

Brixham Montessori Friends School

Parent Handbook

2017-2018



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Introduction

Welcome to Brixham Montessori Friends School! You and your child are about to begin an exciting and rewarding journey in Montessori education. The BMFS community is a place where dedication and commitment are freely given, helping children to grow into the very best people they can be. A community that nurtures a collective energy requiring everyone – parents, teachers, staff, and children – to participate and invest in open communication, patience and trust; a school that is created by, and evolves with, every participating community member.

Mission Statement

To honor each child's individuality, creativity, and intellectual potential through an enriched Montessori educational program.

Vision Statement

Brixham Montessori Friends School seeks to inspire a passion for lifelong learning in our students that extends beyond the walls of the school and the community, building bridges of peace, respect, and compassion for the natural world and all of its diversity. An accredited Montessori school that highly values its community, BMFS is dedicated to a holistic approach to education where academic excellence, innovation, creativity and service-minded learning prepares children to be leaders capable of sharing their unique intellectual and artistic potential with one another and the world at large.

Arrival and Departure

We ask that all students arrive and depart promptly at their designated times. Unless your child is attending before school care (7:30am-8:30am), please do not arrive before the program start time as teachers are preparing their classrooms for the day. **Elementary and their enrolled siblings should arrive between 8:15-8:30am, Toddlers and their enrolled siblings should arrive at 8:30am, and the 3-6 classes should arrive between 8:30am-8:45am.** These staggered arrivals help to avoid congestion in the parking lot and in the hallways/coat locker room. Additionally, it is very important for all children to be present for Morning Circle and to keep disruptions and late arrivals to a minimum. If you do arrive late, please enter the classroom as quietly as possible and a teacher will help you and your child with the arrival routine. As a courtesy to your child's teachers, **please call the Office if you expect to arrive after 8:30am for the elementary program and after 9:00am for the 3-6 program.**

Dismissal time for toddlers enrolled in the morning program is 11:45am and dismissal time for 3-6 children enrolled in the morning program is between 11:45am-12:00noon. Children staying for the full day toddler or full day 3-6 program, the Extended Day (kindergarten) children, and the Elementary children are dismissed at 3:00pm. Aftercare is available to 5:00pm. **Kindly give at least 48 hour notice if you anticipate any changes to your child's aftercare schedule, so we can ensure proper staffing and teacher notification.** Changes to the before care and aftercare schedule are made in the Office.

Please be sure to check in with the supervising teacher on duty when your child is picked up at dismissal time; it's very important that teachers not only see you, but also have a verbal confirmation that you have your child and that you are leaving the playground or the classroom. In addition to the verbal confirmation, we ask all children to shake their teacher's hand when they leave as a way of saying good-bye to one another.

Attendance

Children are expected to attend school on their assigned days. **Please call or email the Office by 8:00am if**

your child will not be at school on a given day, and notify both the office and the classroom teacher if your child will be absent due to a family vacation or other planned event. It is also important for the Office to know why your child is absent, particularly if the child is sick. The school tracks illnesses among children and staff, and it is helpful to know if a child has had a fever or a stomach virus even on days when he or she is not in school. For more information regarding sickness and our health care policy, please see page 9 of the handbook.

Birthday Celebrations

Celebrating birthdays is special in the Montessori environment. Children tell their life story through photographs, storytelling, and singing. We ask that parents help children collect a few favorite photographs highlighting their birth, first year, second year, and so on. It is helpful if parents can place these photos on a poster with a short narrative describing significant facts and details of their child's life, such as first words, favorite foods, etc. During the celebration, the child walks around a candle (representing the sun) while holding a globe of Earth, while as we share pictures and say "Happy Birthday" for each year. We end the walk with the traditional birthday song. A **healthful** birthday treat, such as muffins or fruit kebobs (no cupcakes, please!), is welcomed and always enjoyed by the children.

