

TODDLER PROGRAM



FAMILY HANDBOOK

2025-2026

YUKON MONTESSORI SCHOOL

WELCOME

If you are a family enrolling your child(ren) at Yukon Montessori School (YMS) for the first time, welcome to our growing community of learners. If your family is already part of our community, we are excited to have your children continue to grow and learn with us.

We are a non-profit school dedicated to providing education and programs grounded in Montessori philosophy for children ages 18 months to 13 years. In partnership with families, highly trained and dedicated educators create environments that nurture each child's holistic learning and development, empowering them to reach their full potential.

As a collective of children, educators, and families, we strive to bring our vision of *inspiring students to become self-reliant and compassionate citizens who are equipped to make positive change in their world* to life. On any given school day, families stepping through the doors of YMS will discover a dynamic and inspired learning centre with children of all ages learning and growing alongside their rich relationships with other students, educators, and the materials in the prepared learning environments.

The Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) Montessori approach assists children in developing to their full potential, encouraging learning driven by creativity and curiosity. We foster independence in education and beyond as students emerge into their futures as contributing citizens in their communities and the world.

We believe children are capable and confident partners in their own learning. We seek to understand, value, and include the uniqueness of each child. We meet each child where they are at in nurturing prepared environments that promote their learning and their social and emotional development. We believe children, educators, and families are partners in our education and learning community and build relationships with each other as empathic and compassionate learners. We engage with and learn from the unique skills, knowledges, and cultures each individual brings to our school.

YMS has grown from one small casa classroom to a school with over 75 learners. This growth is the result of the passion of our educators and the commitment of our families to the education of their children. We will continue to grow and adapt in response to interest in Montessori education. As a community, we look forward to the possibilities and the learning that will emerge in the upcoming school year.

This handbook contains information about our programming and other practical matters related to the operation of our school. Please take time to review the information and our guiding policies.

CONTACTING US

The school can be contacted at any time by emailing admin@montessoriborealis.com, and during school hours by calling 867-456-7100 (please leave us a message if we are attending to other matters). Our educators will provide classroom contact information to enrolled families before their start date. Our Board of Directors can be contacted by emailing president@montessoriborealis.com.

TODDLER PROGRAM

Our toddler learning activities support children in their instinctive motivation to learn from and adapt to their surroundings, soak up knowledge through sensorial experiences, and do things for themselves. Our educators nurture growing independence in movement, communication, and self care. Activities of purposeful play form the basis of daily work cycles, guiding students toward cognitive development, receptive and expressive language development, and the strengthening of fine and gross motor skills.

Ideally, students begin the toddler program at 18 months of age and remain until they are ready to move into our preschool program (between ages 2-3).

Daily Classroom Schedule

Our toddler programming runs from Monday to Friday, 8:00 am to 3:30 pm (excepting closures).

8:00 am - 8:30 am	Arrival and welcome at the classroom door
8:30 am - 11:00 am	Morning work cycle*
11:00 am - 12:00 pm	Outdoor play
12:00 pm - 1:00 pm	Lunch
1:00 pm - 3:00 pm	Circle and nap time / Work cycle as children wake
3:30 pm	End of day pick up

Students must be picked up by 3:30 pm

**During work cycles, students work with specially designed, hands-on materials that invite exploration and engage the senses in the process of learning. Work cycles respect individual variations in the learning process and facilitate the development of coordination, concentration, independence, and a sense of order. Music, movement, stories, and snack time are incorporated into work cycles.*

Annual Classroom Schedule

Our toddler programming runs year-round, and is closed for:

- All Canadian statutory and Yukon holidays
- Two weeks of Winter Break, according to the Whitehorse school calendar
- Two weeks of March Break, according to the Whitehorse school calendar
- Professional development days (may vary from the Whitehorse school calendar)
- Emergency closures as required
- Transition days as required (typically in August)

YMS will distribute a detailed school calendar to families before the start of each school year. Please note that financial reimbursement is not provided for any closures.

