



## Parent Handbook

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Ithan Montessori School  
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[www.ithanmontessori.com](http://www.ithanmontessori.com)

## Welcome

We are delighted you have chosen Ithan Montessori School to begin your child's educational journey. Developing and nurturing your child's love of learning is a responsibility we take very seriously. Our goal is to provide an educational atmosphere that incorporates the Montessori Philosophy emphasizing development of your child's mind, body and spirit.

Please take time to read this handbook. It is designed to answer many of the questions you may have regarding school policies and procedures. We encourage parents to take an active role in their child's educational experience. Over the course of the school year there will be numerous opportunities for parents to participate in activities and events. If you have any questions or concerns during your enrollment at Ithan Montessori, feel free to speak to your child's teacher or the school's Director.

## The Montessori Philosophy

The Montessori approach offers a broad vision of education as an aide to life. It is designed to help children with their task of inner construction as they grow from childhood to maturity. It succeeds because it draws its principles from the natural development of the child. Its flexibility provides a matrix within which each individual child's inner directive freely guides the child towards growth.

Montessori classrooms provides a prepared environment where children are free to respond to their natural tendency to work. The children's innate passion for learning is encouraged by giving them opportunities to engage in spontaneous, purposeful activities with the guidance of a trained adult. Through their work, the children develop concentration and joyful self-discipline. Within a framework of order, the children progress at their own pace and rhythm, according to their individual capabilities.

## Mission

Ithan Montessori's mission is to:

- Provide excellence in Montessori Education
- Provide an enriched and welcoming learning community that embodies the Montessori principles of respect for self, respect for others and respect for the environment as well as respect for our country's freedom and democratic principles.
- Nurture, inspire and support each child's individual development
- Foster the growth of self-confidence, independence, self-discipline, and personal and social responsibility.

- Foster children's innate love of learning and to make their introduction to education a joyful and purposeful start to the journey of life-long learning.

## Enrollment Policy

Enrollment in Ithan Montessori School is open to children ages 24 months to 6 years of age. Enrollment shall be granted without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender or disability. Initial enrollment is contingent upon receipt of completed registration forms and acceptance of Ithan Montessori's policies and guidelines.

Children enrolled in the Primary Age Group must be potty trained.

The Tuition Agreement is not meant to serve as a contract guaranteeing service for any duration.

Ithan Montessori School reserves the right to dismiss any parent or child at any time with or without cause. Continued enrollment at Ithan Montessori is contingent upon the parent and child's adherence to the school policies as outlined in this handbook including, but not limited to timely payment of all fees and tuition.

## Interview

The interview is an informal way for the prospective parents and school to become acquainted with each other. All prospective students will be informally assessed by an appropriate teacher. Placement decisions are entirely within the discretion of the Head of School.

## School Hours of Operation

Half day morning session: 8:30 – 11:30 am

Full day: 8:30 – 3:30 pm

Extended morning: 7:30 – 8:30 am

Extended afternoon: 3:30 – 5:30 pm

- All programs must be registered for separately.

## Registration

A non-refundable annual registration fee will be assessed upon enrollment. Child \$150

Family \$250

## Required Records

Emergency Contact Form: Any person authorized to pick up your child must be listed on this form. This form gives permission to our teachers to provide emergency care, minor first aid and transport your child in case of emergency. All custodial parents must review and sign this form every six months.

Health Appraisal: This form must be completed annually while your child is enrolled in school. This form must be completed by a licensed physician and returned to the school within 30 days of enrollment.

Tuition Agreement: This agreement will state the program(s) your child is registered for a long with your payment schedule for the school year. Adherence to this agreement is a condition of enrollment.

## Tuition Policy

All custodial parents prior to enrollment in the school must sign tuition agreements. A non-refundable registration fee is required at the time of enrollment or sooner if securing future enrollment.

Monthly tuition payments are due on the first of the month of September through June. Tuition that is not received by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month will incur a \$50 late fee. Non-payment of tuition is grounds for immediate and permanent dismissal from the program.

There is no credit given for vacation, child illness, suspension, or closings due to emergency situations or inclement weather. Tuition payments are accepted in the form of check or credit card. Tuition can be paid online at [www.ithanmontessori.com](http://www.ithanmontessori.com)

There will be a \$50 fee assessed for tuition checks returned by the bank for any reason. Parents will be responsible for re-issuing a second check. If two checks are returned in a school year, your payment must be made by credit/debit card or money order.

## Arrival and Departure Procedures

Ithan Montessori is located on the property of Christ Church in the building directly behind the church. Parents should follow the driveway around to the rear parking lot when dropping their children off for school. Children participating in the program must be escorted into the building by a parent or caregiver.

Half day students will be dismissed at 11:30 am to their parents or caregivers inside the building. The same procedure will be repeated for full day students.



Please pull into a designated parking space. Do not block the driveway or exit.