Please speak to your child's teachers to arrange for an ideal day to celebrate your child's birthday at school. Typically, the 3-6 and Toddler classes have birthday celebrations during the Morning Circle and the elementary classes have birthday celebrations at the end of the school day. Arrangements for summertime birthday celebrations are usually made during the last few weeks of school in June.

If you choose to have a birthday celebration at home for your child, please do not pass out invitations at school, as inevitably feelings are hurt if a birthday celebration does not include everyone or cards get lost, etc. Mail all invitations directly to the children's homes and help your child to be sensitive to any possible feelings of exclusivity. A school directory is included in the back to school orientation packet.

If your child has food allergies, please pack a supply of allergy-free treats that can be frozen until needed. Please label your child's treats with his or her name; classroom teachers will be sure to have the treat thawed on the day of a classmate's birthday walk.

Board of Directors

BMFS is governed by a Board of Directors made up of five to seven appointed members of the BMFS community. Board members are responsible for school governance and financial oversight, and ensure that the school operates in accordance to state and federal regulations. Members of the Board of Directors typically serve three years and have an area of expertise or experience as a committee member that is helpful to the work of the board. On occasion, a board member is appointed from the alumni community or the community at large. Parents who are interested in serving on the Board of Directors or in an advisory role should contact the Head of School. The school's bylaws are available to read on the community website.

2017-2018 Board of Directors:

Angela Penfold, Chair (e-mail: angelanollpenfold@yahoo.com)

Michelle Sico, Vice-Chair (e-mail: michellesico@gmail.com)

Kelly St. Pierre, Treasurer (e-mail: kellykern@comcast.net)

Mark Rosen, Secretary (e-mail: mark.b.rosen@gmail.com)

Elisa Hegg Marhue, Member (e-mail: elisahegg@gmail.com)

Derek Ahl, Member (email: dhc2@wildcats.unh.edu)

Change of Clothes

Much of the learning at BMFS is hands-on and experiential, and children's clothes will often get wet, dirty or painted on. Consequently, **children should wear clothing that can withstand mess.** Extra clothing should be available at school for a change of clothes; please pack this extra clothing in a labeled zip-lock bag and **label your child's clothing with his or her name.** We will store extra clothing at school (usually in your child's classroom bathroom), so please check this supply of extra clothing often to be sure that all necessary items are on hand. In addition, **we play outdoors in most weather conditions so appropriate outdoor wear is also essential (snow boots, mittens, raincoats, etc.).** A weather advisory guide is posted outside the office to alert parents and teachers of the temperatures outdoors and advise if the temperatures are safe for outdoor play.

Computers

Computers are available in the elementary classrooms for students needing limited access to the Internet for research projects, keyboarding skills and for word processing/publishing. As part of the elementary technology programs, students have increased access to computers to complete their work assignments with upper elementary students using computers on a daily basis. All computer use is under the careful supervision of the classroom teachers; **students, parents and faculty are asked to sign a technology use policy when using the Internet and wireless passwords.** BMFS does not support the use of computers in the classroom for children under the age of five years. BMFS believes that all young children benefit from real, concrete learning experiences to build the foundation for academic and abstract thinking of the elementary years.

Daily Classroom Schedule

Lower and Upper Elementary Program

7:30am	Before Care (<i>Arranged in advance through the office</i>)
8:15am	Arrival in the Classroom
8:30am	Independent Work and Small Group Lessons Individual Snack
11:30am	Lunch
12:00noon	Recess
12:45pm	Reading and Writing Groups Specials Monday: Strings Program and Studio Art for LE Tuesday: Physical Wellness/Outdoor Education Wednesday: Strings Program and Spanish Thursday: Chorus, Theater and Studio Art for LE Friday: Strings Program, Spanish and Studio Art for UE
2:30pm	Jobs
2:40pm	Group Story and Afternoon Circle
3:00pm	Dismissal
3:00-5:00pm	Aftercare (<i>Arranged in advance through the office</i>)

Primary Program (3-6 Year Olds)

