s records may not be duplicated nor be distributed except by authorized staff members.

Parents may request in writing that School records be released to outside parties (e.g., other schools, evaluators); the School maintains a written account in each child’s record indicating to whom and when information from that record has been given. Each person disseminating or releasing to outside parties information contained in a child’s record, in whole or in part, shall upon each instance of dissemination or release record the following: his or her name, signature, position, the date, the portions of the record which were disseminated or released, the purpose of such dissemination or release, and the signature of the person authorizing the dissemination or release. Such log shall be available to the child’s parents and administrators responsible for record maintenance. Copies of records shall be available at no cost to the parents and others authorized for their receipt.

Copies of records shall be available at no cost to the parents and others authorized for their receipt.

## HEALTH POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### Policies

The School's health care policies and procedures have been developed in partnership with a consulting nurse and physician and are reviewed and revised as appropriate. The School retains a consulting nurse to confer with teachers and parents about individual children's health issues; to consult with teachers about the curriculum issues related to health and healthy living; and on occasion participate in health-related workshops with students and their families.

### Absence Due to Illness

While a child's illness can be inconvenient to parents, children who are ill must remain at home. Students must remain at home if any of the following conditions are present:

1. Fever
2. Vomiting
3. Diarrhea
4. Discharge from the eyes, nose, or ears
5. Sore throat
6. Persistent cough
7. Unexplained rash
8. Contagious disease. Parents should call the school immediately if a student becomes ill with a contagious disease (such as conjunctivitis, chicken pox, fifth disease, strep throat), so that we may alert the school community and notify other parents as to risks of exposure.

The School must be alerted immediately if a child has head lice and/or nits.

If your child is ill, please notify the School of his or her absence prior to 8:30 a.m. or as soon as possible.

**A student must be free of fever without medication for 24 hours and/or must not have vomited for at least 24 hours before returning to school.**

### Caring for Ill Students

Should a student become ill during the school day or arrive at School too ill to participate in the activities of the day, the child will remain in the Health Office or Administrative Suite while the School contacts the child's parents and requests that the child be taken home. If the child's parents cannot be located, the School will contact the people identified on the child's Emergency Contact Form and, again, request that the child be taken home. Please provide the School with an accurate list of people authorized to pick up your child in the case of illness and emergency.

### Expectations During Pandemic Alerts

When the School and families have been notified about an actual or potential pandemic (e.g., N1H1 Flu [Swine Flu]), the School will act promptly to remove students with symptoms from contact with other students and staff. The full cooperation and understanding of parents is expected (and appreciated).

### Medication

Most medications are now available in a time-release formula, so it is unusual for children to bring medications to school. Faculty and staff of the School are prepared to administer medications, when needed, under the direction of the consulting nurse. When children go on overnight trips, faculty are prepared to administer medications as needed.

Both prescription and nonprescription drugs must be delivered to the teacher in the original container, accompanied by a signed Medication Authorization Form from the parents, and in the case of prescription drugs, thorough instructions from the doctor describing the patient's name, dosage, frequency with which the medication must be administered, and duration of use. **Please do not put medication (including Tylenol, Benadryl, cough drops, or vitamins) in a child's lunch box or otherwise rely on the child to deliver the medication to the teacher or self-administer medication.** Once the teacher receives the medication, it must be stored in either a lock box or the refrigerator and dispensed according to written instructions and health regulations. No medication, including Tylenol and Benadryl, will be given to students without written permission from the parents.

### Health Examination & Immunization Requirements

The Massachusetts School Health Record must be filled out by your child's physician and returned prior to the first day of school.

Please note that Stoneridge Children's Montessori School does not conduct or require the health examinations that the Commonwealth of Massachusetts requires for all public school students. We recommend that you consult with your health care provider, your school committee, or your local board of health for information about these examinations and to ensure these exams are carried out for your children.

The following Massachusetts statute applies to all children in grades pre-kindergarten through twelve:

No child ... shall be admitted to the School except upon presentation of a physician's certificate that the child has been successfully immunized against diphtheria, tetanus, measles and poliomyelitis, hepatitis B and other such communicable diseases as may be specified from time to time by the Department of Public Health.

The Commonwealth does provide for exemptions for medical or religious reasons. A signed letter from the parents must be submitted to the School Office for the student's record file in the instance of an exemption.

In addition, the Commonwealth requires (a) testing of lead in the blood and (b) one dose of varicella vaccine, or a note signed by a physician stating that the child has already had chicken pox, for all children who are 19 months of age or older, and who are born on or after January 1, 1997. Parents must submit records of their children's immunizations to the School with physician's signature and work to maintain current school health records for their child.

### Emergency Health Care Procedures

Many Stoneridge Children's Montessori School staff are trained in emergency first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). On every field trip away from school grounds, at least one participating teacher is certified in first aid. When an accident or injury occurs, staff are immediately available for emergency intervention.

In case of accident or sudden onset of illness at school, School staff will determine the severity of the accident or illness and determine the course of action according to Emergency Care Procedures. In the case of a medical emergency, the student's physician is notified first. The parents are notified next. If the child's parents cannot be located, the School will contact the people identified on the child's Emergency Contact Form. Staff will apply first aid as deemed necessary and appropriate.

In the case of a life-threatening emergency, your child will be transported directly to the nearest hospital (Beverly Hospital on Herrick Street in Beverly). An ambulance will be called to transport the child to the hospital, and at least one staff member will accompany the child while another staff member continues to attempt to notify the parents and/or emergency contact person. Staff will carry the "Emergency Information Form and Authorization/Consent to Medical Treatment" whenever someone other than a parent transports a student.

### **It is imperative that the emergency contact information in the office be kept up-to-date.**

Emergency room personnel at many local hospitals, including Beverly Hospital, no longer honor the usual blanket permission for treatment of emergency illness or trauma at school. Only life-saving emergency care may be rendered without expressed parental consent on a specific occasion. Other medical care, necessary as it may be, requires parental consent for each individual visit to a health care facility. Therefore, a parent or guardian must be available to decide about or to give permission for the medical treatment of his/her child on any occasion that it may be needed.

### Life-Threatening Food Allergies (See Peanut Policy Statement, page 13)

In order to minimize the risk of accidental exposure to foods that can cause life-threatening allergic reactions, Stoneridge has developed the following policy to provide a safe environment for children who are allergic to certain foods. This policy is based on the experience of many schools, including our own, and the recommendations of experts in this area of child development. The successful implementation of this policy requires that the School staff and parents work together to ensure the safety and well-being of all students.

### General statements:

1. The School aims to be a welcoming and safe environment for children with Life-Threatening Allergies (LTAs) of many kinds, including food allergies. The School will make accommodations for individual students consistent with the School's program.
2. Parents of LTA children bear the ultimate responsibility for deciding what their children eat. There are several different ways that they may chose to exercise this responsibility; some of these are specified below.
3. The School and parents will work to educate the child in self-management of his/her food allergy, to the maximum extent possible for his/her developmental level.
4. Teachers or other School staff have the responsibility for understanding and following the School's policies, but teachers, staff and the School cannot be responsible for outcomes when these policies are followed.
5. Classroom teachers and the School staff are responsible for working with parents to adapt classroom procedures for each child's needs. These adaptations must be consistent with the School's program and are subject to review by the Head of School.
6. A consulting nurse and/or physician provides guidance in creating policies in this area, ensuring the training and supervision of School staff.

### Specific Family Responsibilities

1. Notify the School of the child's allergy in advance of the school year, or as soon as the child is diagnosed.
2. Provide the School with a Food Allergy Action Plan, reviewed by the allergist, that guides response to an emergency, includes a photo of the child and instructions about when to call 911.
3. Provide written medical documentation, instructions, and medications as directed by a physician, using the Food Allergy Action Plan as a guide.
4. Review with the school staff the procedures that accommodates the child's need throughout the school, including in the classroom, in common areas, in after-care programs, during school sponsored activities.
5. Educate the child in self-management of their food allergy, to the maximum extent possible for their developmental level. Children's education includes:
  - safe and unsafe foods
  - strategies for avoiding exposure to unsafe food
  - symptoms of allergic reactions
  - how and when to tell an adult they may be having an allergy-related problem
6. Review policies/procedures with the school staff, the child's physician, and the child (if age appropriate) after a reaction has occurred.
7. Provide and update emergency contact information.

