

FREEDOM MONTESSORI SCHOOL

PARENT HANDBOOK



2012-2013

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WELCOME TO FREEDOM MONTESSORI SCHOOL

Dear Parents and Guardians,

It is my honor to welcome you to the finest Montessori school in York County. I hope you experience the feelings of peace, grace, and love as you walk into Freedom Montessori. The staff and I welcome you to our school and hope that you share our excitement of learning as we journey into another school year.

Your child is about to enter the most magnificent journey of their life. The teachings and work of Maria Montessori will have you in awe as your child comes home with unbelievable stories of their education. We ask you to be supportive, positive, and enthusiastic about our work here Freedom Montessori. Parent involvement is crucial if we are to build successful futures. Children who know their parents are supportive in their education demonstrate high levels of achievement and good behavior. You are always welcome at Freedom Montessori.

Please use this handbook to provide answers to most of your questions. If you have questions, concerns, or comments about anything here at Freedom Montessori, please let me or your child's teacher know. Together, with grace and peace, we will achieve anything.

I look forward to working with all of you this year.

In Peace,

Jamie Laymon, M.Ed
Head of School
Freedom Montessori

ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

- Completed Application for Child Enrollment
- Medical Authorization Form
- South Carolina Dept. of Social Services Form
- Current Immunization Records
- Sick Policy Agreement
- Behavior Management Policy
- A Copy of Parent/Guardian Picture ID
- \$75.00 non refundable registration fee (non-refundable)
- \$150.00 Enrichment Fee*
- 5% Tuition Enrollment Deposit *
- Classroom Supplies or Fees

*All fees and deposits are non-refundable

FEES AND PAYMENT SCHEDULE

Program	Hours	Ages	Annual Tuition	Enrollment Deposit 5% of tuition	Annual Registration Fee	Quarterly/ Monthly/ Weekly Tuition	Annual Enrichment Fee	Encore (Afterschool 3:30 – 6:00 Monthly)
Toddler Half Day	8:30 a.m. – 12:00p.m.	24-36 months	\$3000	\$150	\$75	\$712.50/ \$285/ \$73	\$150	N/A
Toddler Full Day	8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.	24-36 months	\$6000	\$300	\$75	\$1425/ \$570/ \$146	\$150	\$135
Primary Half Day	8:30 a.m. – 12:00p.m.	3-6 years	\$3000	\$150	\$75	\$712.50/ \$285/ \$73	\$150	N/A
Primary Full Day	8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.	3-6 years	\$6000	\$300	\$75	\$1425/ \$570/ \$146	\$150	\$135

Mid- Year Enrollment is determined on a per student basis. The tuition balance is created by deducting the number of school days the child has missed and the per day cost of each day. Parents of students entering mid-year, must still provide the 10% non refundable deposit which will lower their monthly tuition costs. **ABC clients are calculated at a different rate, please call for information.**

Additional Fees

Application Fee is \$75.00 (non-refundable) and is due when the application is submitted.

Annual Enrichment is \$150.00 (non-refundable) prior to the first day of school. This money will be allotted for our Enrichment Programs, Technology Programs, and scholarships.

Encore is our afterschool program. It is optional. All students enrolling in our afterschool program will pay the monthly fee.

Lunch Program Students must bring their own lunches to Freedom Montessori School. We do not offer a hot lunch program.

Field Trip Fees are collected by individual classrooms and are based on classroom activity plans. Toddlers do not take field trips.

Supplies will vary by classroom. Information regarding supplies needed will be communicated to you prior to the beginning of the school year.

Multi Child Discount – a 10% deduction of the second child's annual tuition fee will be applied. All other fees apply.

If your child is out sick, on vacation or simply not at school, tuition will still be due on the date specified on your payment option form. Late fees will still be assessed.

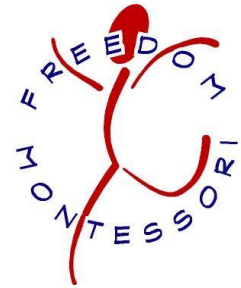
If our building is closed during the weekday or for a holiday and you have not paid your tuition, each day the building is closed you will be charged the late fee that is assessed on your payment option form. If Freedom Montessori has no school on a payment due date, tuition will be due the following work day.

We accept cash, check, Visa, Master Card, credit/debits or money orders. We have a \$35.00 return check policy fee. Payments should be placed in a sealed envelope with your child's name written on it and placed in the black box. Your child will be dismissed from our program after one week of nonpayment. (Nonpayment includes tuition and accrued late fees). Freedom Montessori reserves the right to refuse a personal check after one has been returned. Payment will then be required to be given in cash, money order or certified check.