7:30am	Before Care (<i>arranged in advance through the office</i>)
8:30am	Arrival in the Playground
8:50-9:10am	Transition Inside for Morning Circle
9:10am	Independent Work and Small Group Lessons/Studio Art (MTTr)

	Individual Snack
11:00am	Late Morning Circle and Group Story
11:10-11:30am	Transition Outside for Morning Recess
11:50-12noon	Dismissal from Morning program
12:00noon	Lunch
12:30pm	Rest for Full Day Preschool/Extended Day Begins
1:15pm	Independent Work for Full Day Preschool (not asleep)
2:15pm	Afternoon Recess for Extended Day and Full Day Preschool
3:00pm	Dismissal
3:00-5:00pm	Optional Late Aftercare

Toddler Program

7:30am	Before Care (optional)
8:30am	Arrival/ Independent Work Time Studio Art on Mondays Individual Snack and Toileting*
10:30am	Morning Circle: Food Tasting
10:45am	Toileting*
11:00am	Morning Circle: Singing, Dancing, Story
11:15am	Outdoor Play Time
11:45am	Dismissal from Morning program
11:45am	Lunch for Full Day Toddlers
12:30pm	Afternoon Rest
2:15pm	Toileting*
2:30pm	Outdoor Play Time
3:00pm	Dismissal
3:00pm-5:00pm	Optional Late Aftercare

*Toileting is a process of becoming toilet trained with many toddlers transitioning from diapers to cloth underwear; toddlers in diapers will be checked and changed throughout the day.

Discipline

BMFS believes that all children are innately good and strive to be good, but that expressing oneself in socially acceptable ways is a learned behavior. A child who “misbehaves” or is “disruptive” may be expressing a need that is unmet or unresolved; our task as parents and educators is to understand that need and help the child effectively communicate and address it. Belittling, bullying or harassing are unacceptable forms of communication and are not tolerated at BMFS.

BMFS respects the dignity and worth of each child. We work closely with families to support the growth and challenges of raising children. Positive techniques, classroom set-up and close supervision aid the teacher in his or her awareness of potential behavior problems. In the event of a child whose daily behavior is unusually disruptive and where the peacefulness of the classroom community is compromised, a conference will be scheduled to discuss the child’s placement at BMFS. Parents and teachers will work together to find the best possible placement for any child whose needs are not being fully met at BMFS.

BMFS does not tolerate shaming, ridicule, neglect or corporal punishment, and is obligated under law to report any suspicion of child abuse. For further information about this law, please see the “Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect” pamphlet posted on the parent bulletin.

Donations

Cleaning out your basement or attic? BMFS welcomes many items you may not need anymore: carpets, office supplies, small kitchen items, quality children's books and toys. Please ask your child's teacher what items are particularly useful. Also, due to our tax-exempt status as a non-profit, your donation may be tax deductible. Please let the Office know of your donation and a letter of acknowledgement will be sent to you. Typically, we have several school events throughout the year that rely on donations of food, clothing, garden supplies, as well as cash contributions. We appreciate your support for these events and are always grateful for gifts from our parent community.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), BMFS gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's educational records. Parents have the right to inspect and review their child's educational records maintained by the school. Parents also have the right to request that BMFS correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. All inquiries and requests regarding a student's record should be made directly to the Head of School who will review the request and meet with the parents and teachers for further discussion and possible corrections. Should the Head of School decide not to amend the record, the parent has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.

Generally, BMFS requires written permission from the parent in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, under certain conditions BMFS may, without parental consent, disclose records to the following parties:

- School officials with legitimate educational interests;
- Other schools to which a student is transferring;
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
- Accrediting organizations;
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
- State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Field Trips

Field trips are a wonderful way for children to experience learning in a meaningful and purposeful context. BMFS promotes the opportunity for every classroom to have these enriching experiences as part of its studies. However, BMFS does not have the ability to transport children, especially young children, without the help of volunteer parent drivers. For safety we require parent volunteer drivers to provide the school with a copy of their driver's license and insurance information. In addition, new state regulations require all parent and staff volunteer drivers to complete a transportation safety course and complete a background check. Training for these courses will be made available to parents and staff at no charge. **Children under the age of eight years are required by the State of Maine to have a regulation safe car seat or booster.** Car seats and boosters should be labeled with your child's name.

