

Revised: 06/2022

MONTESSORI GLOBAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE



Faculty Handbook

53 North Old Kings Road, Ormond Beach FL 32174

Phone: 386.492.7165

Fax: 386.675.6993

<http://www.montessoriglobalri.com>

Montessori Global Research Institute

Montessori Global Research Institute (MGRI) is a private school recognized by the Florida Department of Education; accredited by the American Montessori Society (AMS) and the National Accreditation Council (NAC); member of the International Montessori Council (IMC); recognized as a Florida Golden Seal school; insured, licensed by the Florida Department of Children & Families (DCF), and meets all local health, safety, and occupational regulations.

MGRI Contact: Dr Ambar Saleh-Cipolloni
Address: 53 N Old Kings Road
Ormond Beach, Florida 32174
Phones: Office (386) 492-7165
Fax: (386) 675-6993
Email: admissions@montessoriglobalri.com
Website: <https://montessoriglobalri.com>

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WELCOME.....	5
PURPOSE.....	6
VISION.....	6
CORE VALUES.....	6
PHILOSOPHY.....	6
LEARNING OBJECTIVES.....	6
PHILOSOPHY.....	6
PROGRAM.....	8
CHILDREN’S RIGHTS.....	10
CHILDREN’S RRESPONSIBILITIES.....	10
ROLE OF THE TEACHER.....	10
CONFIDENTIALITY AND PROFESSIONALISM.....	11
SOCIAL MEDIA.....	12
POLICIES.....	13
CELL PHONE USE.....	13
MGRI TELEPHONES.....	13
PROFESSIONAL APPEARANCE.....	13
PUNCTIONALITY AND ABSENCE.....	13
Health Concerns.....	14
Drug and Smoke Free Workplace.....	15
Use of MGRI Property.....	15
Administration of Medication.....	15
Breastmilk.....	15
Emergency Procedures.....	15
Emergency Closing.....	16
Guidance and Discipline.....	16
CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT.....	17
AT-WILL EMPLOYMENT.....	17
AFFIRMATIVE ACTION.....	18
NON-DISCRIMINATION.....	18
Americans With Disabilities Act.....	18
Employment Records.....	18
Introductory Period.....	18
Employee Status.....	19
Exempt Employee.....	19
Non-Exempt Employee.....	19
Pay Procedures.....	19
Payroll Deductions.....	19
Overtime for Non-Exempt Employees.....	19
Pay Increases and Promotions.....	19
Expenses Reimbursement.....	20
Performance Evaluations.....	20
Professional Development.....	20
Breaks.....	20
BENEFITS.....	20
PAID TIME OFF.....	20
FAMILY LEAVE.....	21
EMERGENCY/BEREAVEMENT LEAVE.....	21
JURY DUTY OR COURT APPEARANCE.....	21
WORKERS COMPENSATION.....	21

TUITION ASSISTANCE.....	22
STANDARDS OF CONDUCT.....	22
CONFLICT RESOLUTION.....	22
UNACCEPTABLE CONDUCT.....	23
SEXUAL HARASSMENT.....	23
THEFT.....	23
CONFLICT OF INTEREST.....	24
DISCIPLINARY ACTION.....	24
RESIGNATION AND TERMINATION.....	24
 APPENDICES	
AMS CODE OF ETHICS.....	25
Accident/Incident Report.....	26
Child Health Referral.....	27
Authorization for Medication.....	28
Breastmilk Procedures.....	29
Employee Orientation Checklist.....	30
Teacher Position Qualifications.....	31
Employee Request for Leave.....	32
Confidentiality Agreement.....	33
Infant/Toddler Teaching Performance Evaluation.....	34
Primary Teaching Performance Evaluation.....	35
Elementary Teaching Performance Evaluation.....	36

Dear faculty member,

Welcome to the Montessori Global Research Institute (MGRI)!

We are grateful that you have chosen one of the most important professions in our culture, which is devoted to preparing our young children of today into becoming the well balanced, caring, confident people of tomorrow.

We appreciate you sharing with us the opportunity to be part of children's lives, growth, and development. This handbook provides information about our program, policies, and procedures; please ask us for any additional information that you may need. MGRI reserves the right to change policies. Official correspondence from MGRI through email, newsletter, or written memorandum is equivalent to information conveyed in this handbook and may be considered a replacement or update of policies.

We are a comprehensive program designed and dedicated to the holistic development of children in a personal and responsive family environment. The principles that guide our program are that each child should feel safe, secure, and trusting with his or her relationships and interactions in a social-emotional environment that is full of care.

MGRI follows the principles and pedagogy of a Montessori curriculum throughout the day for all children. Our program addresses the range of developmental characteristics emotionally, socially, physically, and mentally for children from infancy through twelve years of age. MGRI recognizes the importance of a child's experience in a linguistically, culturally, and socially diverse environment.

We welcome children and families of all ethnic backgrounds, national origins, sex, abilities, and religions. MGRI equally respects all beliefs and cultures; religious and/or denominational practice, prayer, worship, training, or instruction is not provided.

Sincerely,

Dr. Ambar Cipolloni
Dr. David Cipolloni

PURPOSE

To provide a comprehensive educational experience guided by the philosophy and pedagogy of Dr. Maria Montessori to prepare each individual for lifelong success.