If you are planning to withdraw your child from our program, a written two week notice must be given to the Director. You will be financially responsible for the two weeks that notice was given whether your child is still in attendance or not. Failure to give notice and payment of services rendered will result in a report to the credit bureau. Tuition is subject to change at any time during the school year.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission at Freedom Montessori is to provide a peaceful learning environment where children have the freedom to explore using their creativity and imagination. We will guide each child to discover their own potential.



OUR PHILOSOPHY

Freedom Montessori believes that all children are a gift from God, deserving to experience their greatest potential. We are committed to embracing, protecting, and honoring the individual spirit of each of our children, in a safe and enriched environment. Through motivation and inner discipline, we feel our children will develop the FREEDOM to experience the joy of learning.

THE PURPOSE OF A MONTESSORI EDUCATION

The Montessori approach to education is centered in the uniqueness and potentials of the evolving child. The purpose is to develop the whole child into a well rounded human being. Children enter this world with a natural desire to learn and to perfect themselves. Montessori education fulfills this instinctive need by providing a "Prepared Environment" where children are allowed the excitement of learning by choice rather than by force. Children acquire an "inner discipline" that will guide them to self-development and self-learning.

Individualized lessons and instruction are given according to the interests and readiness of the child. The multi-age setting allows for modeling leadership, mentoring skills, and socialization between different age groups. In addition to academics, the program fosters virtues such as love, peacefulness, compassion and kindness. Children imbibe values of respect for nature, caring for and acceptance of others, and becoming a responsible member of society.

Mankind's basic tendencies are to explore, form order, imitate, abstract, imagine, form social groups, communicate, be independent, be obedient, be creative, learn discipline, participate in activities, repeat, and calculate. As they are satisfied, habits for lifelong learning perpetuate and children are free to become independent thinkers and learners.

Montessori Education can be summed up in one sentence - "Children teach themselves." Dr. Montessori believed that no human being is educated by another person. He/she must do it for herself or it will never be done. Montessori wanted to extend learning outside the classroom. She wanted each child to be excited about learning and to take that knowledge and curiosity to higher levels - that is - to become a part of their lives and to continuously learn without limits!

ENRICHMENT PROGRAM

Our enrichment curriculum provides a continuation of the Montessori philosophy of mutual respect, independence and cooperation that the children are accustomed to in the classroom.

STUDIO ART Children in the primary art classes are involved in gaining technical skills, learning to control a variety of media, and using visual symbols. They view art from many places and times and come to see that art plays a valued role in creating cultures and building civilizations. Lower elementary students are introduced to the stories of famous artists and view their masterpieces to learn about the elements and principles of art. They then apply what they have learned to their own work. They study and apply color, pattern, texture, line, and form. They draw with pencil, charcoal, pastels, crayons, and markers, and they learn to paint with watercolor, tempera, and acrylic paints. The children also experiment with printmaking, ceramics, collage and sculpture. Perhaps most importantly, they begin to experience the joy and satisfaction found in the creative endeavor.

MUSIC Children in primary music classes sing, dance, and play percussion instruments. They improvise melodies, rhythms and creative rhythm language which they use in a conversational manner to create their own music. As they sing or play instruments in ensembles, children build their skill and understanding of music conventions such as how to rehearse, critique, begin and end a performance.

MOVEMENT In the primary class, we practice 'natural gymnastic movements'. The encouragement of these movements lead to essential exercises such as balance, standing with good posture; walking and developing endurance in walking; running, jumping, moving and lifting weights. In the elementary class, the children learn the importance of fun, teamwork, sportsmanship, following rules, safety, and proper technique. Classes develop gross and fine motor skills, stamina, flexibility, hand-eye coordination, and basic skills such as dribbling a basketball, controlling a soccer ball, or the rudiments of baseball.

SPANISH In the primary classes, Maria Montessori's term "sowing the seeds of interest" could well be used to describe the overall goal for the primary Spanish language program. This means creating enjoyment, awareness, and an eagerness to learn more. The primary program focuses on developing listening and speaking skills. Early exposure to other languages creates a facility for understanding and speaking, as well as greater ease in later study. It also creates an early consciousness of culture - the richness of our many ways of being human.