Field Trip Chaperon Guidelines

Parents who sign up to help drive on field trips will also have the important responsibility of chaperoning the children in their care. Please read over the following driving and chaperon guidelines:

1. Make sure booster seat or car seat is properly installed and secured (shoulder strap is off the child's neck)
2. Review rules of the road: no cell phone use while driving, toll money ready, directions to the event reviewed and clarified, reminders about car behavior, car checked for safety (tires, fueled up, etc.), and the school telephone number available for emergencies. **It is very important that you obey all traffic rules, speed limits, and understand that you are responsible for the children in your care.**
3. Once at the destination, remind children to hold hands and walk with you to the event. **Children must stay with their chaperone and group unless told otherwise by the teachers.** Be alert to the needs of your group and reinforce good behavior and social etiquette.
4. If a child in your care needs to use the bathroom, escort the child to the bathroom, making sure that another chaperon or your child's teacher is aware of where you are going and who is with you, etc. (so that he or she may assume responsibility for your group while you are gone). Chaperons may wait outside of the bathroom for an older child or a younger child who prefers privacy or a gender specific bathroom. If the bathroom is a public one with more than one stall, chaperons should request assistance from a teacher or another chaperone of the same gender to assist the child. **Children should never be left unattended** in a public space or when in your care as a chaperon.
5. When leaving the destination, be sure to let your child's teacher know that you are leaving, and proceed back to school. If you must stop for any reasons or if you are delayed in traffic, please call the school so that the office knows you will be late and why. Do not stop unnecessarily for coffee, lunch or a special treat. **Drive directly to the field trip location and back to school again without delay or distraction.**
6. Once at school, please escort the children back to their classrooms or to the playground if that is where the class is meeting. Check out with the supervising teacher before you leave (if no supervising teacher is present, please stay with the children until he or she has arrived).

Expectations for children while in the car:

1. Stay fastened in car seat or booster
2. Use quiet voices
3. Keep hands, feet and arms to self
4. Do not play with windows, door handles, door locks or seat belt buckles

Cautionary Note: Be aware that some children in your care may have food allergies, **please do not share food unless you have confirmed with your child's teachers that there are no allergies or food limitations.** Your child's teacher will alert you to any special needs of the children.

Indoor Shoes

To respect the indoor environment of the school and for the children's safety, we require children to wear indoor shoes while in the school building and ask adults to remove their shoes upon entering the classrooms. Please provide your child with a pair of indoor shoes that are easy to walk in, rubber-soled, and easy to take on and off. Indoor shoes are stored in the children's coat lockers.

Lost and Found

Miscellaneous items found on the school grounds are stored in a basket located in the front hall entryway. We make every attempt to identify items and return them to their owners, but often our basket is spilling over by the end of the year. **Please clearly label clothing, dishes, and lunch containers with your child's name.** We will donate unclaimed lost and found items to a local charity at the holiday break and at the end of the school year.

Lunch

Children who stay for lunch will need to bring a cold pack lunch that is **nutritious, wholesome, and balanced**. Please include an ice pack with your child's lunch as we have limited refrigeration. We ask that you use re-useable containers as much as possible to reduce unnecessary waste in packaging. **Because of severe food allergies to peanuts and nuts and the potential for anaphylactic shock (even when not ingested), we do not allow sandwiches, crackers, granola bars or baked goods with peanuts or nuts of any kind.** In addition, lunchtime teachers will monitor lunches that seem insufficient and/or lack nutritional value and share their concerns with you if they think your child may not be eating enough, etc.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent/Teacher Conferences are held in the fall and spring. Please see the school calendar for the specific dates for this year's conferences. A sign-up sheet will be posted in your child's classroom several weeks in advance. Conferences typically last 30 minutes and both parents are encouraged to come if possible. Childcare is available for a minimal fee. **Should you have a concern that requires immediate attention, please arrange to meet with your child's teacher before or after school hours.** Discussions of your child's progress and/or behaviors are confidential and private. We ask that parents refrain from discussing concerns while school is in session, and to be sensitive to the feelings of your child if he or she is present when discussing a concern or arranging a meeting with teachers.