### School Responsibilities

1. Offer training and education to school staff that describes: what foods cause food allergies; how to avoid reactions; the typical symptoms of an allergic reaction; and what medications are used to control a reaction.
2. Review the health records submitted by parents and physicians.
3. Review the Food Allergy Action Plans to assure that the plan is clear, is understood by key staff, that key staff are trained as needed, and that needed materials are located in appropriate areas (and clearly labeled).
4. Designate school staff and ensure their proper training to administer medication in accordance with the state nursing laws governing the administration of emergency medications.
5. Follow federal and state laws and regulations regarding sharing medical information about the student.
6. Maintain an Individual Health Care Plan for any school student identified with a potentially life-threatening allergy in conjunction with the student's parent/guardian and primary care provider and/or allergy specialist.
7. Educate parents about the foods that may not be brought into the classroom (e.g., no products containing nuts are allowed in a room with a nut-allergic child).
8. Review and update this policy as needed.

### Implementation plans

The simplest implementation plan, recommended by the School, is that any child with a LTA eats only the food that his/her family sends in. This food is labeled in a way that clearly identifies the child and kept in a designated area. This plan has the advantage that the child's school experience helps build the child's independence; s/he knows that food offered in public settings is never permissible. Rather than children being asked to develop school and non-school behaviors, children learn one set of behaviors that work everywhere. *Note: in a classroom where a child/ren have multiple or life-threatening allergies, teachers will provide parents in that classroom with detailed guidelines for "safe" snacks.*

One common adaptation, often used as the child gets older: children are able to identify some categories of food, e.g., fruit and cheese, that never cause problems; and they eat these freely; other categories, e.g., baked goods, they never eat away from home but instead substitute family-provided snacks. We will work with families if there are needs specific to the child or the family, in accordance with the general statements listed above.

### Policy on Child Abuse and Neglect

The policy of Stoneridge Children's Montessori School concerning child abuse and neglect complies with and conforms to the Massachusetts Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Statute, Chapter 119, Section 51A, relevant sections of which are as follows:

“Any...public or private school teacher, education administrator, guidance or family counselor...who, in his professional capacity shall have reasonable cause to believe that a child under the age of eighteen years is suffering serious physical or emotional injury resulting from abuse inflicted upon him including sexual abuse, or from neglect, including malnutrition...shall immediately report such condition to the department (Department of Children and Families) by oral communication and by making a written report within forty-eight hours after such oral communication;...whenever such person so required to report is a member of the staff of a...school or facility, he shall immediately notify (the Head of School), whereupon such person in charge or his said agent shall then become responsible to make the report in the manner required by this section. Any such person so required to make such oral and written reports who fails to do so shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.”

In all instances of suspected physical, sexual, mental, or emotional abuse or neglect, the staff has no discretion whatsoever and must report the suspected abuse to the Head of School who in turn is obliged to report the suspected abuse to the appropriate Commonwealth authorities.

## **CODE OF BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE**

### *Discipline and Montessori Education*

Maria Montessori observed that true discipline is achieved through the kind of purposeful activity that one “inwardly desires and ... has a natural inclination for... the kind of work that gives order to a person’s life and opens up to it infinite possibilities of growth.” Discipline in a Montessori classroom comes through the prepared environment, proper use of didactic materials, and a thorough understanding of the child’s developmental needs.

Most behavioral issues are resolved through the following techniques:

- Prepared Environment – If the prepared environment is creative, emotionally satisfying, and intellectually stimulating, children will have many opportunities for self-development and will develop self-discipline. At Stoneridge, the teachers prepare the classroom environment to encourage social, emotional, and intellectual growth and provide ample opportunity for “work.” The teachers also employ several techniques that encourage the development of self-discipline including routine, clear delineation of limits, fair application of rules, consistency, open communication, encouragement of positive behavior, and logical consequences. In some classrooms this work takes place in the Peace Corner – a quiet area designed for reflection, meditation, and conflict resolution.

- Modeling of Positive Behavior – The School’s teachers are gifted, dedicated Montessorians, skilled observers, and well-versed in child development. All members of the staff model the type of behavior that they wish to instill in children.
- Self Esteem – Children with high self-esteem believe in their own inherent goodness and the goodness of others and are less likely to engage in negative behavior. At Stoneridge, the teachers foster children’s self-esteem through demonstrating daily respect for each and every child, delineating limits and applying rules fairly.

If a student consistently disregards the rules by which the community has agreed to abide, the teacher seeks the underlying causes of the behavior, assists the student in developing an understanding of the inappropriateness of the action, and helps the child to seek constructive alternatives. If such behavior continues, then the teacher requests a meeting with the Head of School who, in consultation with others, observes the child in the classroom. Staff involved with the child will meet to evaluate the child and develop a plan for dealing with the behavior. Shortly thereafter, a meeting between the teachers, administrators, and parents is scheduled and through the home/school partnership the adults develop a plan for helping the child to change his or her behavior. Outside resources may be recommended or required. Failure to resolve the problem could result in the child having to be temporarily or permanently removed from the classroom and/or withdrawn from the School.

### Biting Policy

Biting cannot and will not be tolerated. When a bite occurs, the biter is told that biting people is unacceptable behavior. If a student is biting in response to another’s aggression, a measured negotiation between the children and the classroom teacher will ensue. If the biting continues and becomes a pattern of behavior, any one or more of the following measures may be taken:

- Interventions to help the child modify his or her behavior
- Conferences with the child’s parents
- Evaluation by outside professionals
- Removal of the child from the classroom temporarily or permanently at the recommendation of the classroom teacher and the decision of the Head of School.

We believe that the growth and development of the child must be the focus in all observations, discussions, and disciplinary actions. However, we also recognize that sometimes even the best efforts may be unsuccessful and that in order to preserve the climate of respect for others, ensure the safety of all of the children, and facilitate learning, additional measures may be required.

### Policy on Bullying

*The School will not tolerate any form of bullying (including cyber-bullying), nor will we*

*tolerate retaliation against any person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses bullying.*

As a Montessori school, our policy and procedures on bullying are deeply woven into our identity and into our curriculum at each level. We understand that our mission commits us to helping each child develop to his/her full potential in a safe and nurturing environment; therefore, we promote respect for oneself, respect for others, and respect for the environment.

Bullying has no place in this community; it is prohibited on school grounds and at school-sponsored events, activities, functions, and programs. It is also prohibited on school-sponsored trips (including exchange programs), and through use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by the School. The School's Bullying policy is intended (1) to prevent bullying (including cyber-bullying) among our students; (2) to encourage students and their parents to have confidence in the School's procedures and to come forward promptly whenever a student is subject to conduct that is prohibited by this or any other School policy; and (3) to guide appropriate responses for both the aggressor and the target when they are found to be warranted.

For the School's full bullying policy or to print a copy of the Incident Reporting Form, go to: [www.stoneridgecms.org](http://www.stoneridgecms.org) > Our School > Policies and Procedures.

### *Other Serious Issues*

Stoneridge has had the spirit and the character which has precluded the need to delineate more serious disciplinary behaviors, such as fighting, harassment (sexual or other), bullying, possession or use of illegal drugs, tobacco, alcohol, weapons, inappropriate text or digital materials, theft, academic cheating, and destruction of property. Such offenses will be addressed immediately.

### *Cell Phones and Other Handheld Digital Devices*

The School aims to create a community of students, teachers, and families which is cohesive and appreciative of all other members of the community. While technology has become an important communication tool in our society, it can also interfere with good interpersonal communication, and therefore, with our goals of being a cohesive and appreciative community. Cell phone use may at times also create safety concerns, e.g., parents using cell phones while in their cars.

### *Students:*

We ask families to keep students' cell phones and other handheld digital devices (e.g., personal music players and games) at home. *If it is necessary to have a cell phone or other handheld digital device at school (e.g., a cell phone to help communicate with parents after school), the*

*device shall be turned off while on school grounds (including while on school trips) and kept out-of-sight in a child's locker.* This prohibition of use at school includes the time at school before school starts and after school finishes for the day. Please note that all classrooms have telephones, and children who have a legitimate need to make a phone call may do so using a school phone with the permission of a teacher or staff person. Any violation of this policy on cell phone use may result in the device being taken away (to be returned to a parent). A second offense will necessitate a meeting between the student, the parents, and the Head of School. One exception to this policy: students in UE and MS may be requested to bring in personal music players to use as part of their work in Music class.