VISION

We imagine a community of higher education and child development specialization that promotes optimal outcomes for a peaceful, productive, and harmonious world

CORE VALUES

Respect
Integrity
Diversity
Inclusiveness
Appreciation

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

MGRI follows the eight objectives for student learning as identified by the American Montessori Society (AMS). These are considered equally important concentrations of the classroom experience and relationships with teachers and peers for successful and balanced developmental outcomes:

Independence
Confidence and competence
Autonomy
Intrinsic motivation
Spiritual awareness/cosmic education
Social responsibility
Global citizenship
Academic ability

PHILOSOPHY

Our program addresses the needs of families to support the comprehensive development of their children from birth through the elementary years, far more than the traditional concepts and practices of daycare, childcare, and public education. MGRI operates with principles that recognize the unique characteristics of the young child, guided by the pedagogical and humanistic philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori, the cognitive epistemology of Jean Piaget, the emotional foundations of attachment research by John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth, the promotion of creativity and collaboration by Loris Malaguzzi, the social learning paradigm of Lev Vygotsky, the motivational perspective of Abraham Maslow, and the psychosocial stages of Erik Erikson, as well as significant research findings in early childhood development. These perspectives combine to offer a view of the child as significant and unique.

The purpose of the program is to complement the family in the development of their child by providing a social learning environment within an emotionally supportive atmosphere. MGRI acknowledges that these are the most critical years for the formation of personal identity and establishment of self-regulation to achieve confidence in relationships, in learning, and in effective decision-making to be successful in a global society.

Children are participants in mixed-age communities according to their developmental stage (rather than chronological age) as recognized by Maria Montessori and other child specialists. These communities are Infant & Preprimary (0-3 years), Primary (3-6), Lower Elementary (6-9), and Upper Elementary (9-12). A child's transition from one community to another is determined individually.

All children are regarded with respect and treated as individuals. The child is seen as an intelligent and unique individual, capable of learning primarily through exploration, inquiry, observation, and discovery. The program is designed to be child-centered rather than teacher-directed in order to promote young children's optimal development and autonomy.

The role of the teaching faculty is to prepare opportunities that meet the needs, interests, and abilities of the child, to provide a foundation for the child's social and emotional growth by fostering secure and trusting relationships, and to assist in facilitating curiosity and learning. Children are encouraged to become self-directed and independent within a social context, helping them to learn self-regulation, responsibility, awareness and respect of others.

MGRI is committed to standards of excellence in the quality of the curriculum, in the relationships of the faculty with the children and families, in the professionalism of the faculty, and in the overall aesthetic and social environment. MGRI has chosen to offer a Montessori program of education that is grounded with the principles of addressing a balanced and comprehensive development of each child. It is also consistent with the recommendations of the American Montessori Society (AMS), Zero to Three and the National Training Institute (NTI), the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the National Accreditation Commission for Early Care and Education Programs (NAC), and with Federal Early Head Start and Head Start Program Performance Standards.

We believe that the educational process for children begins at home, and we assist families to recognize and fulfill this responsibility. Our goal is not only to assist in the whole development of the child, but in the parenting skill of the family.

Teacher to child supervising ratios and group sizes at MGRI meet or exceed those of Florida Department of Children & Families (DCF) and AMS.

PROGRAM

The curriculum is the vehicle for the child's social, emotional, and intellectual growth. It assists the child's learning of respect for others, politeness, conflict resolution, communication, and personal care, as well as cognitive, language, and physical development.

The curriculum design recognizes the unique and important developmental needs, interests, and abilities of young children, and provides a balance of learning opportunities. The children are free to interact with a wide variety of developmentally relevant learning materials, from practice with dexterity, coordination, and discrimination skills to language, mathematics, concept formation, and cultural arts and sciences.

Classrooms are designed as a purposeful place for children, prepared and arranged to facilitate their successful learning, independence, safety, and comfort. Room plans promote visual contact, flow of movement, and a balance of space for both social and individual activities.

Program materials are directly accessible to children to select according to their individual preferences and abilities, fostering imaginative thinking, allowing curiosity and exploration, decision-making and discovery, and to promote responsibility and self-regulation. Materials are designed to address a particular skill or concept for the child to acquire.

The principles of the curriculum emphasize giving individual lessons for the child to explore and master. Concrete concepts are presented before abstract ones; simple concepts before complex ones; presentations generally follow a left-to-right, top-to-bottom sequence as preparation for reading and writing.

The environments are attractive and organized without being over-stimulating, enhancing the child's motivation and appreciation of aesthetics.

The display of materials is individualized to isolate specific skills necessary for orderly and sequential development, and to assist in learning concentration, successful task completion, and self-direction.

Children are exposed to languages other than English. The philosophy and curriculum of the school support the child's home language as a prior foundation to the learning of a second language. Children will initiate their own interest and are not forced or expected to use or perform in a second language.

The design of the infant area assists natural exploration and movement for proper physical and muscle development, encouraging their independence and curiosity. Infants are not confined in high chairs, walkers, playpens, or other restrictive furniture. Floor beds are used rather than cribs. Bottle-fed infants are held individually when feeding; bottles are never propped or left with an infant to hold. The transition to solid food is at a weaning table with the teacher on the opposite side of the seated infant.

The selection and design of materials for infants and preprimary children are intended to address the particular developmental characteristics of very young children. These include a rich, diverse, and precise modeling of vocabulary; the use and play of words, print, and song; exploratory experiences with the properties and relationships of objects; developing skills of perception, discrimination, identification, coordination, small and large muscles and body strength; and a variety of sensory, social, communication, cognitive, and physical opportunities.