We ask all parents to observe at least once in their child's classroom, and to attend parent education and parent orientation events. This observation will help parents understand the kind of work his or her child is doing and will provide a context for discussing the child's accomplishments during parent/teacher conferences. **While observing, parents need to be mindful of the confidentiality of each child in the classroom and refrain from discussing another person's child with other parents.** If you have any questions or concerns regarding your observation, please speak directly with your child's teacher. The parent education and orientation events are also very helpful in a parent's understanding and appreciation of the unique education his or her child is receiving at BMFS.

Parent Volunteers and Committee Work

Parents are strongly encouraged to volunteer in a variety of capacities at BMFS both inside and outside the classroom. Throughout the year, we ask parents to help with special events the committees hold, such as the building and grounds clean-up day or making holiday wreaths for the fundraising committee. Classrooms also need parents to help with special events or to help on a regular basis, such as laundering the hand towels. Please let your child's teacher know if you can help, or let the office know if you think you might be able to join a committee or help with a special event. Currently, there are three active parent committees that meet on a regular basis: the auction committee, the building and grounds committee, and the yearbook committee; and three parent committees that are less active and do not meet on a regular basis: the playground committee, the activity committee and the public relations and marketing committee.

Parking Lot and Playground Safety

Parents are responsible for the safety and supervision for their child in the school parking lot. Please hold your child's hand and/or use extra caution for older children. **Drivers of vehicles need to drive slowly and use caution when entering and exiting the parking lot.** Be vigilant and always mindful of small children or older distracted ones. **No child should be left unattended in a parked car, and please do not leave your vehicle running or idling while picking up or dropping off your child.** Parents who visit with one another near the entrance of the school or in the parking lot need to be mindful of the traffic and potential problems with parking congestion, as well as **actively supervise their children** if they are at play in the garden or vernal pool area (not a designated playground space).

All children should be supervised during school hours when on the playground or in the gardens by at least one adult. Teacher supervision on the playground is at designated class recess times only. **Parents are responsible for the supervision of their children at all other times.** The playground safety rules are generally as follows:

- No standing or walking on top of the monkey bars
- No jumping from the top platforms of the climber or gazebo
- No war-like games or aggressive fantasy play

For a more comprehensive list of playground rules for the different age groups (elementary, 3-6 classes, aftercare), please see the playground rules posted to the right of the playground exit door.

Sharing

Sharing news and/or items from home is an opportunity for children to practice their social skills and gain confidence in speaking to a large group. The elementary classes and the 3-6 classes will design a schedule for sharing that works well for their respective classes. **Sharing should be noncommercial, educational and peaceful.** We do not allow children to share items that depict negative cultural or gender stereotypes, are aggressive or violent in nature, or are overly commercial (such as Barbie, GI Joe, Star Wars, etc). Generally, books, pictures, small collections of nature objects, a special box, musical instrument or even a flower or leaf picked on the way to school can make for a lovely sharing. As a Montessori school, BMFS strives to help children experience the wonder of real things, which they naturally delight in.

Snack Basket

Each classroom will design a snack schedule and procedure that meets the need of the individual classroom. If your child's classroom assigns a snack basket, then your child will bring snack for the whole class on a designated day. The snack basket is a fun and inexpensive way for the children to experience the responsibility for caring for and feeding the group. Children are usually quite proud of their role as "snack provider."