Please utilize the utmost caution when exiting the parking lot.

Keep in mind that you must inform the school director if anyone other than the primary care giver will be picking your child up from school at any given day. We will require a photo ID be presented if our teacher does not recognize the person picking up. You should include at least 3 people on your emergency contact form who are allowed to pick up your child from school.

## Attendance

The school day begins at 8:30. The smooth flow of our program depends in large to the children's prompt arrival and departure. It is very disrupting to the classroom environment when a child enters late. In addition, a child will have a difficult time adjusting to the classroom community if they are often late or absent. If your child arrives late please quietly open the door and let the child enter on their own. If you arrive after 9:30am. Please take your child to the office and they will be escorted by a staff member to their individual classrooms. If they are leaving early, please notify us beforehand. Parents are asked to call the school office prior to 9:30 am to notify the teachers when a student will be absent from school.

## The Parent-School Partnership

Our school director and teachers have been carefully selected based on their education level. Montessori expertise and experience in the field. Early Childhood Education. Teachers supervise the children in their classroom at all times. All of our staff are required to have child abuse, criminal and FBI clearance as well as a bi-annual physical exam. We ensure all teachers are certified in first aid and CPR. The school discourages staff working for the parents whose children are enrolled in Ithan Montessori in any capacity outside the school.

There will be a mandatory parent meeting at the beginning of each school year. The Director and staff will take you through your child's day and explain the set up and "works" in the classroom. These dates will be announced at the beginning of the school year.

## Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO)

Ithan Montessori encourages our parents to be involved with their child's education. We appreciate support and feedback as we strive to fulfill our mission. We welcome ideas and interaction, as ultimately this will strengthen our program. Ithan Montessori fosters an environment where families grow together through education and community service. The PTO will assist our director and teachers to expand our vision of community involvement and service as well as organize fun school events throughout the year.



## Developmental Assessments/Report Cards

Teachers will assess your child's academic and social development formally twice per school year. This assessment is designed to report the progress teachers are observing, recording, and evaluating about your child's skills, knowledge, behaviors, and accomplishments.

## Student Clothing

One of the primary goals of a Montessori environment is to help children become independent in caring for themselves. Children, as Dr. Montessori noted, will often say, "Help me do it myself" As part of this goal, it is important to provide children with clothing they can get in and out of independently. Please dress your child in clothing that he or she can successfully adjust without adult help. Also, children should be dressed in casual and comfortable clothing that allows for freedom of movement and the freedom to explore their environment. Clothing should not be cumbersome or too fancy as to inhibit the child's ability to explore water, art, the outdoors, and movement. Each child needs a pair of hard soled slippers to leave at school. These slippers will only be worn inside the school environment and should be such that the child can independently put them on or remove them. Occasionally, accidents happen-water spills or an item breaks and thus the inside shoes **MUST** have a hard sole so as to best protect the child's feet from injury. In addition, open-toed shoes, crocks or flip-flops are **NOT** permitted. Each child should also bring an extra set of clothing to school so that he or she has something to change into if clothing becomes soiled. Please label all extra clothing with the child's initials. Your child will get dirty. Outdoor clothing should also be appropriate for the season. Since our outdoor environments become particularly muddy, we ask that each child bring rain boots.

## Lunch/Snack

Ithan Montessori School is a Peanut and Tree Nut Free School. We will provide your child with a healthy morning and afternoon snack. We encourage parents to pack. We encourage parents to pack a healthy lunch limiting juices. No candy is permitted in lunch boxes. Each classroom is equipped with a refrigerator and a microwave to heat any warm lunches the children may bring.

## Early Intervention Services

While all children grow and develop in unique ways, some children experience delays in their development. Children in Pennsylvania with developmental delays benefit from a state supported collaboration among parents, service practitioners and others who work with young children needing special services. Our program is open to any services your child may require.



## Calendars/School Newsletters

Monthly calendars and newsletters will be available online to parents of Ithan Montessori students. The calendar and newsletter will keep parents informed of the activities and events occurring at the school.

## Holidays and Breaks

Ithan Montessori will be closed for all major holidays. Winter break will occur at the end of December each year. A Spring break will occur in late March or early April each year. Please see your monthly calendar for specific dates. The academic year will run from September through June. A Montessori inspired summer camp will be offered several weeks in the summer. Information for summer camp will be distributed in late winter.

Ithan celebrates a variety of holidays, as a way of expanding the children's awareness of other cultures. It is our belief that children need to become aware of rituals and celebration as part of their experience of the cultures of the world. We do not promote any ethnic or religious positions. If your family would like to share a special celebration with the children, please let us know.

## Inclement Weather

Ithan Montessori will be closed in the event of severe weather. Closing information will be posted on our website: [www.ithanmontessori.com](http://www.ithanmontessori.com). Our director and teachers will contact parents as well to notify them of school closings.