The primary program materials are arranged into the following classifications:

Practical Life materials allow practice of everyday activities such as pouring, cleaning, and sorting while developing concentration, coordination, order, independence, equilibrium, and refinement of small and large muscle control. Practice and mastery of practical life work are the foundation for eventual competence in mathematics, writing, reading, and cognitive skills.

Sensorial materials refine the use of the senses in differentiating color, shape, size, weight, form, taste, smell, sound, tone, and texture. This promotes preparation for the perceptual and physical skills necessary for reading and writing, and for concepts of mathematics, geometry, algebra, and abstract thinking.

Mathematics materials provide a visual and kinesthetic experience of quantity and symbols while preparing the child for the operations of addition, multiplication, subtraction, and division.

Language materials present concrete experiences of associating vocabulary to objects and pictures, of applying the sounds of language to their symbols in the alphabet, of word construction and writing, and of reading. The primary Montessori language program encourages articulation, expression, vocabulary development, comprehension, and understanding of grammar.

Art, Geography, Science, Music, and Movement materials allow the child to expand a range of interests and to develop cultural awareness, knowledge of the physical world, creativity, and self-expression.

The elementary program continues from the foundation of materials and concepts presented in the primary program, particularly in Mathematics, Language, Culture, and Sciences. The emphasis is on cosmic, holistic education with increasingly complex experiences toward abstraction and applications.

The elementary child is rapidly developing an enlarged interest and awareness of the interconnectedness of nature and existence. Timelines, cycles of life, and The Great Lessons assist in understanding the microcosm to the macrocosm of life and the universe, its history and origins, the role of human culture, and the interdependence of all things. The disciplines of zoology, botany, anthropology, geography, geology, ecology, and the arts are explored extensively. The structures and usage of language provide vehicles of expression, imagination, knowledge, and critical thinking. The mathematics of arithmetic, geometry, and algebra facilitate organization of abstract concepts into pragmatic applications.

Children's Rights:

- A child has the right to work undisturbed.
- A child has the right to work alone.
- A child has the right to do nothing, by observing, thinking, or relaxing.
- A child has the right not to join a group activity.

Children's Responsibilities:

- All children and faculty are respected.
- Materials and all features of the environment are cared for.
- A child is not to interfere with or disrupt activities or other children's work.
- Pleasant voices are used.
- Children and faculty walk while inside.
- A carpet mat or table is used for individual work.
- Materials and mats are carried carefully with two hands.
- Materials and mats are returned carefully to their places neatly when work is done and the environment is restored cleanly and properly.
- Carpet mats are walked around.

ROLE OF THE TEACHER

This is not just a job but a vocation, requiring qualities that promote sensitivity toward the particular needs of each child, and a level of personal maturity to interact effectively with children, parents, professional colleagues, and visitors. It is one of the few professions that have a truly significant impact on determining the course and outcome of a child's life. The quality of your work is of inestimable importance.

An effective teacher is one who develops a rapport with each child that is genuine, respectful, personal, patient, curious, compassionate, delightful, and informed. It is a responsive, trustful, secure, authoritative, and reliable presence for the child to depend on, without being either authoritarian or permissive.

One of the best ways to understand this role and the nature of young children is to develop the skills of careful observation, self-reflection, and to cultivate an attitude of listening. The time of the child is not the time of the adult.

Interactions with the child are to be purposeful. Young children learn primarily through their imitation of adults. You are a constant model to children of behavior, attitude, speech, listening, and style. Kneel or sit when interacting to be at the child's eye level, and speak closely with children and others at pleasing voice tones and volume.

One of the objectives of the program is for the child to develop self-direction and self-regulation. The teaching role is to assist the child in this learning process. The teacher is not to solve problems, impose answers, or demand compliance, obedience, or conformity.

The concentration of a child, their involvement in their work, and the completion of a work cycle are very important in the process of decision making, attention, self-control, and memory. Be aware

of the timing, appropriateness, and necessity of intervening with a child in order not to interrupt this process.

Each child is expected to master working alone prior to functioning in groups. Model respect for individual work by requesting if you can join them and by redirecting other children accordingly.

Interactions with a child should be courteous and respectful. Affection, humor, listening, and a positive attitude are encouraged. Notice a child's attempts and successes with acknowledgement rather than with excessive and automatic praise. Tell a child what you like. Support with a handshake, a smile, or a hug; children are masters at detecting what is authentic or not. Build your attention from the child's strengths rather than reacting to their flaws.

Remain vigilantly aware of what the children are doing. Be alert; tactful intervention and redirection –and ignoring- often prevent any need for correction.

When correction is necessary, be clear and consistent with your expectations. Be mindful to regulate your emotional state, displays, and reactions. Avoid unnecessary “handling” of a child. Punishment, threat, intimidation, and ridicule are not effective and are not permitted.

Conflict with a child is to be expected; young children are in the long process of learning how to understand their own emotions, how to express themselves, how to meet their desires and needs, and how to interact with others. A child who is defiant, oppositional, disrespectful, aggressive, or angry can be frustrating, confusing, demanding, and emotionally draining. Keep in mind that very often this child is likely afraid, uncertain, or hurt. Your role is assisting the child to feel emotionally secure and accepted despite their behavior. You are to help them learn how to communicate and develop self-control. The modeling of your responses, emotions, behavior, and attitude is extremely important in what the child learns.