### Parents:

We ask parents not to use cell phones on the School grounds or School trips when children are present or when driving a vehicle. In particular:

- Cell phones should not be used in the driveway or parking lot when children are present. Cell phones are distractions, and the safety of the children demands that parents not use cell phones when driving a car in our parking lot and children are present. When you arrive early for pickup and children have not yet appeared, cell phone use is permitted. When children appear, please discontinue cell phone use immediately. Similarly, parents are free to use cell phones in the parking lot after drop off when no children are around.
- Cell phones should not be used in the hallways of the school. Please, no exceptions!
- Under no circumstances may drivers use cell phones (or any other distracting electronic device) while driving on a school-sponsored trip. Exception: if you need to check on directions or report a problem, please pull off the road to use your cell phone.

### Computer and Internet Use Policy for Students

Computers are available for Lower Elementary students in the library, and in the classroom for all Upper Elementary students. Middle School students bring their own Apple laptop computers to school. Children learn the skills they need to be productive technology users in all areas of the curriculum. The School uses Apple laptops and a wireless network.

*The Internet* – The Internet is a vast network, linking computers around the world. It has great potential both for use and abuse. This policy exists to help ensure that students use this valuable resource in a safe and appropriate manner. All computer use at the school and Internet access done through the School must be consistent with and in support of the School's curricular guidelines and educational objectives.

*Student Responsibility* – Each student is expected to take individual responsibility for his or her appropriate use of the Internet. While all student use of the Internet is to be conducted under adult supervision, adults are not expected to monitor student use at every moment.

*Internet Access is a Privilege* – Internet access through the School is a privilege. School officials may revoke a student’s privilege if it is abused. Inappropriate conduct via Stoneridge’s Internet access system will be subject to disciplinary action in conformity with the School’s rules and local and federal laws.

*Administrators’ Access to Student Files* – Uses of Stoneridge’s Internet access system are not private. School authorities may examine all student computer files and records, including files on the School computers and on their own computers when brought to school. Administrators will cooperate in providing access to law enforcement authorities when required.

*System Security and Resource Limits* – Students are expected to follow procedures and guidelines that are given to students to protect the security of the School’s computer system and respect its resource limits, including rules regarding downloading software and files.

*Network Etiquette* – Students are expected to follow rules of Internet network etiquette, as well as any rules that apply to their particular classroom. These include acting respectfully towards others and using language that is not offensive.

*Internet Filtering & Monitoring Practices* – In order to help provide safe Internet access for all students and in accordance with the Federal Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA), there is limited filtering in place designed to block inappropriate websites. However, no filtering is 100% effective. Stoneridge will make all reasonable efforts to monitor the online activities of minors while using computers.

*Unacceptable Uses* – The following uses of Stoneridge Internet access are unacceptable for students:

- Cyberbullying – see Policy on Bullying, page 24.
- Accessing, transmitting, or receiving obscene, pornographic, or illegal material.
- Accessing social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace.
- Using technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by the School to engage in cyber-bullying.
- Engaging in cyber-cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is taking material created by others and presenting it as if it were one’s own. Any school policies on cheating, cyber cheating, and/or plagiarism are applicable to students’ use of the Internet.
- Infringing copyrights, including software and information in text or visual format.
- Participating in commercial or political activities that are not directly related to the educational purposes of Stoneridge Children’s Montessori School.
- Accessing chat rooms, engaging in instant messaging, or posting to bulletin board services.

- Posting or filling out forms with private or personal information about yourself or information about another person.
- Attempting to access another person's files without permission.
- Receiving or sending email from personal home accounts.
- Tampering with computer hardware or software, unauthorized entry into computers, and knowledgeable vandalism such as transferring viruses or destruction of someone else's computer files.

*Unacceptable Behaviors* – The following behaviors are unacceptable, using any medium at any time:

- Communicating abusive or harassing messages to others or about others
- Distributing pictures of others without their consent

Please refer to the School's Policy on Bullying (page 24).

*Disclaimer of Liability* – Stoneridge disclaims all liability for the content of material that a student may access on the Internet, for any damages suffered in the course of or as a result of the student's Internet use, and for any other consequences of a student's Internet use.

*User Agreement* – At the beginning of the school year, students and parents at Middle School and Upper Elementary levels will be asked to sign a user agreement.



## **Part II: Parents' Responsibilities**

Partnership With Parents  
The Stoneridge Partnership  
Admission, Enrollment & Financial Aid  
Tuition, Fees & Payment Schedules



## PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

Maria Montessori wrote at length about the role of the parents and the family in the education of a child. Parents and teachers alike must work together in service of the child to provide an environment that corresponds to his or her developmental needs and satisfies his or her creative impulses. The support that the child needs comes in a consistent approach to learning that extends beyond home or school and into everyday living.

### What's Happening?

Keeping up-to-date with school events is a key parent responsibility. To help insure that parents have access to accurate and timely information, the School uses the following modes of communications.

- *This Month at Stoneridge* is our monthly publication. Parents receive an email notice (usually the last Thursday of the month) that includes a link to the online version of the newsletter. A paper copy is always available on the table in the front lobby as well. The newsletter contains a detailed overview of the events for the coming month, a column written by the Head of School, and articles by faculty about their class activities and by parents about various topics of interest (e.g., a summary of a recent parent education event). We strongly urge parents to print out a copy of this newsletter each month and post it in your kitchen.
- The Stoneridge online calendar is accessible from the School's website ([www.stoneridgecms.org](http://www.stoneridgecms.org)) and is kept fully up-to-date. Please bookmark the calendar and refer to it often.
- A sign along the driveway is used to help give parents a reminder right before the most important events occur.
- An email sent to parents, titled "Updates and Reminders."
- There are bulletin boards in the lobby (adjacent to Pat's window) where information is also posted. A parent volunteer works with the School's administration to keep this area updated and responsive to parent questions.
- Parent mailboxes are located in the lobby and are available for the distribution of information between the School and the parents. Parents may use these mailboxes for responding to School notices or for personal notes. However, distribution of any notices, solicitations, advertisements, or political announcements requires permission from the School and will generally be allowed only when these items relate to the purposes of the School (e.g., advertising School events).

### Communication With Your Child's Teachers

At Stoneridge, our goal is to work with parents to meet the needs of their children at each stage of their development. In order to accomplish this, the parents, teachers, and administrators must maintain close communication with each other. Teachers check their email (and voicemail) before and after school each day and typically respond on the same day. While it is a wonderful resource, email does have limitations. For example, in the event that your family is dealing with an

emotionally charged issue, we strongly encourage you to address it in person, with your child's teacher or the Head of School. Email, if used at all in these cases, is best used as a prelude to a face-to-face meeting. All administrative staff are available on email on a regular basis.

*Note: Some teachers do encourage a telephone conversation or face-to-face conferences with parents. In all cases, your child's teacher(s) will let you know the best way to communicate with them at the Back-to-School Night at the beginning of the school year.*

### Important Learning Opportunities for Parents

Throughout the year, there are a number of scheduled opportunities that enable parents to participate in their child's schooling, learn more about Montessori education, and communicate with teachers. Our teachers and administrators work hard to make these events interesting, relevant, and enlightening. While we encourage families to attend as many of the following events as possible, there are some events which are deemed of greatest importance, and these are marked by the "pine bough" icon in our publications. For our online calendar, where icons are not an option, we add the words "Pine Bough" after the titles of these events. We ask parents to note these events on their calendars at the beginning of the school year and to plan to attend them. (See *The Stoneridge Partnership* policy statement, pages 36-37.)

 *Back-to-School Night* – this important parent-only event is scheduled at the very beginning of the school year for each class. Parents will visit their child's classroom and meet with the teachers to learn about the curriculum and goals for the year.

 *New Parents Dinner* – a wonderful opportunity for new parents to meet and socialize with the Board of Trustees and the School's administration during a cocktail hour and dinner. A genuinely enjoyable evening for everyone.