MODERN TECHNOLOGY The Montessori philosophy advocates that the classroom be a reflection of the home, the community, and the world. Now, a century after Maria Montessori founded her Casa dei Bambini, the world is becoming a high technology society, with computers a part of everyday American lives. Computers are almost a household necessity, and basic word-processing programs are now easier for young children to use. We feel that it is important that we implement the use of technology in our enrichment program through computers, digital cameras and digital art programs.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION Godly Play® is an imaginative approach to Christian Education developed by Jerome Berryman. It is what he calls "his interpretation of Montessori religious education". He feels that children have experienced the presence of God, but lack the language to express this to others. In the Godly Play® enrichment class, the students will have entered a sacred space in which they can feel safe and free to respond as they are surrounded by parables, sacred stories and

liturgical action stories. Over a period of weeks, the director will present each of these stories using wooden figures and materials that allow them to hear and see the old stories in a new way. During the class time, the children hear the story, respond by wondering and using art response materials, and then participate in “the feast” which is their communion experience.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION As a SC Green Steps School and SC Champions of the Environment, we are dedicated to educating our young students on the importance of caring for our natural environment. We strive to instill a curiosity for the world around us by taking regular field trips through the City of Rock Hill PTR’s Environmental Education team. Monthly lessons are taught through themes in Enrichment classes using the Action for Cleaner Tomorrow curriculum guide and NAAEE’s guide for Early Childhood EE. Our lessons not only instill of love and caring for our Earth, but are also aligned with the SC State Curriculum Standards.

As we strive to reduce waste within the Freedom Center Building. We ask our parents to work with their children in creating and packing a waste free lunch for school each day. We will have parent workshops available throughout the year to assist parents in ways to implement more environmentally friendly behaviors at home.



Please refer to our Project Go Green website for more information.

<http://freedommontessori.wordpress.com/>

CURRICULUM

In addition to the philosophy and teachings of Maria Montessori, we at Freedom Montessori have developed a curriculum that specifically correlates with the South Carolina State Learning Standards for all students.

Our toddler, primary and elementary curriculums are available on our website www.freedommontessori.org or a hardcopy is available on request.

SUGGESTIONS FOR APPLYING MONTESSORI IN YOUR HOME

Parent Role as Teacher

- a. You are your child's first and most valued teacher. When your child expresses a desire to do something in your home, for example, cooking, show him/her how to do it in a way that he/she will be able to repeat alone. Demonstrate using as few words as possible and performing each action as clearly and carefully as possible. Your child learns more by watching than by listening, although both are avenues by which your child absorbs and processes information. Once you have demonstrated something to your child, allow him or her to do it alone and without correction (this could be difficult, but you will both benefit).
- b. Your Toddler or Primary child learns much from the process of an activity and is not product oriented (like adults) at this young age. Affirm the positive in his or her actions, and encourage him or her to do the activity right away. You may have to fight the urge to correct and/or criticize.
- c. Present your child with real work. These tasks will build character, self-esteem and intellect. Your child will attempt to model him or herself based upon your actions. Model the behaviors you would like to see your child acquire.

Creating a Montessori "prepared environment" in your home.

- a. Establish order. First create a daily routine that your young child can depend upon. Set times for play, meals and bed and keep to them whenever possible. Allow flexibility, but try to hold to the times that you set, so that your young child knows what to expect.
- b. Next, and you have probably heard this before, have "a place for everything and everything in its place". As adults this can be difficult. You can create variety and limit your child's toys by rotating them each month or week. Consider clearing out toy chests and replacing them with low shelves. Make child-sized work areas and eating areas. Lower the rod in your child's closet so he/she can hang up his or her own clothing. Allow your child to place folded clothing in designated space.

Activities

- a. Allow your child to select his or her own clothing. If you are not comfortable with the choice, allow them to select between two sets of clothes. Whenever you find

yourself in a struggle with your child, encouraging them to choose between two options often diffuses the situation.

- b. Allow your child to pack his or her own lunch. Make good, healthful foods that they enjoy available to them.
- c. Have plenty of paper, colored pencils and books available for your child to work with, as well as scissors, glue and other craft materials should also be available.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Hours of Operation

Freedom Montessori opens at 7:30 a.m. for early morning drop-off. Please do not enter the building before 7:30 a.m. Our school day begins at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 3:30 p.m. Our extended day programs run from 3:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. All students are encouraged to be in class by 8:30 a.m. each morning. Your child will be tardy after 8:30.

Late Pick Up for Encore

As our employees are scheduled to leave at closing at 6:00 p.m., a fee of \$15 per 15 minutes, per child, will be charged for late pickups. The fee will be applied at 6:01 p.m. and to every additional 15 minutes after 6:01 p.m. that your child remains at school. (Ex. After 6:01 p.m., \$15 per child. After 6:15 p.m. \$30 per child) Freedom Montessori may terminate child care services after 3 late pickups per year. (August – June) The clock on the computer in the front lobby of the center determines the time.

Freedom Montessori will operate according to the calendar at the front of this book. Please observe all dates that Freedom Montessori will not be open.

Drop-off Procedures

In the morning, please use the Main Entrance (Oakland Avenue) to the Freedom Center to walk your child into school. **PLEASE PARK IN A PARKING SPACE AND NOT ALONG THE SIDES OF THE BUILDING.** (A map is located in the back of this handbook.) All parents/guardians are required to electronically sign their child in each day. You will have at least 2 codes that are the last 4 digits of the primary and secondary sponsors' social security numbers (provided on your child's application).