All children must feel safe. Be alert to prevent harm to others or to the environment. Model compassion and direct attention to the victim of an altercation more than to the perpetrator.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND PROFESSIONALISM

Faculty are expected to be sensitive to the safety and welfare of children at all times, and to the responsibility entrusted to them by parents and families. Faculty are to always conduct themselves in a professional and courteous manner.

All information concerning children, families, parents, faculty, administration, and the affairs of MGRI is considered to be confidential. Faculty are representatives of the program and are expected to act supportively and discretely. Sharing of any information that is not professionally necessary is not permitted. This includes any electronic communication in either images or text. Faculty are not permitted to communicate with parents, guardians, or family members by telephone, texting, or email without authorization from the administration. Personal information concerning a child may not be divulged by an employee to newspaper, television, radio, or any other media. All such inquiries shall be managed by the Director.

Any legal inquiries, subpoenas, or requests for court records received should be brought to the administration's attention.

Complaining, passing rumor, gossip, or innuendo is irresponsible, disrespectful, and contrary to the interest of collegiality, honor of privacy, and integrity of the program and will not be tolerated. These can be cause for dismissal.

All faculty and administration are in collaborative relationships; cooperation and communication are essential. Disagreements, conflicts, and misunderstandings will occur. It is important not to react or make assumptions from indirect reports. If a problem occurs that involves a colleague or administrator, communicate directly with that person in a respectful and appropriate manner. Be careful not to become an audience; if you are approached with someone else's concerns redirect them respectfully and clearly. Bring unresolved concerns to the administration if not satisfied.

This applies to parents as well. Redirect a parent with concerns to the administration. Report to the administration any concerns or discussions from parents.

Faculty must be alert to signs of abuse or neglect of children and are obligated by law to report suspected incidents. Examination or questioning of a child should be done with discretion and respect. Inform the administration of any concerns or discuss the situation directly with the Abuse Hotline. Keep clear written documentation of all details and sequence of the situation. Parents are not permitted any abuse of a child, including their own. Inappropriate behavior or language on MGRI premises must be addressed in the interests of the child.

Do not speak to anyone of your concerns of a child in their presence. Be discrete in answering a parent's questions about their child or intervening in negative statements. Avoid reporting negative behavior of a child.

All faculty are expected to follow the AMS Code of Ethics for their interactions with children, colleagues, administration, families, and the community. It is the duty of each faculty member to report any suspicion or observation of ethical misconduct by faculty, families, or visitors to the administration. Reports should be made directly to the administration as soon as responsibly possible.

Social Media

MGRI recognizes that its employees use social media. Be aware that regardless of personal privacy settings or access allowances, social media is a public domain and is likely viewable by other individuals and organizations that have not been directly authorized by you. Posting of photos of MGRI students, families, or personnel is strictly prohibited. Any violation of this policy is grounds for immediate termination.

Exercise creating online content with care and consider the risks. Any conduct that adversely represents an employee, students, families, or MGRI may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Employees may never represent themselves as a spokesperson for MGRI, or present MGRI in any social media post from a personal account unless otherwise approved by the Administration.

POLICIES

The arrival and departure of each child are to be recorded daily. Only recognizable authorized persons are permitted to pick up a child. If necessary, verify the person's name as authorized on the child's data form, from recognition by other faculty, or confirmation by telephone from the parent. Document unfamiliar persons with a copy of a driver's license, signature, and date. Children under eighteen years of age must have a specific note of authorization to pick up a child.

Children are never to be left unsupervised or left without qualified faculty. Proper teacher to child ratios are to be maintained at all times, including outdoors, meals, and rest; parents and volunteers are not qualified to be included in supervisory ratios.

Cell Phone Use

Cellular phones, apple watches, or other electronic devices are not permitted during work hours. Leave them in your car or kept in the office locker while working. Notify the administration for any anticipated important or emergency calls. During breaks, phones are to be used only in appropriate office rooms, parking lots, or entry area.

MGRI Telephones

The office telephones are available for emergency calls and authorized personal calls. Please notify the receptionist of any expected emergency calls.

Professional Appearance

Faculty are expected to dress professionally. For primary and elementary, black, white, khaki, or blue slacks or capri pants and blouse. The MGRI jacket is to be worn at arrival and pick-up times; name badges are to be worn at all times. The Montessori t-shirt may be worn on Friday.

Sandals, open-toed shoes, t-shirts, jeans, tight pants, shorts, spaghetti straps, or revealing clothes are not permitted. Be aware that long fingernails and excessive jewelry may be unsafe for children and yourself. Tattoos are to be discreetly covered. Personal items are not permitted during scheduled work hours, including purses, wallets, shoulder bags, backpacks, fanny packs, etc.

Punctuality and Absence

Consistent punctuality is expected for the reliability of adequate coverage for the children. Faculty should follow their scheduled hours consistently for both arrival and departure. Professional responsibilities should begin from the moment of documented arrival and until departure. Unless otherwise approved, early arrival or extended departure may affect future scheduling. All faculty are expected to track their weekly hours and communicate with administration in advance to prevent overtime (more than 40 hours weekly).

Notify the administration for any absence or lateness. Requests for absences (paid or unpaid) are to be as far in advance as possible using the proper procedure. Requests for absences are not authorized until approved in writing.