 *Parent/Teacher Conferences* – Conferences are available throughout the academic year. Twice a year, once in the fall and once in the winter, several days are set aside specifically for the purpose of consultation. Discussion during Parent/Teacher Conferences focuses on the child's social and emotional development and academic progress. It is an opportunity for both parents and teachers to ask questions, raise concerns, and engage in the open communication that is so fundamental to a strong home/school partnership. Accordingly, both parents (if applicable) should attend the conference whenever possible. If there are issues of work that prevent you from attending a conference as scheduled, the teacher will reschedule the conference for a more appropriate time. Childcare is available during many of these conference times. Signup for conferences is done online.

 *Learning Night* – The faculty at each level will present one aspect of the curriculum to parents who will have a chance to participate in typical learning activities.

 *The Journey of Discovery* – The Journey of Discovery allows parents the opportunity to experience the different Montessori environments from Toddler House all the way through Middle School. All head teachers will be on hand to help you experience the materials directly and learn how each level builds upon the previous levels. This major event, held annually, is key to understanding the Montessori educational program offered at the School. Parents are expected to attend at least once in their first two years at the School.

*Next Step Evening* – For parents whose children are changing levels, faculty invite you to their classroom to learn about the curriculum and program at the next level.

*Parent Observation* – We encourage all parents to spend a morning observing their child in the classroom. Your visit will help you learn more about your child, our classroom environments, and the Montessori experience. The School requests that observations be scheduled in advance. Observation guidelines will be provided, as will a comfortable chair in the assigned classroom. Observers are asked to remain in the classroom to which they are assigned and not float to another classroom.

As stated above, parent observation is welcomed and encouraged at anytime, but once a year, a week is set aside specifically for this purpose. During Parent Observation Week, parents are invited to schedule an observation with their child’s teacher and visit their child’s classroom for at least 45 minutes. For our younger students, these observation times are scheduled later in the year.

*Parent Education Events* – Our Parent Education Events are opportunities to learn about the unique characteristics of a Stoneridge Montessori education through the eighth grade or to learn about other topics of interest to parents.

*Special Guest Night* – Twice each year one parent is invited to work side-by-side with his or her child in the classroom. Children will show you their work and introduce you to their friends.

### *Written Communications About Your Child*

#### *Progress Reports*

Parents often ask how students are “evaluated”--and how progress is mapped--without grades, tests, and, quizzes. Each child’s progress at School is monitored daily by the teachers (through written records) and by students (through their workbooks or journals). Assessment and feedback are both constant and cumulative through self-correcting work, collaborative learning, and interaction with teachers. Elementary and Middle School students also participate in frequent

one-on-one meetings with teachers to review the current week's work and formulate a plan for the coming week. In addition to the information exchanged through Parent/Teacher Conferences, a written assessment of a child's development is communicated to the parents twice during the school year, once in winter and once in spring; for MS students, written assessments are communicated three times during the school year.

### *Standardized Testing*

Standardized testing is important for a number of reasons. First, standardized testing provides educators with an additional feedback on both the strengths and weaknesses of a child. Second, standardized testing is a part of our culture and a part of our lives. The School recognizes that its students must be familiar with, practiced in, and skilled at standardized testing because of the challenges that they will meet through a competitive secondary school admission processes. The School regards standardized testing as a part of its Practical Life curriculum. Finally, Stoneridge uses the test results to assess its curriculum in a number of different ways, including comparing our results with national norms.

At Stoneridge, students take standardized tests beginning in the spring of third grade (end of Lower Elementary). Students in grades 3 through 7 take the Stanford Achievement Tests for one week in April or May. In addition, all Middle School students (students in grades 7 and 8) take the Secondary School Admission Test (SSAT) in December or March of each year, whether or not they are applying to an independent school. Parents are responsible for registering their children for the SSAT and should specifically request that copies of the results be sent to the School.

Stanford testing results are delivered to the School over the summer, and faculty review the results in September as part of their preparation for the school year. Test results are viewed by the faculty as one more piece of information about a child's progress. In the fall, the School mails copies of the Stanford results to parents of current fifth through eighth grade students; parents are encouraged to talk with the Head of School about any questions they may have. Parents may request copies of their child's standardized testing at any time.

### *Learning Skills Program & Special Services*

The Learning Skills Program provides the option for families to work with tutors selected by the School. The Learning Coordinator is in charge of the program. The goals of the Learning Skills program are:

- to work with teachers to assess each student,
- to identify students who need additional support and to carefully assess and monitor these children throughout the year,
- to recommend a tutor that will best meet the needs of a child, and
- to ensure close coordination among the child's tutor, teachers, and parents to meet the needs of the child.

Parents will be billed for the tutoring services by the School; more information for families whose children are recommended for tutoring will be sent out during the fall.

During their time at Stoneridge, some children may need services beyond what the School staff and Learning Skills Program can provide. These services include tutoring, an educational (psychoneurological) evaluation, or psychological counseling (therapy). Recommendations that a child receive special services are made, when appropriate, by the School, and when we do so, it is after careful deliberation by the teachers who know the child best and other School staff. The Head of School is always part of these deliberations. At other times, parents initiate these services, most often after discussion with the child's teacher and/or Head of School.

The School maintains a list of individuals who specialize in these support services. The lists are based on recommendations from other school families and from School staff. These lists can be obtained from the Head of School and the Learning Coordinator and are intended only to give you a starting point in selecting someone with the relevant expertise. You as parents have the final responsibility for selecting the individual with whom you and your child will work. If you find evaluators and therapists with whom you have worked successfully, please pass the names and contact information of these individuals to the Head of School or Learning Skills Coordinator so that this information can be made available to other school families.

### *Other Communication Systems*

#### *Emergency Phone System*

The School has an emergency phone system whereby we can send a recorded message to every phone number (home, cell, work) that we have on file for all of our families. We reserve the use of this system for emergencies where email is not sufficient. For example, if a situation emerges requiring children to be picked up from school at mid-day, we will use the emergency phone system (as well as email) to reach all our parents.

#### *Student Information System*

The School uses a database to maintain all information about students and families. The database is used routinely by all members of the administration and faculty for all the administrative purposes of the school, including maintaining family contact information (addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, work information, grandparent information), recording attendance, and organizing progress reports. We also use it to help us keep track of our alumni and annual fund gifts. The Student Information System has become a key School resource and is protected by appropriate levels of security.

Each summer, parents receive a Family Information Sheet that includes the contact information we have on file. Parents are asked to review the sheet to ensure that our records are fully up-to-date and then make revisions or corrections online through our database parent-portal. The Family Information Sheet includes the secure web site address and family username and

password. Some information that you share with us can be designated as “private,” which means we will not release to anyone else.

Email has become a standard method for communication between School and families. It is essential that each family provides at least one email address that is not “private,” i.e., where the School, as well as Class Parents, can send information regularly and we can contact you when needed.

*If contact information (phone numbers, address, email addresses, emergency contacts) changes during the school year, it is essential that you keep the School informed so that we can contact you when needed.*

### Placement of Children

In CH, LE, and UE, children are placed in a class and remain with the teachers for three years. When a child is ready to make the transition to the next level, the teachers at the child’s present level confer with teachers at the next level to ensure that the placement of the children serves each child – and the group of children – very well. Teachers consider each child’s learning profile as well as each child’s need to be with (or separated from) certain peers; teachers also consider the composition of each class, ensuring that it is balanced from a learning perspective as well as socially. Creating classes balanced in these ways is essential to the successful functioning of classrooms with a three-year cycle! Members of the School’s administrative team review all placements. Final placement decisions are the responsibility of the School.

Parents of children who are transitioning are welcome to visit and observe at the next level. If parents have concerns about their child’s placement, they are encouraged to talk with the child’s current teachers or with the Head of School. Parents may also make written requests about placement, which the School will consider carefully, but many factors beyond a parent’s request are considered when making the final decisions. Such written requests should be given to the Head of School and the head teacher of your child’s current class by May 1.

Parents learn about placement decision in mid-August when the *Handbook/Directory* is mailed.



## *The Stoneridge Partnership*

Policy Statement Adopted by the SCMS Board, 2/15/06.

The Stoneridge Partnership involves a substantial commitment by parents and by the School to a shared goal. Parents understand this commitment as a key part of their child's education.

What is the shared goal? Parents select the School because they want their children to develop to their full potential in all respects—academically, socially, and in their values and beliefs. Parents and the School share a passionate commitment to our children becoming successful and enthusiastic learners and thoughtful, aware, and responsible human beings. This is the shared goal.