Pick Up Procedures

Pick Up at Freedom Montessori will be new this year. Our goal is to ensure safety amongst all, so this procedure might change until we find the best way of doing pick up. **No one will be allowed to pick up a child without their code.** All children whom are dismissed at 3:30 will be placed in a car rider line and picked up by their parent or emergency contact person.

The teacher on duty will be responsible for electronically signing your child out.

If your child is not picked up by 3:45, you will be charged a \$20.00 late fee per day. Payment must be paid on that day. An excessive amount of late pickups can lead to dismissal of our program.

If your child is registered for Encore (afterschool) then they will immediately be chaperoned to the cafeteria to be greeted by our afterschool director. All Encore parents must come into the building to electronically sign their children out. Pick up after 6:00 is considered late and you will be charged as stated in this handbook.

We encourage parents to have their child in class by 8:30 a.m. If a student is dropped off after this time, the parent/guardian should electronically sign their child in and quietly escort their child to class. Same applies if child needs to be picked up during school hours. This is for attendance purposes and so that classrooms will not be disrupted.

A child will only be released to the parents or other persons who are at least 18 years of age and authorized by the parent to pick up the child. The designated person must show identification which matches the information on file. If you have designated someone who is not on your pick up list, please notify in writing or call Freedom Montessori before the scheduled pick up time and be sure that they have one of the codes assigned to your child.

Expectations for Behavior

It is the desire of Freedom Montessori to offer opportunities for each student to learn in an atmosphere that is most conducive to the realization of their potential. Basic to this goal is the provision of schools and classrooms that are safe and orderly, where students and staff recognize the rights of others, and where each student is free from fear, intimidation, and disruption of the educational process.

It is expected that all students will follow the rules and be respectful.

Freedom Montessori Ground Rules:

1. Respect self, others, and the environment.
2. Always use grace and courtesy.
3. Carry only one thing at a time.
4. Use two hands to carry an activity and/or materials.
5. Use a rug for all floor activities.
6. Use a table for all table activities.
7. When you need a teacher, walk over to her, touch her shoulder or arm, and wait for her to respond.
8. Always say "yes" or "no, thank you".
9. Always use table manners while eating.
10. Appropriate playground and/or gymnasium behavior is expected.

(cont.)

11. Wash your hands:

- before you eat snack/lunch.
- before preparing food.
- after using the bathroom.
- before and after using clay, play dough or paint.

Disrespect and fighting are serious offences at Freedom Montessori. Any student who is disrespectful to an adult in our building will be sent home for up to three days or possibly dismissed from the program. Hitting and biting may also be handled in the same manner.

Consequences

At Freedom Montessori our teachers are trained to use positive reinforcement and redirection in their classrooms. Each teacher has their own set of consequences for misbehavior. Please refer to the teachers discipline plan.

The goal of discipline is that children will develop a sense of responsibility for their own behavior. The peace rose is a “Montessori tool” that we use in each classroom for children to resolve conflict and to work out their problems. Children will be sent to the Director if behavior is unacceptable and parents will be called. Corporal Punishment is not implemented at Freedom Montessori.

Bullying Policy

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our students so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. **Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school and will be dealt effectively and immediately and can lead to dismissal of the program.** If bullying does occur, all students should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a *TELLING* school. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

Dismissal of a Child

Freedom Montessori reserves the right to dismiss children at any time. Some causes leading to dismissal may include, but are not limited to, discipline problems, children becoming a threat to themselves or others, non payment of fees, late drop off and/or pick up, and failure to follow Freedom Montessori’s policies.

Parental Participation

Freedom Montessori maintains an open door policy. Parents are encouraged and welcome to visit and observe their children anytime.

All parents will have certain requirements that they must adhere to in order for their child to remain with us and to be accepted the following year. Here are those requirements:

1. Parents (either parent) must volunteer one hour per month to the school, whether it is work inside or outside of the school. We will have several things for you to choose from.
2. Parents will be required to attend at least three Parent Meetings to better understand the Montessori philosophy and learn what your child does at school. There will be approximately six of these provided.
3. Parents must support and participate in fund raising.
4. All enrolled and returning parents will have to attend a Parent Orientation session before school starts. These dates will be posted to our website and mailed to your home address this summer. Please make sure we have your correct mailing address and information on file at all times.

Parent Volunteer Committees

All parents will be required to serve on at least one committee during each school year your child is in attendance. There are several committees that will be available for signup during orientation. A detailed listing of these committees and participation form is located in the back of this handbook. (Ex. School Improvement Council, Field Trips, Teacher Appreciation, Teacher Birthdays, Fundraising, Fashion Show, etc.)