Montessori Curriculum

We strive to expose our students to learning situations that include the major areas of the Montessori curriculum – practical life (including self-care skills such as toileting independence), movement, sensorial, and language(s). Our educators enrich this curriculum with music, art, early numeracy concepts, social and emotional skills, and outdoor learning experiences.

APPLICATION AND ENROLLMENT

Toddler Program

Families can apply for enrollment at any time during the year. There is a non-refundable application fee.

Registration in the upcoming school year is offered to current YMS students prior to new students.

Montessori principles regarding classroom balance inform and guide offers of enrollment. More detailed information is provided in our *Waitlist Policy*.

YMS will contact families by email when a space is available. YMS will confirm your child's enrollment after receiving a required non-refundable, non-transferable enrollment deposit and completed registration package.

YMS reserves the right to pause applications, refuse applications, and/or to cap waitlists at any time.

TUITION FEES AND RELATED FINANCIAL POLICIES

YMS is a participant in the Yukon Early Learning and Child Care (YELCC) funding program, which means that \$700 of your monthly tuition installment will be paid to YMS on your behalf by the Yukon Government.

Your child's receipt of full funding is based on regular, full-time attendance. Families are responsible for paying the remaining balance, including any amount of funding not provided by YELCC due to extended voluntary absences or infrequent attendance. If you are planning a vacation or absence longer than four consecutive school weeks, please inform YMS as early as possible. Financial reimbursement is not provided for absences.

Toddler Program Tuition

Tuition for the year is \$15,271.20, of which **\$6,871.20** is payable by the family.

A \$572.60 non-refundable, non-transferable deposit is due at the time of enrollment and is your child's monthly payment installment for June. Your deposit represents a commitment to a space in the program for your child; it cannot be refunded or transferred to another month or to another child.

The remaining tuition balance (\$6,298.60) can be paid in full on or before September 1st, or in 11 equal monthly installments of \$572.60.

Annual Society Fee

There is a non-refundable society fee of \$25 per family per year. This fee is invoiced at the same time as your enrollment deposit.

Invoicing and Payments

Families paying through monthly installments, which is the default payment option, will be invoiced 14 days before the first day of each month. Payments are due by the first day of each month, September to August (you will not be invoiced for June), and can be paid via e-transfer to: treasurer@montessoriborealis.com. Please email our treasurer if you wish to pay once in full or in quarterly installments. **Please note that payments are non-refundable and non-transferable.**

There is a non-refundable fee of \$40 per past due payment. This fee is payable immediately.

YMS reserves the right to cancel a child's enrollment when an invoiced payment is past due by over 14 calendar days.

Child Care Subsidy

Families that have been approved to receive an income-tested subsidy from Yukon Early Learning and Child Care (YELCC) must ensure that YMS is immediately provided with a copy of the approval letter and are responsible for the full amount of their child's tuition fees until the letter is received and tuition can be recalculated.

After receiving your approval letter, YMS will recalculate your child's tuition fees based on the number of months and amount indicated in the letter. You will be notified and invoiced or refunded accordingly.

You are required to complete and sign a [Child Care User Subsidy Eligibility Form](#) each month and provide it to YMS. YMS will submit the completed form to YELCC on your behalf. Failure to provide completed forms may result in families being invoiced for full tuition amounts. Printed forms are available at the school office.

Withdrawal Policy

We understand that unforeseen circumstances can lead to changes and occasionally a family will need to withdraw from YMS. Providing YMS with timely notice of withdrawal allows educators to prepare for impacts on the child(ren), the class, and the YMS community. It also allows the school to offer upcoming vacancies to waitlisted children.

We require written notice of withdrawal on or before the first day of the month prior to the month that the child(ren) will no longer be attending YMS. If notice is given after the first day of the month prior, the payment due on the first day of the month that the child(ren) will no longer be attending will be owed.

For example, if a family provides late notice on November 5th that they will be withdrawing their child(ren) effective December 1st, their payment(s) for December will still be due. If notice is given on or before November 1st, then the December payment(s) will not be due.

This Withdrawal Policy applies to after-school program payments whether a family is withdrawing from the school or only from an after-school program.