Parents should try to include their child in the planning and preparation of snack whenever possible (shopping, cooking, organizing food items). Snacks should be simple and nutritious: cheese and crackers, carrots and hummus, orange slices, apples, etc. No juice or paper goods are needed. As a cautionary note, we have several children with severe food allergies (peanuts, nuts, eggs, and milk); please do not bring in baked goods that have been commercially prepared and if baking from home, **please check with your child's teacher about food allergies in the classroom**** In addition, there are students at BMFS with sensitivities to food dyes, sugars, and additives, so we encourage you to choose snacks that are unsweetened, minimally processed, and as organic as possible.

****Do not use peanuts or nuts of any kind in preparing snack or special birthday muffins (such as oils, add-ins, etc.), and be aware that peanut or nut contaminated utensils or preparation surfaces can trigger an allergic reaction leading to potentially fatal anaphylactic shock in severe cases.**

Snow Days

BMFS carefully considers the driving conditions of the school community when determining a delay or cancellation of school due to snow or icy conditions. Cancellations or delays are usually determined by 6:00am and posted local television stations and their websites, WCSH6 and WMTW8. A text messaging alert system is also used to communicate a school cancellation or delay, as well as a message on the school voice mail (assuming the power and cable lines are in service). In the unlikely event that weather conditions warrant an early dismissal, parents will be notified by e-mail and text to pick up their child as soon as possible to ensure safe traveling for everyone. There are no make-up days due to school cancellations for snow or ice.

School Policies

Documentation Policy

By signing the Tuition Enrollment Contract, parents give permission for pictures of their child taken at school or at school functions to be used in any publication or promotional material for Brixham Montessori Friends School. Non-consent for said documentation shall be submitted in writing to be kept on file.

Signature of the Tuition Enrollment Contract is also an agreement by the parent to permit the use of the family name, address and telephone number in the school handbook, which is printed as a service to the BMFS community.

Health Care Policy

1. Brixham Montessori Friends School requires all children to be fully immunized according to the current Bureau of Health Immunization recommendations for the on time and delayed schedules. Dates of immunizations and vaccine type will be on file for the following:

- a. Measles
- b. Mumps
- c. Rubella
- d. Diphtheria
- e. Pertussis
- f. Polio
- g. Tetanus
- h. Haemophilus influenza type B (Hib)
- i. Varicella

2. Any child not immunized because of medical or religious beliefs shall be admitted to Brixham Montessori Friends School with a written statement by the child's parent or child's physician documenting that such immunization is medically contraindicated. **In the event of a disease outbreak, children who are not immunized will be excluded from the program until the outbreak no longer exists.**

3. **Brixham Montessori Friends School requires parents to notify the school within 24 hours if a child has any serious signs of illness, such as a fever of 100 degrees or higher, vomiting, diarrhea, or has been diagnosed with conjunctivitis, strep, chicken pox, lice, or other communicable disease.** Children

are not permitted to attend school until symptoms of illness are gone and/or medical treatment has been provided. **State regulations recommend that children be symptom free for 24 hours without medication before returning to school.** We ask all parents to notify the school if a child is absent due to any sickness (common cold, sore throat, or cough).

4. Any prescription or nonprescription medicine will be administered **only by written, signed, and dated parental permission naming the medication and dosage, and must be given directly to the office for safe keeping.** All medicine shall be stored in its original containers and properly labeled. Records will be kept on file for any medication dispensed at school.

5. In the event that a child should become suddenly ill or seriously injured while in attendance, parents will be immediately notified and first aid/emergent care will be provided by a certified First Aid and CPR staff member until further professional medical treatment/ ambulatory service can be provided. Documentation of all accidents or injuries will be recorded on the day of occurrence and made available to the parent and/or licensing specialist.

6. All teaching staff is required by Brixham Montessori Friends School to be trained and certified in CPR and First Aid. Teaching staff is also required to be in good physical and mental health, and be fully immunized against measles, mumps, rubella, tetanus, and diphtheria. Any teaching staff not immunized for medical or religious reasons shall have written documentation on file, and will be excluded from school in the event of a disease outbreak.

7. Diapering and Toileting

Brixham Montessori Friends School believes that every child has exclusive rights to his or her privacy in regard to toileting, and will encourage children to be as independent and self-managing as possible.