We know that our children are most likely to reach this ambitious goal when parents and the School work closely together on their behalf. This is the reason for the partnership.

What is the School's role in this Partnership? The School is committed to providing an excellent educational experience to each child. The School is committed to making sure that each child is known as an individual by his/her teachers. The School is committed to listening to, understanding, and responding to the family's point of view and parents' important insights into their child. Finally, the School is committed to creating events of great value to families in understanding the School's learning and teaching approach.

What is the parents' role in this Partnership? Parents are committed to developing an understanding of the School's learning and teaching approach, at their child's level and also more generally. How are reading and mathematics taught at my child's levels, and how can parents help at home? How can we encourage each child to feel in charge of his or her learning? How do we teach children to work through disagreements? How do we teach children to show respect for other people and for the earth we share? By parents and teachers sharing these fundamental approaches to each child's learning, children experience their world as unitary and consistent, which helps them develop to their fullest.

To enable parents to develop this understanding, the School schedules several key events each year. These events may change over time. The current list includes:

For all parents:

- Back-to-School Night (overview of the year)
- Learning Night (about the curriculum)
- Parent-Teacher Conferences (about your child)



For parents who are new to the School:

- New Parents Dinner (meet faculty and school leaders)

We also have events designed for a particular audience, including:

- Next Step Evening (for parents of children transitioning to a new level)
- The Journey of Discovery (held annually, for all parents to experience at least once during their first two years at the School)

In the School's publications and publicity, these events will be designated with the school's pine bough icon (see above). We ask parents to note these events on their calendar in August, when the full school year calendar is posted online, and to plan to attend them.

There are also other important parent education events, sponsored by the School and/or the Stoneridge Parents Association, which help parents learn about the School's program. We encourage you to attend as many of these as possible.

## ADMISSION, ENROLLMENT, AND FINANCIAL AID

### New Applicants

Stoneridge Children's Montessori School seeks to enroll curious, creative, self-motivated learners who will thrive in the prepared environment of a Montessori classroom. The admission process that these children experience is designed to educate the children and their families to both the educational philosophy and methodology used in the classroom and the values embraced by our school community. While applications are accepted throughout the year, the admission process formally begins in mid-autumn for the next academic year and ends in early spring with the introduction of new students to their school, teachers, and classmates.

Interested families should follow the steps outlined below throughout the admission process:

- Stoneridge offers the public an opportunity to tour its facilities and explore its campus at open houses scheduled throughout the admission season.
- Interested families must call the Admission Office at (978) 927-0700 to request an admission packet and a tour, schedule an in-classroom observation, and arrange a meeting with the Admission staff. The in-classroom observation is a mandatory part of the admission process. After the tour and in-classroom observation, the family meets with a member of the Administrative staff (Director of Admission, Head of School, or Assistant to the Head), who will talk with the family about their goals and expectations and answer any question the family may have about the classroom learning environment, the faculty, the School curriculum, or the admission process.
- Parents or guardians submit a completed application with a non-refundable fee of \$50.00 on behalf of the child applicant. A decision to apply for admission to the School is an indication of the family's willingness to embrace the Montessori philosophy and methodology that was witnessed during the tour and in-classroom observation and discussed with the Admission staff. It is a statement of intent.
- When the School receives the application and non-refundable fee, the Admission staff opens an application file for the child, requests additional information from the family as necessary, invites the child applicant to visit the School if appropriate, and serves the family as a point of contact and facilitator throughout the admission process. The purpose of a child applicant visit or a student interview is to gain more information about the family and the child and to determine the child's readiness for a particular kind of classroom experience. It is an opportunity to discuss attitudes and values and determine whether there is a "good fit" between home and school.
- All applicants are notified of the Admission Committee decisions in early March and if accepted, an Enrollment Contract is mailed with the notification. Each family has 30 days

to respond and enroll by signing and returning the Enrollment Contract and paying the tuition deposit. If the contract is not returned within 30 days, the School cannot guarantee that an accepted child will be enrolled. Note: the School will adjust the dates and times for “late” applicants.

- A child is considered enrolled only when the Enrollment Contract is signed and returned and a non-refundable tuition deposit is paid to the School.

Stoneridge is a nonsectarian Montessori school that does not discriminate against individuals on the basis of race, creed, religion, national origin, cultural heritage, age, sex, marital status, or sexual orientation in the administration of either its admission or employment policies or procedures. However, in its effort to create the most positive educational environment, relatively even distribution of boys, girls, and ages is critical to the success of each three-year developmental cycle in which the students are grouped. The School thus reserves the right to select children for admission to the School on the basis of their age, gender, and/or current grade level.

#### Re-Enrollment Procedures

An Enrollment Contract, Tuition and Fees Schedule, and information regarding Tuition Insurance is mailed to current students and their families in mid-January. If there is any question regarding the status of a student’s opportunity for re-enrollment, the School will notify the family in lieu of an Enrollment Contract.

Current families should follow the steps outlined below in the re-enrollment process. Exact dates are set in the School Calendar:

- The Enrollment Contract is mailed to current families on or about January 15.
- Each family must re-enroll by signing and returning the Enrollment Contract and paying the non-refundable tuition deposit. All enrollment contracts are due and tuition deposits payable by early February.
- After the February date, the admission process is open to all applicants, and the School cannot guarantee that a current student will be re-enrolled. A child is considered re-enrolled only when the Enrollment Contract is signed and returned and a non-refundable tuition deposit is paid to the School. If you have questions or concerns about changing family circumstances or issues particular to your child that make your child’s return uncertain, please speak with the Admission staff, the Business Office staff, or the Head of School as soon as the concerns are known to you. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis.

- Finally, acceptance of the Enrollment Contract is predicated on the successful completion of the year in progress and full payment of the current year's tuition and fees. If a child should fail to complete such work successfully, or not meet expectations set forth in this *Handbook*, or his or her parents' payment of the current year's tuition and fees is not made in full, the School reserves the right to terminate the contract and refund the tuition deposit.

### Financial Aid Policy

Stoneridge grants financial aid to students who have been admitted to the School and have demonstrated a need for assistance in paying the costs associated with a Stoneridge education. The Financial Aid Program seeks to ensure that once enrolled, a student need not withdraw for financial reasons. Financial aid takes the form of tuition reduction rather than full tuition grants or scholarships. When a family has a demonstrated need for assistance and completes the application process in a timely manner, financial aid is available on a limited basis.

Interested families must contact the Admission Office to request a financial aid application packet. Once received, the completed forms are to be submitted for evaluation by a date in early December for tuition assistance for the next academic year. All applications for assistance are held in strict confidence. Applicants will be informed of their status by mid-January. Financial aid awards are not negotiable. Families receiving financial aid must reapply for this assistance each year.

## **TUITION, FEES, AND PAYMENT SCHEDULES**

### Enrollment

A completed Reservation Agreement and Enrollment Contract together with the appropriate Tuition Deposit must be received by 4:00 p.m. Friday, February 5, to reserve a space for your child at Stoneridge Children's Montessori School during the upcoming academic year if your child is currently enrolled at Stoneridge and intending to return to the School in the fall.

### Tuition Payment Plan

The School offers three tuition payment plans as outlined below.

1. Single Payment Plan – Payment of 100% of tuition on or before June 1. Participation in the Tuition Refund Plan is encouraged, but is not required, for this option.
2. Two Payment Plan – The first Payment is comprised of 50% of tuition plus Two-Payment Administrative Fee (\$100) and Tuition Refund Plan Payment on or before June 1. The second payment is comprised of 50% of tuition, less tuition deposit paid, on or before December 1. Participation in the Tuition Refund Plan is mandatory with this plan.

3. Ten Payment Plan – Ten equal monthly payments each of 10% of the total of tuition, Ten-Payment Administrative Fee (\$250), and Tuition Refund Plan Premium, with the first payment due May 1 and the last February 1. Participation in the Tuition Refund Plans is mandatory with this plan.

PLEASE NOTE: Families selecting, but not meeting, the payment schedule of either the Single or Two Payment Plan will be automatically moved from the Single to the Two Payment Plan – or from the Two to the Ten Payment Plan – with the appropriate Administrative Fee (and Tuition Refund Plan premium if necessary) added. Also, late fees of 1.5% per month (18% per annum) will be assessed on unpaid balances after the payment due dates.