Withdrawing families forfeit their non-refundable, non-transferrable enrollment deposit(s). Deposit(s) cannot be transferred from June to a child's final month of attendance or used to cover a payment due as a result of providing late notice of withdrawal.

YMS reserves the right to end an enrollment at any time if circumstances suggest that ongoing attendance is not in the child's or the program's best interests. YMS will make reasonable attempts to communicate and problem-solve in every circumstance.

PROGRAM-RELATED PRACTICES

Arrival and Departure

Please adhere to arriving between **8:00 - 8:30 am** and departing at **3:30 pm**. A fee of \$1 per minute may be applied for arrivals before 8:00 am and for departures after 3:30 pm.

We ask that parents refrain from coming into our classrooms. This gives our students a space that is all their own for learning, helps them grow their confidence in independent routines, and helps our educators build connections by assisting with transitions. Parents can arrange for a classroom observation with their child's lead guide and will be invited into their child's classroom for YMS community events throughout the year. See our policy on *Family Engagement* for more details.

Your child can only be picked up by contacts listed in their registration forms. Please contact the school office or your child's lead guide when alternate pickup situations arise and as contacts require updating.

Attendance

Please contact your child's lead guide if your child will not be attending school. If your child is not attending due to a communicable illness, please inform us immediately.

Toileting

Our educators will collaborate closely with families regarding toileting. We encourage gentle, routine-led toileting independence. Once a child is comfortable in the classroom and moving around it well, we will ask you to provide cloth trainers and many changes of clothing. Children will still wear diapers for naps until they are regularly waking dry.

Naps

Children will have a daily nap/quiet time between 1:00 - 3:00 pm.

- ✓ Please provide a labelled blanket (*to stay at school*).

What to Bring to School

Please help support your child's educators by **clearly labelling all items coming to school with your child's/family's name**. YMS is not responsible for any lost items.

Lunches and Snacks

Please ensure that your child has:

- ✓ A labelled, dishwasher-friendly water bottle at school;
- ✓ A nutritious lunch each day, labelled and packed with an ice pack, preferably in reusable packaging; and
- ✗ Please refrain from sending processed or sugary items.
- ✓ Unless YMS has informed families in writing that certain food items are not permitted, students can bring nut products and other foods containing common allergens.

We are regulated to ask that lunches contain foods from all food groups as set out in Canada's food guide (for example, fruits and vegetables, protein foods, and whole grains).

Our toddler classroom provides two nutritious snacks (mid-morning and mid-afternoon) that include foods from at least two food groups. Snacks are collaboratively prepared by our students and staff.

Clothing

Ideally, your child's clothing is comfortable, washable, and easy to manage (for diapering, toileting, etc.). Each child needs:

- ✓ Labelled, non-marking indoor shoes (*to stay at school*);
- ✓ A labelled bag with a few labelled changes of clothes (*to stay at school – soiled clothing will be sent home, so please return fresh changes of clothes the next day*);
- ✓ Well-labelled, seasonally appropriate outdoor clothing layers and gear (*we will be outside every day, so please be prepared for ever-changing weather conditions*).

Toys from Home

- ✗ We ask parents to please explain to their children that their toys are to stay in their vehicle or at home. One comfort item such as a quiet plush toy is welcome (labelled please).

Field Trips

Off-site activities extend our curriculum and expand opportunities for experiential learning and physical activity. Throughout the school year, students participate in well-planned and supported off-site activities. Families will not typically be notified about smaller excursions unless there are logistical or packing considerations. Families will be notified ahead of time for more significant excursions.

Birthdays

Birthdays are special and our early learning classrooms celebrate children's birthdays as a community with a Montessori birthday ceremony.

If you are planning a birthday party for your child, please feel free to leave party invitations with lead guides for distribution. We ask that you save any gift giving for celebrations outside of school.

VALUES, GUIDING PRINCIPLES, AND THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

We believe that the foundation of learning is through trusting, nurturing and reciprocal relationships between all members of the school community. Families are always welcome to contact the school with any questions, concerns, or updates regarding their child or their child's experiences.