Electronic Communication

We will be utilizing email and our website for the primary method of communication this year. Please be sure we have a current email address for you at all times throughout the year. This should be an address that you check daily. Also, refer to the website for detailed information on school events.

Field Trips

Freedom Montessori does not own a transportation vehicle. When we do go on a field trip that requires transportation, we will ask for parent volunteers. A valid driver's license and proof of insurance must be documented. Please see the Driver/Chaperone packet in the back of this handbook.

Child Restraint Law

All children that attend Freedom Montessori must abide by the South Carolina Child Restraint Law. All children from age birth to six years of age must be in a car seat or booster seat in the back seat of a car, unless the child is unusually large.

Wiping Policy

Once a child is completely potty trained, is in underwear and is in the Primary Classrooms (3-6), staff will no longer be able to assist them in cleaning themselves after a bowel movement. Unfortunately, due to very strict Child Abuse and Neglect Laws, Freedom Montessori chooses not to handle a child during bathroom accidents, the child will have to clean themselves. We will help and assist your child as much as we can to clean themselves properly however no employee at Freedom Montessori will extensively wipe any child. Soiled clothing will be sent home in a Ziploc bag. Please make sure your child has a clean set of clothing every day, this includes clothing, undergarments and socks.

Staff

Most teachers and staff at Freedom Montessori hold a Master or Bachelor degree and are certified Montessori teachers and/or child care professionals. They are certified in Infant/Child CPR and First Aid, and have undergone State and Federal background checks. Our staff maintains knowledge of current practices in Early Childhood Education by attending conferences, trainings, and college classes.

Nutrition

At Freedom Montessori, we understand that nutrition plays an important role in your child's physical development. Therefore, we provide a breakfast snack and an afternoon snack. All snacks are well balanced and meet the nutritional requirements of the USDA. Children who due to medical reasons require a specific diet can be accommodated if parents discuss the dietary needs/restrictions with the classroom teacher or the Director.

- **We do not offer a lunch program to our students.** All students must bring their own lunch to school. We will gladly microwave leftovers and anything that takes one minute or less to heat up. If your child needs necessary utensils, napkins, etc., please provide them in their lunch box. We encourage parents to pack a healthy nutritional waste free lunch for their child. Table manners are required and expected at age appropriate levels.
- **Please Consider:** Prepare foods so that your child can be self-sufficient in feeding her/himself. For example, cut fruits and vegetables and send oranges and tangerines peeled unless your child can already do this for her/himself. Please pack a well-balanced, nutritious meal, excluding candy and other highly sugared foods.

Medication Policy

Freedom Montessori has a "no medication" school policy. Due to the rising statistics of overdosing in children's medications, we reserve the right not to administer any medications. If your child needs a prescribed medication during the hours in which they are present here at school, the parent or legal guardian must come to school and administer the medication. Please see the Director with any questions regarding this policy.

Sick Leave Policy

Freedom Montessori will not accept children when they are ill. South Carolina Division of Child Care Licensing states a child should not be in attendance if the child has any of the following conditions:

- Fever greater than 100 degrees Fahrenheit
- Symptoms of possible severe illness such as unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, or other unusual signs until medical evaluation indicate inclusion.
- Uncontrolled diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Mouth sores, unless a physician determines the condition as non-infectious.
- Rash, until a physician determines that it is not a communicable disease.
- Pink eye
- Scabies, head lice, or other infestations
- Tuberculosis
- Impetigo
- Streptococcal pharyngitis, strep throat
- Pinworm infection
- Ringworm infection
- Chicken Pox
- Pertusis
- Mumps
- Hepatitis A virus
- Abdominal pain

A child must be fever free for a FULL 24 hours before returning to school accompanied by a doctor's note.

If a child contracts a communicable disease, parents **must** keep the child at home for the appropriate exclusion period and **must** report the disease to the Director. **All parents will be notified in writing when a child in the class has contracted a communicable disease.**

Children who have been ill may **NOT** return to school until they have a doctor's note, are no longer contagious and are ready to participate in the full program, including indoor/outdoor play.

Injuries / Emergencies / Incident Reports

In case of severe injury or acute illness, first aid treatment will immediately begin and, if warranted, the child will be transported to the nearest medical facility, which is Piedmont Medical. At the same time Freedom Montessori will be notifying a parent or guardian of the circumstances. If a parent cannot be reached, a person on the emergency list will be contacted. A staff member will accompany the child to the medical facility and will remain until parent or guardian arrives.

All injuries and accidents are recorded at Freedom Montessori. An incident report will be sent home within 24 hours of the accident, with your child. In not all cases will parents be contacted.