In case of a check being returned for insufficient funds, a \$25 fee will be assessed for each occurrence.

#### *Non-refundability of Tuition Deposit and Tuition Fees*

The Tuition Deposit and the annual Tuition and Fees are non-refundable. If a student is absent, withdrawn, or dismissed from the School for any reason whatsoever, the obligation to pay annual tuition and fees shall continue as though the student were enrolled and in attendance for the entire academic year. In view of this unconditional obligation, the Tuition Refund Plan is available to insure annual tuition in the event of absence or separation from the School in accordance with the terms of the plan.

#### *Non-transferability of Tuition Deposit, Tuition and Fees*

The Tuition Deposit and the annual tuition fees are not transferable and will not be applied to another child's tuition, summer camp fees, or annual fund obligations and the like.

#### *Tuition Refund Plan*

The Tuition Refund Plan is available to all families. For parents and legal guardians selecting the Single Payment Plan, participation in the Tuition Refund Plan is optional. For parents and legal guardian selecting the Two Payment Plan or any multi-payment plan, participation in the Tuition Refund Plan is mandatory. A description of the Plan and terms and conditions of coverage are described in the plan brochure. The level of insurance varies according to the reason for withdrawal. For example, “withdrawal for other than medical reasons” is covered at the 60% level and requires that “the student has attended more than fourteen consecutive calendar days.” Brochures and related information are available from the Business Office.

#### *Student Accounts in Arrears*

It is the policy of the school that all tuitions and fees must be paid in full by April 1; and at least 50% of tuitions and fees must be paid by December 1. Families whose tuitions and fees are not paid by these dates will be asked to keep their child home until appropriate payment is made. Exception to the policy may only be made by the Head of School or Business Manager, in consultation with the Board's Finance Committee.

The School may refuse to sign a contract with a parent and/or a legal guardian whose payments of tuition and fees are in arrears from a previous school year. The School will release a student's record only when the student's account is paid in full. The School may also terminate student enrollment when there is a failure to pay tuition and fees.

*Withdrawal and Late Entrance Policies*

Pro rata allowance will be made if the student is accepted after the first four weeks of school, but no reduction or credit will be granted if the student is withdrawn. When students are withdrawn, parents should file a claim with the company that runs the Tuition Refund Plan, if they have purchased this policy.

*Mandatory Withdrawal or Termination Policy*

When students are enrolled at Stoneridge, it is expressly and implicitly understood that both the student and his or her parents agree to support and abide by rules and regulations outlined in the Enrollment Contract, this *Parent Handbook*, and/or other communications to families of children enrolled at the School.

If school rules are continuously violated, the student repeatedly engages in disruptive behavior, or he/she suffers such serious academic problems that the School believes that it is unable and/or inadequately staffed to meet the needs of the student, or if at any time the student's presence in the School poses a threat or a danger to the safety and security of others or a student's influence is considered a harmful presence in School, the School reserves the right to require withdrawal.

Also, the School, in consultation with the School's physician and/or psychologist, reserves the right to request withdrawal of a student for medical or psychological reasons. Further, if the School is unable to respond appropriately to a student's social, emotional, and academic needs or is inadequately staffed to meet the needs of the student, the School reserves the right to require a change of environment and re-assign the child to another classroom in order to better serve the student and ensure his or her well-being.

Finally, as said above, the student may be required to withdraw from Stoneridge for the failure of his or her family to pay the contracted tuition and fees in a timely manner.

## **Part III: Parents' Support for Stoneridge**

Volunteerism & Community Service  
Philanthropic Support  
Governance (Board of Trustees)



## VOLUNTEERISM AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

From our earliest days, the survival and success of Stoneridge has been closely linked to a strong spirit of volunteerism among our parents. Throughout the year there are numerous opportunities for parents to contribute their talents to benefit our children and our School and to become more involved in Stoneridge-based community outreach programs.

### Admission Tour Guides

Parent tour guides are needed to be Stoneridge ambassadors for the Open House events during the year and to phone prospective parents and discuss their personal experiences with our school. If you would like to be a tour guide/ambassador, a two-hour training session with the Director of Admission is required in October. Volunteers are also needed to post Open House posters in their communities three weeks in advance of the event.

### Class Parents

Each classroom has two Class Parents who act as liaisons between the teachers and the parents for the purpose of communicating and organizing various events for the students and the parents. Class parents welcome new parents, assist the faculty with classroom projects, find drivers and chaperones for field trips, organize the classroom Pot Luck dinner for the parents, and attend S.P.A. meetings to speak about the activities happening in their room. Class Parents are selected by the School in advance of the opening of school. The names of class parents can be found at the top of each class list.

### Sustainable Stoneridge

This committee considers issues of sustainability as they affect the School and its families, including sustainable living and the School's curriculum in this area. Individuals interested in working on projects in this area should contact the chair of the group.

### Stoneridge Parents Association (S.P.A.)

The S.P.A. is an active organization of parents, teachers and administrators who support the School through fundraising and volunteerism. The mission of the S.P.A. is to foster a spirit of cooperation and involvement within our community and to promote good communication.

All parents of children currently enrolled at the School and current staff are members of the S.P.A. Several meetings are held each year, and we encourage parents to attend to learn about what is happening in the classrooms and how they can support their child's Montessori education.

The S.P.A. is instrumental in organizing and implementing many vital programs and events during the year and welcomes parent volunteers on the following committees:

*Auction Committee:* Our gala fundraising event, always fun and successful. Volunteers needed to solicit auction items, help with donations, and plan our annual party in the spring. Online auction included as part of the fun. Big investment, big rewards!

*Book Fair:* Banbury Cross Children’s Book Shop sets up shop in our Multi Purpose Room for a two-day book fair in November. Volunteers are needed to help with set-up, clean-up and sales. (Short and sweet! Requires a commitment of six to eight hours of work per week for one to three weeks during the fall.)

*Community Services Committee:* Recognizing the needs of others in the broader community, this committee coordinates a variety of activities with campaigns for community awareness and financial support for Head Start, Beverly Bootstraps, HAWC, and other local charities.

*Fundraising Committee:* Use your creative energy to help support school programs and explore new fundraising ideas. Work together to meet an annual goal while having fun.

*Holiday Craft Fair:* Crafters and artisans from our school community and the local community come together in our lobby to show and sell their wares, with a percentage of the proceeds supporting Stoneridge.

*Hospitality Committee:* The perfect volunteer opportunity for someone with limited time. Help to provide refreshments for morning S.P.A. meetings and various school activities.

*Welcome Committee:* The Welcome Committee assists in organizing the New Parent Tea in June, creates packets of extra information for the first day of school and organizes the Welcome Coffees. In addition, the Welcome Committee assigns “buddy” families to all new families during the summer. The “buddy” families are asked to support new families in navigating their first year at Stoneridge.

## PHILANTHROPIC SUPPORT

Each Stoneridge student is the beneficiary of the generosity of Stoneridge parents, grandparents, faculty and staff, alumni/ae families, corporations, foundations, and friends. Stoneridge strives to keep its tuition affordable, while at the same time, providing the very best education possible. We provide high quality facilities and materials and hire the most qualified faculty and administrators available from national- and international-level candidates. We are able to achieve this through focused fundraising programs. These include:

### Annual Fund

The Annual Fund is launched in the fall, when families are asked to make their pledges to be fulfilled by April 30. We aim for 100% of our families to participate – you are strongly encouraged to support the School’s Annual Fund.

Historically, the school budget has received about 6% of its annual operating funding through annual donations. These funds come from parents, grandparents, alumni, faculty, staff and friends; from foundations; and also from matching gifts of our families’ employers. Stoneridge’s continued vitality and strength results in part from unrestricted annual giving: Annual Fund contributions have an immediate and significant impact on the day-to-day operations of the School.

### Special Opportunities and Planned Giving

Stoneridge will, from time to time, identify fundraising initiatives that reflect priority needs. For example, the School identified new equipment in the Multi Purpose Room as a priority, and the families of the Class of 2006 responded to this need with great generosity. Other priorities will be identified from time to time. The Head of School, in consultation with the Board’s Advancement Committee, is responsible for identifying these special opportunities. If you are interested in a special gift to Stoneridge or would like to make a planned gift to the School, please contact the Head of School or the Chair of the Board’s Advancement Committee.