Health Concerns

The health condition of each child is to be checked and recorded daily. This practice should always maintain respect and discretion.

No child is to be admitted with indications of sickness or a contagious condition. MGRI cannot admit a child who is sick or has a contagious condition. If a child develops or is suspected of illness while at the school, notify the parent to come promptly and bring the child home or to a physician; isolate the child as much as possible. Document appropriately with the health referral form.

Vomiting, fever, diarrhea, open or infected sores, runny eyes or nose are signs of possible communicable illness. Along with one or more of these signs, a noticeable change in a child's behavior or disposition may indicate illness, especially in infants.

When a parent is notified to pick up a child for a health concern, the child cannot be readmitted without a validly signed and dated note from the treating physician stating that the child is healthy and can return to the school. MGRI requires a minimum of 24 hours for a child to return to the school from the first administration of a prescribed antibiotic. A child must be free of a fever (less than 100°) for 24 hours before returning.

Document any accident, injury, or illness that occurs to a child and obtain a parent signature. This includes any incident observed upon arrival. This report must be professionally written and grammatically correct. (accident/incident form)

Faculty are obligated by law to report suspected abuse or neglect of a child's health, safety, or welfare.

Proper hand washing is the most important method of controlling the spread of infection. Disposable gloves or hand sanitizers are not adequate substitutes for handwashing. It is our policy for children and faculty to wash their hands frequently with soap and running water. The proper procedure is turn on water and wet hands; turn water off; apply soap and lather hands for 20 seconds; turn on water and rinse hands; turn water off; dry hands:

- After using a toilet
- Before and after assisting a child with changing or toileting
- After assisting a child with nose wiping
- Before and after any food related activity
- Before and after entering the infant areas
- Before and after administering medication
- Before and after treating a wound
- Whenever exposed to blood or body fluids

Disposable latex gloves should be used before contact with blood or blood-containing body fluids such as diarrhea or vomit. Blood contaminated materials (clothing, bandages, diapers, wipes, etc.) are to be disposed in securely tied plastic bags. Otherwise, disposable gloves are not to be used in the normal changing or toileting procedures.

MGRI does not promote or permit the use of pacifiers for children. Research shows that pacifier use interferes with a child's optimal development of the immune system, dentition, language, self-regulation, and the bonding process.

Lice are a particular concern for a child's health and that of others. A child with lice may remain at the school until regular pickup; assist the child to avoid any head contact with others. Inform the parent at departure; document properly with the Incident/Accident form and provide the handouts from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) for the parent to initiate appropriate treatment. The child can return to school the day following the first administration of treatment.

Remain respectful and sensitive with a child of confirmed or suspected illness to avoid negative stigmatizing of their condition.

Drug and Smoke Free Workplace

It is MGRI policy to maintain a drug and smoke free workplace.

Smoking and use of other tobacco products, including electronic cigarettes, is prohibited on MGRI premises. Any individual under the influence of alcohol or mind-altering substance will be subject to discipline, including possible termination.

Use of MGRI Property

Unless authorized by the administration, the personal use of MGRI property is prohibited. This includes classroom materials, tools, machines, copy machines, computers, and credit cards.

Administration of Medication

MGRI cannot administer any medication to a child without a currently valid prescription or physician's note of authorization specifically for the child. This includes all prescription and non-prescription (over-the-counter) forms of medication, as well as sunscreen. The parent must sign an Authorization for Medical Treatment form at the school. Each administration by faculty is to be documented.

In order to monitor any reactions of a child, note that the initial dose of a medication must be administered by the parent or a physician. MGRI requires a minimum of 24 hours for a child to return to the school from the first administration of a prescribed antibiotic.

Breastmilk

MGRI encourages the use of breastmilk for feeding infants. Whenever possible nursing mothers are supported to feed their child at the school. Otherwise MGRI follows procedures in the storage, preparation, and feeding of frozen or fresh breastmilk. A breastmilk-fed infant cannot be given formula without written authorization from the parent. Copies of these procedures are included in the handbook appendix.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of an accident involving a child, necessary first aid should be given. If the accident is severe or if faculty are uncertain, call 911 and notify the parents. If the child's parents are not present at the time of professional responders, the original notarized Authorization for Emergency Medical Treatment form must accompany the child. These forms are kept in a binder in the MGRI office and each respective classroom. An Incident/Accident form must also be completed.

Unannounced fire drills are conducted monthly. Always maintain proper count of the children and check all areas of the classrooms before exiting.

Children should be brought inside the building at any sign of lightning or seriously inclement weather. In the event of a thunderstorm with lightning, hail, or the threat of tornados children should be kept away from windows.

If the event requires evacuation, faculty are to assist children to relocate in the designated safety area.

Emergency Closing

Emergencies such as severe weather, fires, plumbing, or power failures can disrupt the school's operation. In extreme cases, these circumstances may require the closing of the school.

When the decision to close is made after the school has opened, parents will receive official notification from the appropriate MGRI faculty. When the decision to close is made before the school day has begun, the school will follow information from public announcements via the television and radio stating the closing of public schools due to hazardous situations, such as storms or hurricane warnings.

Guidance and Discipline

Each child is regarded with respect and treated as an intelligent individual. Children are encouraged to become self-directed and independent within a social environment, learning responsibility and regulation of their emotions and behavior.