Child Abuse

South Carolina requires child care providers to report any suspected incident of possible child abuse or neglect.

Clothing

Children should always be dressed comfortable and according to the weather. Children paint, play and get dirty at school. Please do not dress your children in clothes that you do not want them to get dirty. Parents are asked to provide two changes of clothes to be kept in your child's cubby. **No flip flops are to be worn.**

Dress Code

1. Please send your young child in clothing that is easy to put on and remove, in case your child gets wet or has a bathroom accident.
2. Each child is required to have a change of clothing in his/her cubby at all times. It is the parents' responsibility to make sure that clothing is labeled and replaced as needed. Be sure to label the baggie containing your child's extra clothing.
3. Velcro tennis shoes are preferred. **NO FLIP FLOPS, HEELS OR COWBOY BOOTS**
4. Jewelry – when it presents a safety hazard or creates a distraction that impacts the learning environment for student or others - shall not be worn.
5. All children are required to have a Freedom Montessori T-shirt to wear on field trip days and other special events.
6. Girls - if wearing dresses or skirts please wear a pair of shorts underneath.

Lost and Found

All lunchboxes, backpacks, and clothing should be labeled to facilitate return to their owner. Items that are not labeled will be taken to Lost and Found located in the Employee's work room.

Birthdays

Birthdays are a special time for the classroom. The children love a celebration that is both enjoyable and educational. A Montessori Celebration of Life includes singing, narration of the child's life story and showing photos from each year of his life. Parents are invited to

attend, share a special treat, and narrate their child's story. A gift of a book, puzzle, or other manipulative to your child's class is also a nice way to mark a student's special day. This provides an opportunity for the child to experience the pleasure in giving as well as receiving. If you wish to participate in this tradition, please remember to inscribe the gift with your child's name, birth date, age and current year. Children's birthdays that fall during the holiday months will also be given a chance to celebrate their birthday while school is still in session. If you are planning a home party for your child, please do not pass out invitations at school. We have found that this can be upsetting to those children not invited. **You must coordinate your child's Celebration of Life with his/her teacher.**

Community Board and Info

Freedom Montessori has a community board located in the lobby. Current info, upcoming dates and meetings will be located here for you to see "at-a-glance." Our Giving Tree is also here. The Giving Tree is a wonderful book by Shel Silverstein. It illustrates for us the cycle of giving and receiving. It is located in the lobby and will contain various items needed by each of our classrooms. Please reference this community area daily as you drop off and pick up your child from school.

School Closings/Delays

In the event of inclement weather, please tune to any major television broadcasting company, check our website or call the school at 803-327-7885. I will leave/update information on our telephone answering service. **We operate on the same closing/delay schedule as the Rock Hill School District.**

Visitors

Visitors must sign in/out at our visitor's table and will receive a badge to wear.

Classroom Observers

In order to ensure a peaceful environment for the children, we ask that you follow these guidelines when visiting our classroom.

- Open and close the doors quietly.
- Speak in a whisper voice to hear the teacher, assistant, and children.
- Refrain from interrupting children at work.
- If a child approaches you, please keep conversation brief and remind child to continue with their work.
- If you notice your presence is a major distraction to the children, please feel free to visit another time.

Business Partners

Business partners are a vital key to our program. A list of current business partners are listed on our website. If you would like some information on how you or someone you know can become a business partner to Freedom Montessori please see the Director or visit our website at www.freedommontessori.org .

Emergency Medical Plan/Policy

In the event that a medical emergency should occur at Freedom Montessori School the following steps will be taken:

1. Medical conditions such as loss of consciousness, semi consciousness, breathing difficulties, severe bleeding, unequal pupils, seizure, neck or back injury, severe headache, stiff neck or neck pain when head is moved, hives that appear quickly, very sick child who seems to be getting worse quickly, repeated forceful vomiting, vomiting blood, severe abdominal pain that causes a child to double over, possible broken bones and shock would require immediate medical care by a health care professional.
2. Call 911 immediately upon recognizing signs and symptoms that require immediate medical attention.
3. Call the child's parent/guardian immediately after calling 911 to inform them of the child's symptoms and where they will be transported for medical care
4. Call the persons listed as emergency contact if parents cannot be reached
5. Provide CPR/First Aid as trained in an approved CPR/First Aid training course until EMT's arrive.
6. Child will be transported by the director to **Piedmont Medical Center** if parents cannot be reached and if emergency medical team is not needed. Emergency information for the child will be taken with the child to the hospital or Emergency room OR
7. Emergency medical team will transport to **Piedmont Medical Center** if necessary.
8. The director of the center will go with the child to the hospital and stay with the child until the parents arrive.
9. The Center's emergency person, floaters and or any extra staff will remain at the center and handle any issues that may arise.
10. Report to DSS within 24 hours any accident or injury involving any child occurring at the center requiring professional medical treatment.