## Mandated Reporters

Under the Child Protection Services Act, mandated reporters are to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. All employees of Ithan Montessori are considered mandated reporters under the law. We take this responsibility seriously and do everything within our means to protect the welfare and best interest of the children in our school. Suspicions need not be discussed with parents before potential abuse or neglect is reported.

## Stake Holders

Stake holders are those groups or individuals who are significantly impacted by the children/families who attend Ithan Montessori and who have the potential to impact our facility. A list of Stakeholders will be available to view at the request of the parents.



## Parent Code of Conduct

Ithan Montessori expects the parents of enrolled students to behave in a manner consistent with decency, courtesy and respect at all times. One of the goals of Ithan Montessori is to provide the most appropriate environment in which a child can grow, learn, and develop. Achieving this ideal environment is not only the responsibility of the teachers and director but also each and every parent or other adult who enters the school. Parents will be expected to behave in a manner which fosters this ideal environment. Parents who violate the Parent Code of Conduct will not be permitted on the school property thereafter.

- Swearing/Cursing: No parent or adult is permitted to curse or use other profane language on school property at any time. Such language is considered offensive and will not be tolerated.
- Threatening of Employees Children, other parents of adults associated with Ithan Montessori. Threats of any kind will not be tolerated. Parents must be responsible for and in control of their behavior at all times.
- Physical Punishment of your child (or other children) at the school. While Ithan Montessori does not seek to impose our disciplinary standards on families, the corporal punishment of children is prohibited in our school or on the grounds. While verbal reprimand may be appropriate it is not appropriate for parents to verbally abuse their child. Parents are strictly forbidden to discipline any child other than their own. If you see a situation between children that warrants an adult taking action, please bring it to the teacher's attention immediately.
- Smoking: DPW and Ithan Montessori prohibit smoking in or around the school at all times.

## Discipline Policy

Ithan Montessori believes that keeping children busy and actively engaged decreases the frequency of behavior problems in the classroom. Our teachers only use positive guidance and redirection. Setting consistent, clear, understandable, age appropriate limits, fosters the child's ability to become self-controlled, which is our ultimate goal. Teachers encourage positive behavior, ignoring negative behavior, and facilitate redirection. By teaching children that each choice they make has a direct consequence, they will begin to learn to be responsible for their own actions. We encourage and teach children how to problem solve in order to avoid frustration that can lead to acting out. Ithan Montessori prohibits corporal punishment of any kind, cruel or severe punishment, humiliation, or verbal abuse. If a behavior problem exists, every attempt will be made to remedy the situation. However, dismissal of a child for behavior problems will be at the discretion of the director and CEO.

## Dismissal Policy

Ithan Montessori reserves the right to dismiss any child at any time with or without cause. A child must be dismissed if his/her parents are prohibited from entering the school property. Parents will be refunded any forward paid tuition with 30 days of dismissal. Any past due balances must be paid within 30 days of dismissal.

## Notification of Schedule Change

If your child's schedule must change for any reason, please notify the school director as soon as possible. At least 2 weeks' notice of withdraw from the school must be given in order to be eligible for a refund on forward paid tuition.

## Health Policy

Ithan Montessori follows the American Academy of Pediatricians guideline for deciding when to keep your child home in the event of illness. Any sick child should be kept home especially when they have:

- Diarrhea or stools that contain blood or mucus or cannot be contained in a diaper
- Fever of 100.5 or over (without medication)
- Cold or flu symptoms, e.g. sore throat, persistent cough or sneezing
- Rash or discharge from the eyes or nose
- Headlice
- Sluggishness, persistent, crying, irritability, or difficulty breathing
- Contagious or communicable disease
- Child "not well enough to go outside"
- All children must be diarrhea and fever free for 24 hours without medication

## Care Action Plans

Ithan Montessori will administer medication including Epi-pens, asthma inhalers, etc. If your child requires that any medical treatment or medication be administered during school hours, your child's physician must fill out a Care Action Plan. This plan must list warning symptoms to look for and the proper steps to follow to care for your child in the event that staff might need to administer medication. Please discuss any Care Action Plans with your school director and classroom teacher.



## Incident Reports

Incident reports are sent home if your child incurs an injury or accident while in our care. Parents will be called if an injury is moderate to severe in nature. This would include but not limited to a cut that bleeds, a contusion, a fall from any classroom or outdoor equipment. Minor scratches and scraps will be reported daily. Should a serious injury or illness occur and hospital emergency treatment is necessary, the child will be transported, by ambulance and accompanied by the director or senior staff member. The child's parents will be contacted immediately and can make arrangements to join the child at the hospital.

## Concerns and Complaints

Should you have any concerns or complaints concerning the school or program, please attempt to discuss these issues first with your child's teacher and then with the school director. If you're not completely satisfied with the answers you receive or would like to discuss further, please contact Tracie Costello, CEO at 610-272-8085