Our program provides opportunities for children to learn how to understand their behavior with the purpose of developing self-control. They are helped to recognize and understand their feelings, the relationship of their actions on others, and to find acceptable solutions to problems. Conflict is seen as a normal process of learning social skills.

The program is committed to an environment and atmosphere of trust, safety, and security for all children. Policies, procedures, and interactions are alert to prevent children from physical, as well as emotional, harm.

Faculty recognize the importance of their own behavior as a model for children to imitate.

Florida State law prohibits anyone from physically striking or otherwise frightening, humiliating, or threatening a child.

MGRI's child guidance policy is as follows:

True discipline is provided by creating a positive, enjoyable learning environment that a child wants to participate in.

Each child is respected as an individual. Correcting of children is intended to develop self-direction and self-control with an awareness of others.

A child is redirected to more acceptable behaviors or activities. Children are guided to resolve conflicts by example, encouragement, suggestion, discussion, and supportive intervention in order to help them solve their own problems.

Basic expectations are regularly discussed with the children.

A child will be given the opportunity to have a break from a situation when needed.

A child may be asked or accompanied to leave a situation for a brief period to regain composure.

Destruction of property or harming of self or others will not be allowed. In extreme circumstances, a child may be physically removed from an area. As a last resort, a child may be restrained in situations where safety may be at risk for the child or others.

If a child's behavior is consistently a concern to the interference or safety of others, faculty and administration will review the appropriateness of the school to meet the child's needs and abilities. The child's parents will be informed of the school's concerns. If the school administration determines, parents will be consulted to dismiss the child's enrollment. MGRI will provide referral or advice when relevant.

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

Employees are expected to work according to their scheduled hours or as directed by the administration, and meet the responsibilities as defined in the respective and most current job description, teaching evaluation, and Faculty Handbook. Work schedules may change according to the needs of the program at the discretion of MGRI administration.

Habitual tardiness, absenteeism, and/or misuse of leave time will be grounds for disciplinary action including dismissal.

Fulfill and maintain all necessary requirements, credentials, and continuing education according to the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF). Background screening is required before working with children. DCF child care hours are to be completed within 90 days after date of hire; it is the employee responsibility to register for and complete these hours accordingly. Failure to comply will result in dismissal or leave without pay.

At-Will Employment

In the State of Florida employment is considered "at will" and assumes to me in the best interests of both employee and employer.

Any misrepresentation, falsification, or material omission of information either on the application for employment or related to position of employment, whenever discovered, may result in change in pay, position, or dismissal from employment.

Affirmative Action

MGRI is an equal Employment Opportunity Employer that does not discriminate or tolerate discrimination against qualified applicants or employees. It is the policy of MGRI to affirmatively ensure that employment is guided by the principle of equal opportunity and to reaffirm equal opportunity in all personnel-related actions.

MGRI intends to carry out the spirit of federal, state, and local laws and regulations which prohibit discrimination in employment on the basis of race; color; religion; national origin; gender; age; veteran's status; marital status; familial status, source of income, mental or physical disability; association with a member of protected class; or sexual orientation.

Non-discrimination

We provide an environment that is free from unlawful discrimination of any type, including discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law.

Americans with Disabilities Act

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities in job application procedures, hiring, firing, advancement, compensation fringe benefits, job training and other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment. A qualified employee or applicant with a disability is an individual who satisfies skill, experience, education, and other job-related requirements of the position held or desired, and who, with or without reasonable accommodation, can perform the essential functions of that position. The ADA does not alter MGRI's right to hire the best qualified applicant but does prohibit discrimination against a qualified applicant or employee because of his or her disability.

Employment Records

It is very important that your records are up to date and accurate. Please notify the administration of any changes in your address, marital status, number of dependents, telephone number, legal name, beneficiary, emergency contact, or similar personal information changes.

Personnel files are confidential property of the MGRI. Employees have limited access to their personnel records. Requests to review your employment file should be made in writing to the administration. The employment file shall be reviewed in the presence of the administration. Employees wanting to make an addition/correction to the information contained in the record should submit the information to the administration.

Introductory Period

All newly hired employees are in an introductory period of 90 days. Introductory employees will have an evaluation at the end of the 90 days. At that time MGRI will determine the employee status as regular, terminated, or extended.

Employment and compensation can be terminated at any time during this period with or without cause at the discretion of MGRI.

Employee Status

For the purpose of determining the eligibility for certain employee benefits, MGRI employees are classified as:

- Regular Full Time (35 or more hours per week as contracted)
- Regular Part Time (less than 35 hours per week as contracted)
- Temporary Full-time (35 or more hours per week hired for a specific period of time)
- Temporary Part-time (less than 35 hours per week hired for a specific period of time)
- Substitute
- Contracted

Exempt employees

All regular and temporary full-time employees are Exempt Employees who meet the criteria established by federal and state law. Exempt employees are hired to perform a job and paid on a salary basis regardless of the time it takes (typically 40 hours per week) and are exempt from minimum wage and overtime requirements.

Non-exempt employees

All regular and temporary part-time employees are Non-exempt employees. They are compensated for the actual amount of time spent on their job. Federal and state laws require payment of at least minimum wage and overtime to all non-exempt employees. These employees are required to record the number of hours worked during each work week. Non-exempt employees are paid on an hourly basis. Non-exempt employees are not necessarily paid a predetermined amount for each pay period.