Confidentiality Policy

Freedom Montessori and its employees have an ethical and legal obligation to respect the privacy of our families and staff, and to protect and maintain the confidentiality of all information we learn about our families/staff in the course of providing services to them. All student and staff files/records will be locked in the Directors office at all times.

Drug Free Policy

Freedom Montessori visitors, volunteers, or chaperones will not possess, take, or be under the influence of controlled substances, and/or illegal drugs at Freedom Montessori on or off campus. Failure to comply will result in an immediate release of that person.

Alcohol Policy

The use of alcohol is prohibited on Freedom Montessori property and at Freedom Montessori activities where children are present. Freedom Montessori visitors, volunteers, or chaperones will not be under the influence of alcohol at any Freedom Montessori activity where children are present. Failure to comply will result in an immediate release of that person.

Firearm Policy

No weapons, concealed or otherwise are allowed at Freedom Montessori School or activities, on or off campus

Questions / Concerns

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns about Freedom Montessori please speak with the Director, Jamie Laymon. Freedom Montessori is a licensed facility following all policies and regulations set forth by South Carolina Division of Social Services, the Department of Health and Safety, and the South Carolina State Fire Marshall, and conforms to all state laws regulating the operation of a child care facility.

ABC Child Care Program (South Carolina's Child Care and Developmental Funds Program)

Freedom Montessori is now an ABC enhanced LEVEL A provider allowing eligible parents with funds to use toward their child's tuition. Please visit <http://childcare.sc.gov/main/general/programs/abc/index.aspx>, if you are interested in receiving more information about this program.

Waitlist

Freedom Montessori maintains a waiting list for families interested in our school within the current year. Families who are interested in being enrolled at Freedom Montessori must fill out an application, submit a registration fee of \$75.00 and be put on a waiting list. Applications are dated and numbered according to when they were received. Staff members' children and siblings have priority for openings.

Emergency Numbers

There are many times throughout the day that administration is away from their desks. We do check messages and emails periodically; however, if you must get in touch with us for emergency purposes only, please call (803) 327-7888 and let the receptionist know that you need someone at the school.

Email Addresses

All staff email addresses are located on our website, www.freedommontessori.org

Any of the information contained in this handbook is subject to change at any time. All parents will be informed of new changes as they occur.

Driver & Chaperone Instructions

Drivers

- All drivers must submit a copy of their valid driver's license (if not already on file), vehicle registration, and current proof of insurance.
- You should arrive at the school, at the time specified on day of field trip, to allow for the installation of car seats. (If you are bringing your child to school that morning, we strongly recommend you stay.)
- After dropping your child off please wait in the café for further instructions from administration.
- Vehicles should be ready to receive car seats and have sufficient gas to travel to and from destination. Please make sure your vehicle is well maintained for travel. For example, inside of car is clean, check oil, tire pressure, etc.
- We will be leaving promptly at time specified from the school. Chaperone packets will be handed out that morning and we will try to stay in a caravan formation as best we can. Please do not stop anywhere to and from our destination.
- All drivers are expected to act as chaperones and both parties should be in full compliance of all Freedom Montessori policies and state laws.

Chaperones

Please wear tennis shoes and appropriate attire on all field trips. Remember Freedom Montessori t-shirts are required for all chaperones.

All drivers and chaperones are responsible for the children in their vehicle and chaperone packet, from the time we leave the school until we get back.

Chaperones may be asked to assist with a group not containing their child.

Please remember, you are here to ensure the safety and enjoyment of all children, not to socialize with other parents.



Forms & Documents

Acknowledgement of Responsibility

As a parent, you are responsible for knowing and following all policies set forth in this handbook. Please sign below and turn into your child's teacher or the Director.

I have read all of the information above. I understand the rules and regulations of Freedom Montessori and will, with my best intention honor this handbook.

Child's Name _____

Parent /Guardian Signature_____

Date_____

Parent Committees

Here is a list of Parent Committees that we have put together for you to volunteer to serve on. It is our goal for you to be actively involved in our school and the success of Freedom Montessori. Each parent must serve on a least one committee and actively participate during the school year. Please turn this form in at the Parent Orientation you choose to attend.

Parents Name _____

Please choose at least one committee, you may choose more.

___ Fundraising Committee

This committee will handle all fundraising activities for the school. Example: Book Fairs, fundraisers, Chic-fil-a Nights, Jersey Mikes Nights, Fuel Pizza Nights, etc.

___ Teacher Birthday Committee

This committee will recognize teacher/staff birthdays as needed during the school year. This committee is more for the working parent who can't be at the school as often as they would like.