Please see our policies on *Social and Emotional Guidance* and *Family Engagement* for detailed information on guiding principles, family partnership, and collaboration.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

YMS follows the current guidelines and policies for Yukon licensed child care centres and school age programs, enhanced with increased frequency of cleaning and sanitizing and thoughtful practices.

Illness Policy

YMS's illness policy is in the best interests of the school community. When sick children come into the school, they almost always infect others, which causes avoidable difficulties for other families and can even lead to classroom or school closures when staff and their families become ill.

Sick Students

If your child is sick, please do not bring them into the school. We offer enriched and active programs, and unwell children will find it difficult to join in.

- ✖ If your child has a severe cough or runny nose that is in the contagious phase or impacts their ability to participate in the program, please keep them home. We understand that lingering coughs and clear running noses can persist after the contagious phase of illness and children may return during this phase if they have enough energy to participate in the program.
- ✖ If your child has a fever or chills, please keep them home until the fever has been gone for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications (e.g., Tylenol, Advil, Motrin, etc.).
- ✖ If your child has been experiencing vomiting, diarrhea, or other symptoms of gastrointestinal illness, **please keep them home until your entire household has been completely free of symptoms for a minimum of 48 hours.**
- ✖ If your child has a contagious or spreadable condition (e.g., lice, scabies, worms, viral/bacterial infections such as flu, hand-foot-and-mouth disease, impetigo, strep throat, pink eye, etc.), please keep them home until the condition has been medically cleared as no longer contagious or spreading (a medical note is not required).
- ✖ If your child is experiencing loss of taste or smell or shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, please keep them home.

- ✓ Please inform us immediately if your child has contracted a communicable illness.

This list covers some of the more commonly experienced school-year illnesses but is certainly not exhaustive. We will keep families up to date about any health issues impacting our school. Please also keep us up to date about any health concerns you have regarding your child(ren).

If your child feels or becomes unwell during the school day, we will contact you for immediate pickup. If we cannot reach you, we will contact your emergency contact.

Staff Illnesses and Emergencies

YMS is a small non-profit school. We make reasonable efforts to schedule qualified substitute educators, but it is not always possible to guarantee substitute staffing when our core educators are not available. When emergency closures become necessary, YMS will make every attempt to contact families in advance. Keeping sick children at home until they are no longer contagious will help limit closures and their impacts on the school community.

Allergies

Please include all of your child's allergy information in your registration package. If a child's allergy information changes, please notify YMS. We will keep families up to date about any severe allergies impacting classrooms.

Prescription Medication

If your child needs to take prescription medication during school hours, a medical consent form must be completed by a parent or guardian. The medication must be handed directly to one of your child's educators in its original packaging with the prescription label adhered to the container and clearly identified with your child's name. Educators will administer the dosage indicated on the prescription label. The first dose must be administered at home to ensure that there is no allergic reaction.

Emergencies

In the event of an emergency, injury, or illness, YMS will not hesitate to seek proper care for a child. **Please keep emergency contact information up to date.** If there are any changes during the school year, please inform YMS immediately. In the case of an emergency, the child's parents will be informed as soon as possible. If we cannot reach the parents, we will contact the next emergency contact on file.

In the case of an evacuation, YMS will take students to the Kwanlin Dun Cultural Centre (1171 Front Street). Families will be contacted to pick up their child(ren) at this location if necessary.

Cold Weather Policy

We spend time outdoors each day, so please ensure your child is prepared for cold weather conditions by packing warm layers and well-labelled gear – an insulated coat and snowpants or a snowsuit, winter boots, warm socks, warm headwear, waterproof mittens, and a buff or neck warmer. Lead guides will use their discretion about heading out in extreme weather conditions.

Helmets

Activity-appropriate helmets are required for activities where helmets could prevent injuries. Lead guides will let families know when students should bring their helmets to school (labelled please).

Confidentiality and Duty to Report

YMS respects the privacy of our families. We recognize the importance of providing respectful and supportive services to families and strive to ensure that communications are kept in confidence and handled with sensitivity. However, if we have reason to believe that a child is at risk of harm, we are required by law to immediately report the information.