Pay Procedures

The salaries of employees shall be paid bi-weekly in accordance with the payroll calendar attached to employee contracts. Each employee is responsible for following the proper procedures for documenting daily work hours. Misrepresenting number of hours or times actually worked is subject to disciplinary action, including termination.

Payroll Deductions

Payroll deductions for exempt and non-exempt employees will be made according to Florida law, employment agreement, or upon request of the employee. Mandatory deductions include federal tax, state tax, FICA (Social Security) and worker's compensation insurance. Non-mandatory deductions such as medical insurance require written authorization from an employee prior to being withheld.

Overtime for Non-Exempt Employees

It is the employee's responsibility to avoid overtime pay by communicating with MGRI administration in advance.

Pay Increases and Promotions

Pay increases or promotions are not automatic. Increases or promotions are granted on the basis of merit as documented by a performance evaluation, attainment of a relevant professional credential, administrative negotiation, or change in employee position or responsibilities.

Expenses Reimbursement

Reimbursement for work related travel will be considered on an individual basis and must be approved by the Director. Travel to and from work (i.e., personal car mileage, public transportation, etc.) will not be reimbursed.

Overnight and out-of-state stay will include per diem and meal costs in accordance with the U.S. General Services Administration rates.

Personal purchases of classroom or program related materials must be authorized in order to receive reimbursement.

Performance Evaluations

The performance evaluation is a descriptive indicator of an employee's practice according to the standards expected in their respective position. The employee should become familiar with the content of their performance evaluation form as a specific and precise guide to their job

A new employee will receive an initial evaluation after the completion of 90 days of employment.

Full and part-time employees will participate in their performance evaluation annually.

Professional Development

All employees are encouraged to improve their professional skills and knowledge, as well as to advance their career.

The employee annual performance evaluation contains a professional development plan that describes the expectations for the individual's growth.

Breaks

Faculty are expected to follow their assigned schedule which may contain a lunch or personal break. Any alteration of scheduled breaks but be approved by the administration. Note that any break time will be with the condition of appropriate staffing coverage.

BENEFITS

Paid Time Off

Regular full-time employees are eligible to earn paid time off (PTO). Any type of absence may be classified as PTO including sickness, vacation, or personal. All other employees are not eligible for PTO unless otherwise approved by the Director. PTO cannot be requested on the business day(s) immediately before and after the first and last day of a holiday closure unless otherwise approved by the Director. All PTO will be available to eligible employees for use by the start date of the employee's contract. Employees should reference their employment contract for total hours/days of PTO available. PTO does not rollover into the following school year.

With proper notice and upon the approval of the administration, an additional day of religious or cultural significance that is not scheduled may be substituted for one of the above paid holidays, for earned vacation leave, or leave without pay.

2022/2023 Holidays and School Closures:

- September 6 - Labor Day
- November 11 - Veteran's Day
- November 21-25 - Thanksgiving
- December 19-30 - Christmas
- January 16 - Martin Luther King Day
- February 20 - President's Day
- March 13-17 - Spring Break
- May 29 - Memorial Day

Family Leave

MGRI offers up to twelve (12) weeks of family leave during a 12-month period and may be requested as parental leave during the year following the birth or adoption of a child. Leave cannot be taken more than 12 months after the arrival of the child and must be taken as a consecutive period of time.

MGRI's Family Leave Policy also applies to an employee facing a serious health condition, or to care for a spouse, parent, child, parent-in-law, or domestic partner with a serious health condition. Official documentation must be provided.

Employees who have been employed by MGRI for at least 12 months are eligible for paid family leave. Paid family leave is only available to employees planning to return to work and requires the use and exhaustion of any annual and/or sick leave the employee may still have available. The administration will determine eligibility for paid family leave. For employees who are not eligible for paid family leave, they may take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave upon administrative approval.

Emergency/Bereavement Leave

Employees will be granted emergency leave for death in the immediate family (spouse/domestic partner, children, parents, or siblings); documentation will be necessary. The number of approved days will be reviewed according to the individual situation.

Jury Duty or Court Appearance

Employees should notify their supervisor as soon as they are summoned to serve on jury duty or subpoenaed to court. All employees will be excused from work for jury duty or when subpoenaed.

Employees will be paid the difference between their regularly scheduled pay and the amount they receive from jury duty or as court witness for up to five (5) days unless otherwise required by local ordinance. It is required that employees submit evidence of the amount of fees received from the court in order to receive this benefit.

An employee on jury duty must communicate with MGRI during each day of jury duty regarding expected length of absence. If released from jury duty during working hours, depending on the time the employee may be able to report to work.

Workers Compensation

It is our collective responsibility to maintain a safe environment by following reasonable practices to avoid injury. As an employee of MGRI, you are covered under the Florida Safe Employment Act.

Workers' compensation is a mandatory insurance of MGRI that provides employees who become injured while on the job with medical coverage and income replacement. MGRI pays for the medical treatment and lost wages of employees who suffer job-related injuries or illnesses.

All employees are covered by workers' compensation laws of the State of Florida. An employee must immediately notify the administration of any accident or injury occurring at work or as a result of working.

Tuition Assistance

In addition to the structured training program for all employees, regular full-time employees are eligible to receive tuition assistance for external training programs upon approval by the Director. If mandated by the Director to improve employee job skills and fill a job requirement, the organization will pay the cost of the training or education.