## GOVERNANCE

Stoneridge's Board of Trustees is composed of up to fifteen (15) members plus ex officio members, including the Head of School and the Head of S.P.A. Board members are elected for three-year terms by the members of the Corporation. All parents of children currently enrolled at the School and all current staff are voting members of the Corporation. The entire membership is invited to meet at the Annual Meeting (third Monday in May) to elect the next group of members of the Board of Trustees. Nominations for the Board are encouraged and should be addressed to the Board's Committee on Trustees.

The primary responsibilities of the Board include safeguarding the financial stability of the School, ensuring that policies and operations adhere to the mission of the School, and appointing the Head of School and evaluating his performance. The Board delegates to the Head of School responsibility for operations, including hiring and supervision of all faculty and staff.

### 2011-2012 Board of Trustees

Dan Watkins, Chairperson

Dave Lemons, Treasurer

Ellen Schiller, Clerk

Tony Boisvert

Melissa Dimond

Alan Feldman, Head of School (ex officio)

Bob Granese

Betsy Lawrence

Diana Mathey

Sarah Parker, S.P.A. Chair (ex officio)

Michèle Petryk

William Shields

Susan Steiner

Deb Thomas

Gifford West

Kim Woods

Dorothy Zur Muhlen

## **Part IV: What We Stand For**

Mission

School History

Values Statement

Diversity Statement

Academic Philosophy & Programs



## MISSION AND HISTORY

### Mission Statement

*Helping children and their families construct their learning, lives and communities.*

### School History: Celebrating 20 Years

In 1989, a group of parents and Montessori teachers came together to found the Children's Montessori School in a graceful old carriage house in Ipswich, Massachusetts. From the beginning, the School was characterized by active parent and teacher participation. The founders, like true Montessorians, learned by doing, and through their shared experiences shaped not only a school, but also a community. The perseverance of the founders and the cooperative spirit that they engendered in those who followed them continue at the School today. They are embodied in our mission statement: Helping children and their families construct their learning, lives, and community.

Since our founding, we added "Stoneridge" to our name and changed locations twice: in 1999 to temporary quarters on the Endicott College campus, and then to our permanent home, designed specifically for our school and set amidst 9.4 wooded acres. Stoneridge Children's Montessori School opened its doors in September, 2001 amid the laughter of children and the proud smiles of the parents, teachers, trustees and administrators whose extraordinary vision, hard work, and generosity made our new home a reality.

Today Stoneridge Children's Montessori School is an independent, coeducational school serving children of 21 months in age through early adolescence. What began as a parent-teacher cooperative school with 41 students and a staff of six, now serves about 140 students, employs 35 dedicated teachers and administrators, and is governed by a Board of Trustees that oversees a budget of over \$2 million. We have nine classrooms: one Toddler class (2-3 years); three Children's House classes (3-6 years); two Lower Elementary classes (grades 1-3); one Upper Elementary class (grades 4-6); and one Middle School class (grades 7 and 8).

Throughout the years, our belief in and dedication to the philosophy established by Dr. Maria Montessori has remained steadfast. We believe that through education, through our work with children, there is much that we can do individually and collectively to bring humanity to a deeper understanding, a higher well-being, and a greater spirituality. Each year, we thoughtfully re-dedicate the School and ourselves to the service of the child, Montessori ideals, and the belief that education is the strongest armament of peace.

## VALUES STATEMENT: *A Foundation for Peace*

Stoneridge Children’s Montessori School is a community of children and adults united by Dr. Maria Montessori’s vision of peace through education. In an atmosphere of freedom and responsibility, we work toward our human potential. We are dedicated to creating a sustainable future for the planet and all who inhabit it. We strive to develop and support the following values:

### *Work*

“A child can only develop by means of experience in his environment. We call such experience work.”  
Dr. Maria Montessori

- Inspire the joy of learning through discovery and exploration
- Invite curiosity, creativity, and imagination in all areas of work
- Nurture risk taking and initiative
- Experience reverence, awe, wonder, and respect for life

### *Independence*

“Individual activity is the one factor that stimulates and produces development, and this is not more true for the little ones of preschool age than it is for the junior, middle, and upper school children.”  
Dr. Maria Montessori

- Respect the right to persist in chosen work without interruption
- Respect the right to direct oneself and to act with ever greater sureness, ability, and self-confidence
- Speak and write clearly and confidently

### *Interdependence*

“The stars, Earth, stones, all kinds of life form a whole relation with each other, and so close is this relation that we cannot understand a stone without some understanding of the great sun!”  
Dr. Maria Montessori

- Be courteous, caring, and respectful of others
- Use peaceful and cooperative skills to resolve conflict
- Acknowledge and celebrate the different ways humans meet the same physical and spiritual needs
- Respect the cycles of the Earth and recognize our ecological and moral responsibility to the world

## **DIVERSITY STATEMENT**

At Stoneridge Children's Montessori School, we strive to reflect the larger world in our student body and our faculty and staff. Through our curriculum, cultural programs, and engagement with our community and other similar institutions, we seek for our students to engage with people whose life experiences are substantially different from their own. We recognize that building a diverse school requires an ongoing commitment of time, energy and resources on the parts of our board, our faculty and staff, and our families.

Diversity, like peace through education, is part of the fabric of the Montessori philosophy as Dr. Montessori's teaching transcended borders and social barriers. Through our curriculum, we work to acknowledge and explore differences among us and in the world. We want our students to understand and value differences in culture and styles of learning and to be aware of and move past prejudices, creating an environment where each child and family feels safe and accepted.

We aim to create a diverse community which welcomes everyone regardless of differences of gender, race, religion, family structure, socioeconomic level, culture, age, sexual orientation, language and learning style. As an organization we work to provide our faculty, staff, students, and families with the tools and language to support this diverse community and to address conflict when issues arise around the differences the children see around them. In the end, we want the years our students spend at Stoneridge to help them emerge equipped to thrive in a rapidly changing world with open hearts, open minds, a sense of their own value, and a commitment to effect positive change.

Adopted by the Board of Trustees, March 13, 2010

## ACADEMIC PHILOSOPHY AND PROGRAMS

### *Philosophy*

In keeping with the Montessori method, Stoneridge endeavors to create a carefully prepared classroom environment that fully engages each child in a developmentally appropriate way. The prepared environment, which consists of furnishings and learning materials that are designed to lead each child from concrete concepts to abstract and in-depth understanding, is one of two key components of the Montessori Method. The other is the Montessori teacher, a knowledgeable, sensitive, and rigorously trained adult who prepares the environment each day and serves as a guide to the children.

The term “guide” extends from Maria Montessori’s belief that “education is not something that a leader does, but a natural process spontaneously carried out by the human being.” The child holds the pattern for his or her development within, and the teacher, through observation and experimentation within the prepared environment, provides the experiences that the child requires for growth and development.

The academic program at Stoneridge is a carefully designed continuum based on Maria Montessori’s Four Planes of Development theory and the home-like, family-based model of peer interaction that she put forth. Each classroom is organized in a cross-age, mixed gender grouping of children based on the four planes of development; over several years, each child is carefully prepared to transition successfully (academically and socially) to the next level.

### *Academic Programs*

The school’s Curriculum Guide, a large format fold-out, presents a map of curriculum topics at each level.

Brief descriptions of classes by age grouping follow. The Back to School Night in early September helps parents learn about specific daily practices in their own children’s classrooms. We also encourage parents to attend the many parent education opportunities offered throughout the year to learn more about the Montessori method and specific curriculum goals. Finally, please take advantage of our library’s extensive collection of Montessori publications.

**The Toddler House Program** (21 months-3 years) is designed to guide the young child in the quest for independence by assisting in care of self and care of the environment while supporting the innate need for order, security, and exploration. The daily program includes individual and group work time, snack, and outdoor time. True to Maria Montessori’s principles, the singular curricular goal of the Toddler House Program is to “follow the child.” The toddler is the curriculum. While materials are designed to advance and enrich language, eye-hand coordination, and practical life skills, everything that the toddler does is considered to be “toddler work” and to lead to the acquisition of knowledge.