___ Teacher Appreciation Committee

This committee will plan and organize Teacher Appreciation Week which is held in May. This committee will have to meet minimally, only to plan for the week of May 4 – May 8, 2008.

___ School Beautification Committee

This committee will help in creating beautiful things in and around our environment. This committee will meet bi monthly addressing needs of the school, what they can do to help, how the classrooms can help, and how we will together as parents and school meet our goals. (Five or six parents)

___ Fish Tank Committee

This committee will maintain the fish tank, includes cleaning, restocking, checking water levels, etc. **You will not have to feed the fish ☺** This is not a difficult task at all; one or two parents can make it work, if they know how to care for a fish tank.

___ Labels for Education, Box Tops, Harris Teeter, Comporium, Bi-lo, Target and other Committee

This committee will encourage and record all parents to get involved in easy fundraising tactics. This committee will have to be a strong group of parents to work together continually throughout the school year.

___ Environmental Education Committee

This committee will help aid in our process of becoming a "greener" school. Recycling, reducing and reusing in both the school and the community.

___ In House Committee

This committee will volunteer during school hours to assist in the daily needs of teachers. This will be a monthly obligation for about 2 hours.



Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to another great year at Freedom Montessori! My name is Amanda Robertson and I'm the coordinator for Box Tops for Education.. This program will help us purchase items for our school.

One of the easiest ways you can make a difference is to sign up for the Box Tops website at boxtops4education.com. It's easy, free and you'll learn about new ways to help our school earn the extra cash it needs.

Exclusive online benefits:

- Track our school's Box Tops earnings.
- Print money-saving coupons for your favorite Box Tops brands.
- Enter to win Bonus Box Tops for our school.
- Make mealtime easier with family-pleasing recipes.

Plus, you can sign up for regular email updates on our school's progress!

Box Tops offers three easy ways to earn cash for our school through everyday activities like buying groceries, shopping online and purchasing books– all at no additional cost to you.

Clip - Clip Box Tops from hundreds of participating products. Box Tops are worth 10¢ each when our school redeems them from Box Tops for Education.

Shop - Shop your favorite online stores at the Box Tops Marketplace. Up to 8% of each qualifying purchase is donated to our school.

Buy books through the Box Tops Book Club

Order quality titles from award-winning authors and illustrators throughout the school year. Our school earns one Box Top for every dollar spent, up to \$20,000.

To learn more, visit boxtops4education.com. Thanks for choosing to make a difference for our school with Box Tops!

Sincerely,

Jamie Laymon
Freedom Montessori School
jlaymon@freedommontessori.org



Dear Parents,

Freedom Montessori proudly joins Harris Teeter's Together In Education program to help raise funds for our school. It's easy and it's FREE.

Simply **give the cashier our code, 5878, and your VIC card when you check out and your card will be linked for the entire school year.** That's it! You only have to link your VIC card once each school year.

Once your card is linked, Freedom Montessori will receive a percentage of your Harris Teeter brand (Harris Teeter, Premier Selection, H.T. Traders, Harris Teeter Naturals, Your Pet, Hunter Farms, Highland Crest and More Value) purchases credited back to our account.



This program does not interfere with your VIC savings or cost you any money!

Don't forget to link your VIC card to our account code next time you are shopping at Harris Teeter.

Thank you.
Jamie Laymon

Dear Parents:

Welcome back to school! The Labels for Education program is a great way to get FREE merchandise for our school and it's even better this year. Campbell's has made it easier for Freedom Montessori School to reach our collection goals with over 150 products now worth 5 points! Also, the new collection process makes it even easier to redeem merchandise. Visit labelsforeducation.com for details.

To meet our goals, we need to collect thousands of points. With your help, the Freedom Montessori School can make this year the best ever!

Participating in the program is easy — simply save proofs of purchase from participating Campbell products and send them to our school. Some of the products eligible for redemption in the program include:

- Campbell's® soups
- Campbell's™ or Franco-American® SpaghettiOs® pasta
- Campbell's® beans, gravies, and canned pasta
- Prego® pasta sauces
- Swanson® broths and canned poultry
- Campbell's® tomato juice
- Pepperidge Farm® breads, cookies, crackers, and frozen products
- Campbell's® Foodservice products

The following products are worth 5 points!

- 26 varieties of condensed soup in specially marked cans
- All Campbell's® Microwaveable Soups
- All Campbell's® Supper Bakes® Meal Kits
- Al V8 Splash® Beverages
- All Pepperidge Farm® Goldfish® crackers
(visit labelsforeducation.com for a complete list of products and point values)

If you have any questions, or would like to help with our Labels for Education collection drive, please contact our program coordinator, Amanda Robertson, at (803) 327-7885. Don't forget to visit labelsforeducation.com for a complete list of participating products and more information about the program.