Prior to payment for training, MGRI will require that the employee sign an Education Assistance Agreement outlining the stipulations in order to receive tuition assistance (see form attached). Availability of tuition assistance is subject to available MGRI funds and is not a guaranteed benefit. Training programs must be approved by the director and may include but is not limited to a Montessori certification program or CDA training program.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

All employees are expected to follow the AMS Code of Ethics and all policies, procedures, and declarations as presented in this handbook.

Conflict Resolution

Problematic issues with colleagues may occur. It is important not to react emotionally, or to complain about, accuse, or criticize a person to others. As difficult as it may be, respectfully communicate directly with the person about your disagreement, conflict, or misunderstanding. Avoid personalization of the issue. Acknowledge each other's perspectives and feelings. Agree to an appropriate resolution that maintains the integrity of professional principles.

If an agreement cannot be reached, both parties should bring the matter to the attention of the administration.

MGRI is committed to providing meaningful, respectful, and equitable positions and experiences of employment within the stated purpose of the school. An employee who is dissatisfied with a condition of their employment should request a formal meeting with MGRI administration to directly discuss concerns. MGRI expects to be able to resolve any dissatisfaction as fairly, realistically, and supportively as possible.

In the unlikely event that the employee is not satisfied with the outcome, she/he may request resignation or pursue legal counsel.

Unacceptable Conduct

This includes the following examples which may result in disciplinary action or termination:

- Neglect or abuse of a child, including failure to report actual or suspected neglect or abuse of a child;
- Dishonesty, including falsification of timecards, personnel records or other MGRI documents and misrepresentation of any fact to or on behalf of MGRI;
- Unauthorized use of MGRI funds, equipment, vehicles, documents, or property;
- Theft, misappropriation of property, or intentionally damaging property belonging to a child, family, visitor, employee, or to MGRI;
- Disrespectful actions or words directed to a child, family member, visitor, colleague, or others at any time;
- Insubordination or refusal to obey instructions from a supervisor or administrator;
- Using obscene, abusive or threatening language;
- Disorderly conduct or aggressive behavior;
- Leaving the job during working hours without permission;
- Threatening, intimidating, or coercive behavior;
- Immoral or indecent behavior;
- Unauthorized sleeping on the job;
- Making false or malicious statements about MGRI, children, families, visitors, or other employees;
- Failure to cooperate with an internal investigation;
- Patterns of absenteeism or tardiness;
- Disclosing confidential information about children, families, employees, or MGRI without authorization;
- Failure to report a workplace injury or accident involving an employee, child, family member, or visitor;
- Possession of any firearm, ammunition, explosive, or any other weapon on MGRI property,
- Willful disregard of safety rules and procedures;
- Consumption or being under the influence of alcoholic beverage on MGRI premises;
- Unwarranted interference with the work of other employees;
- Failure to comply with any our policy set forth in this handbook;
- Failure to report the harassment or intimidation of an employee specifically related to sex, ethnicity, age, religion, national origin, disability, or marital status;
- Any violation of professional ethics or codes of conduct;

Sexual Harassment

MGRI prohibits sexual harassment in any form. Sexual harassment is defined as deliberate or repeated behavior of a sexual nature that is unwelcome. Any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature interfering with someone's employment, job decisions, and work performance.

Theft

In the event of theft of an employee's personal property while on campus, it should be reported immediately to the administration; it is the victim's prerogative to contact the police. Note that MGRI assumes no liability for lost, stolen, or damaged property. Employees should take adequate

precautions in safeguarding their personal belongings and property while at work; lockers are available during work hours.

Conflict of Interest

Employees are prohibited from using their job title or the MGRI name for private profit or benefit.

Employees are prohibited from providing services of any kind to families during their regularly scheduled work hours.

A potential conflict of interest may result from an employee having a child or relative enrolled at MGRI. Such an employee must maintain their assigned role as their primary responsibility and not interfere with the child's respective schedule or activity,

Disciplinary Action

Disciplinary action will progress in the following manner:

Verbal warning: Verbal statement to employee that he/she has violated a policy or expectation and that such violation may not continue.

- Written reprimand: Formal notification in writing regarding the violation.
- Suspension: Loss of work and/or pay for a specific number of hours or days. Notice of suspension is provided to the employee in writing.
- Dismissal: The employment is terminated.

Resignation and Termination

Resignation: An employee who wishes to discontinue their employment should provide a written letter of resignation at least two weeks in advance. Employment maintenance during part or all of this time is at the discretion of MGRI. Vacation days and holidays may not be used to satisfy the required notice period.

Termination: Any employee may be determined unsatisfactory by MGRI to remain employed. Employees who are terminated involuntarily are not eligible for accrued vacation leave.

MGRI will issue the final paycheck according to the normal pay schedule for an employee who resign or is terminated All MGRI property, including keys and equipment, must be returned to the administration on the final day of work; any pay that is due will be withheld until all MGRI property is received.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

I, _____, hereby acknowledge that I have received a copy of MGRI’s Faculty Handbook in electronic and/or paper form for review. I understand that these manuals contain information regarding MGRI’s expectations which affect me as an employee. I acknowledge that I have read and understand the received handbook.

I also understand that MGRI may revise, supplement, or rescind policies, procedures or benefits described in the manuals, with or without notice. As such, I understand that it is my responsibility to comply with the policies and any revisions made to them.

Employee Signature

Date