**The Children’s House Program** (3-6 years) engages the absorbent mind of the child through self-selected work and constructive activity, both in the prepared environment of the indoor classroom and outdoors, where children are encouraged to explore the natural world. Materials in the classroom are divided into curricular areas that assist the child in the development of concentration, coordination of mind and body, independence, order, and self-discipline. Practical life exercises encourage small- and large-muscle development and reinforce the concepts of order and sequence. Sensorial materials develop the child’s ability to make finite discriminations through the use of the five senses. The language curriculum balances a strong phonics approach with a method that allows creative writing through dictation, invented spelling, and literary appreciation. The mathematics curriculum includes the manipulation of materials that are sequenced with concrete experiences leading to more abstract discoveries.

**The Kindergarten Program** (5-6 years) is the culmination of the child’s two previous years of work in Children’s House. Maria Montessori recognized two tendencies in the kindergartner: the extension of consciousness through activities performed on the environment and the perfection of those abilities that already exist. By remaining at school for a full day, kindergartners are able to consolidate and internalize skills by teaching them to younger students in the morning, challenging themselves with more difficult work throughout the day, and enjoy enhancing opportunities for art, music, and physical education in the afternoon. Kindergarten children take full advantage of the benefits of multi-age grouping, developing strong friendships with peers, playing a leadership role in the classroom, gaining self-confidence, and mastering the academic and social skills that are necessary for a successful transition to elementary levels.

**The Elementary Program** (6-12 years) builds on the characteristics of children this age, who are engaged in thinking, perceiving, and learning about the interconnectedness of things and in pursuing a newfound interest in social relationships. Languages and the arts are recognized as a means of communicating ideas and fulfilling fundamental human needs. Reading, writing, mathematics, geometry, and science are tools within the child’s own culture that unlock new insights. Geography, history, botany, and zoology are presented in ways that give meaning and appreciation to the great order of the universe. The elementary curriculum is based on five major stories and several minor ones that provide children with a vision of the universe from the “Big Bang” through the present. Each story sparks imagination and curiosity and is accompanied by charts, timelines, illustrations, artifacts, scientific experiments, literature studies, and independent research.

**The Middle School Program** focuses on the physical and emotional transformation as the adolescent strives to discover the true nature of self and society. Our Middle School Program is designed to support this effort and to help our students prepare for secondary school placement as they move forward on their educational journey. The academic scope and sequence of the Middle School Program is ambitious. The broad-based, liberal arts curriculum includes language arts, mathematics, physical sciences, life sciences, cultural studies, Spanish, art, music, and physical

education. The emphasis is consistently on the student's own responsibility for learning – what Maria Montessori described as the principle of “Help me do it alone!” Participation in service programs – such as working in a soup kitchen, farming as a community venture, and internships in the workplace – enhances our students' ability to make connections and demonstrates both the responsibilities and benefits of community life.

The Middle School has an exchange program with Escola Montcau-LaMola, a school near Barcelona, Spain. MS students first host, then visit, with students from the partner school.

### *Special Programs*

**The Art Program** relates to our whole school philosophy of education through engagement with the inner life of the child through hands-on experiential learning. The major goal of our creative projects is to connect with the inner self and express that self with confidence. Art is integrated into the daily curriculum of the Toddler House and Children's House classrooms. Students in Kindergarten, Lower Elementary, Upper Elementary, and Middle School visit the art room once or twice a week for an hour of choice-based art work with instruction. Students of all skill levels participate and create art work using a variety of media and materials.

**The Music Program** aims to provide students from CH to MS with expressive skills that will last them a lifetime. Students develop tuneful singing and rhythmic movement as precursors to reading and writing music. Music notation is introduced at the Lower Elementary level. Students use songs and instruments from around the world as they develop increasingly sophisticated vocal and rhythmic skills. Stoneridge students receive the opportunity to share their musical learning and talents in several concerts during the school year and during regular assemblies. In addition, LE students have the opportunity to perform with the Lower School Voices, and UE and MS students have the opportunity to perform with Upper School Voices.

**The Spanish Program** encourages each child to approach language individually, creatively, and confidently. The program incorporates Montessori philosophy by promoting self-expression and channeling each child's natural curiosity toward the learning of the Spanish language. In Lower and Upper Elementary, songs, stories, and traditions, calendar study, simple sentences, and vocabulary are supplemented by books on the global influence of Spanish culture. In the Middle School, students are divided into classes based upon their level of Spanish fluency.

**The Physical Education Program** is based on the philosophy of developing strong minds and strong bodies. Activities are focused on skill building, teamwork, coordination, and goal setting in a non-competitive atmosphere. Communication, cooperation, and trust are key objectives at all levels of the physical education program. Toddler House, Children's House, and Kindergarten students engage in a curriculum focused on developing gross motor skills, learning to wait for a turn, sharing, following directions, and cooperation. Lower Elementary and Kindergarten students begin playing more complex, non-elimination games and participate in a six-week

swimming course at the Beverly YMCA. Upper Elementary and Middle School students are exposed to a more competitive athletic program featuring two-week units on a variety of sports. Age-appropriate elements of Project Adventure activities — ranging from “Adventure Play” for young students through a two-day low and high ropes course for Upper Elementary students — are included in our physical education curriculum. In addition, Upper Elementary and Middle School students may sign up for after-school sports options.

**The Library** houses a collection and provides services designed to support classroom work, school curriculum, and the independent reading needs and interests of our students. Toddler House and Children’s House students visit the library to hear stories and choose books to check out. Elementary and Middle School students use the library to conduct research to support classroom work and to select independent reading materials. The school’s Librarian is available to assist students with research and reading activities, and using print and online resources. (See Birthday Book Tradition, page 15.)

**The Community Service** Program allows students of all ages to perform service both inside and outside of school throughout the year. Activities range from simple tasks performed by individual students on a daily basis to class- and school-wide projects that require initiative and planning. Students sweep stairs, collect food for Beverly Bootstraps, complete chores to raise money for Head Start Thanksgiving dinners, assist with younger students, and more.



Staff  
directory



## STAFF DIRECTORY

The school's main phone number is 978-927-0700. This number is usually answered by the administrative staff. Additionally, you can call 978-922-3938 and dial extensions directly.

Alan Feldman, Head of School  
x 312  
afeldman@stoneridgecms.org

Cathy Palmisano, Upper Elementary Teacher  
x 321  
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Cecilia Soltis, Children's House III Assistant Teacher  
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Cici Fougere, Director of Physical Education  
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Diane Sullivan, Lower Elementary A Head Teacher  
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Elizabeth Alexander, Art Teacher  
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Elizabeth Slade, Curriculum Coordinator  
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Ellen Sears, Director of After Care  
After 3 pm (978)407-3768  
esears@stoneridgecms.org

Genevieve McHugh, Children's House II Assistant Teacher  
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Hannah Mell, Director of Music  
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Heather Carnevale, Lower Elementary B Head Teacher  
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Holly Curtis, Lower Elementary A/B Assistant Teacher  
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Joe Faletra, Staff Accountant  
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## WHOM TO CONTACT

Parents often ask, “Whom do I call if I have a question about...?” We hope that this list helps you to locate the correct person at the School to address your questions or concerns.

Questions about a student’s progress in the classroom	Your student’s Head Teacher
Any concern at any time	Alan Feldman, Head of School Rebecca McGrail, Assistant to the Head
Volunteering	Sarah Parker, S.P.A. Chair Rebecca McGrail, Assistant to the Head
Recommendations for special services (tutoring, etc.)	Shadi Tayarani, Learning Coordinator Alan Feldman, Head of School
Notification of absences, lateness; changes in pick-up/drop-off; general information; an appointment with Alan or Rebecca	Pat Tucker, School Secretary
Secondary School application process	Holly Grose, Spanish Teacher and Secondary School Advisor
Billing, financial matters, facilities	Joe Faletra, Staff Accountant Jackie Hibbard, Business Manager
Enrollment, admission, financial aid, school publications	Valerie Lausier-Collins, Director of Admission & Publications Coordinator
Special events	Rebecca McGrail, Assistant to the Head
Music and after-school music lessons	Hannah Lynn Mell, Director of Music
Physical education and all after-school sports programs	Cici Fougere, Director of Athletics
Scheduling information	Online calendar and <i>This Month at Stoneridge</i> sent via email. (Printed copies available in lobby.)

**See the Staff Directory (page 89) for phone extensions and email addresses, or go to [www.stoneridgecms.org](http://www.stoneridgecms.org). Click on “Our School” then “Faculty & Staff Directory.”**

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