The expectation for toddler children, ages 2-3 years, is that a teacher is needed in the bathroom to assist with wiping and learning how to use the toilet independently. This includes helping children dress and undress as needed, and discussing the necessary steps to successfully use the toilet. If the child is still wearing diapers or pull-ups, the teacher will encourage the child to participate in removing and replacing his or her own diaper or pull-up, and disposing of the soiled items into an approved waste bin. While a teacher is assisting a toddler child in the bathroom, the expectation is for the door to be left open, allowing the teacher to maintain supervision and communication with the class as a whole, to include the assisting teacher and children who are waiting to use the bathroom.

The expectation for preschool children, ages 3-4 years, is that a teacher is needed only occasionally depending on the individual needs of the child and the child's readiness for independence in both toileting and dressing/undressing. Teachers will assist children in learning how to safely wipe themselves by demonstrating the proper wiping procedure, and encouraging them to wipe independently. While a teacher is assisting a preschool child in the bathroom, the expectation is for the door to be left ajar, allowing the child some privacy while maintaining an open door to the classroom. Children in the 3-6 classroom should be toilet-trained prior to entering as a three year old; if the child is still "in process," then cloth training pants are preferred over pull-ups as cloth gives immediate feedback to the child learning how to manage his or her toileting needs. It's also important that clothes continue to be easy pull on and off at this age with little need for adult assistance in zipping, buttoning, snapping or hooking a belt.

The expectation for extended day (kindergarten) children, ages 5-6 years, is that a teacher is not needed for assistance in toileting or for dressing and undressing. Extended day children are expected

to have the necessary skills to independently manage their bathroom needs, to include toileting and dressing and undressing. If an extended day child asks a teacher for assistance, then assistance will be given if deemed necessary by the teacher; if a teacher is required to be of assistance, the door will be left ajar, allowing the child some privacy while maintaining an open door to the classroom. Extended day children are strongly encouraged not to share a bathroom with another child for their toileting needs.

The expectation for elementary children, ages 6-11 years, is that a teacher is not needed for assistance in toileting or for dressing and undressing.

As a final note, it is expected for every child and teacher to practice safe hand-washing procedures, and proper disposal and containment of soiled items. Every classroom should be equipped with plastic bags, disposable non-latex gloves, and disinfectant spray/cleanser.

8. Health Screenings

Upon entering the third year of the 3-6 Program, every Extended Day (Kindergarten) child will be screened for vision and hearing by our school nurse consultant. This screening is to detect possible sight or hearing defects as required by the State of Maine Department of Education. Parents who object to the screening due to religious or personal beliefs may be exempt when such objections are provided in writing to the school.

Additional vision and hearing screenings may be conducted by our school nurse consultant for children entering the lower and upper elementary programs in accordance with the Title 20-A M.R.S.A Sections 6451-6454 and Maine Department of Education Regulation Chapter 45. Parents who object to additional vision and hearing screenings due to religious or personal beliefs may be exempt when such objections are provided in writing to the school.

Late Pick-Up Policy

BMFS is committed to ensuring that all children are properly supervised in a safe, nurturing environment. We consider our Late Aftercare program to be an invaluable service that we are happy to provide for the convenience of participating families. However, it is important that we know when parents will require care beyond their contracted hours. If you will be late picking up your child, please call the school as soon as possible.

The Board of Directors has approved the following 2017-2018 fees for late pick-up:

Late Pick-Up before 5:00pm

\$4.25 for 10-30 minutes beyond contracted aftercare hours

\$9.50 for 30-60 minutes beyond contracted aftercare hours

Late Pick-Up after 5:00pm*

\$9.50 for 10-30 minutes after school hours

\$18 for 30-60 minutes after school hours

**Please note that a child who is not picked-up in a timely fashion at the designated dismissal time compromises the teaching staff's ability to prepare their classroom for the following day's lessons, and may require staff to stay beyond their contracted time. Children waiting for a late pick up will be under the care and supervision of the Office.*

Non-discrimination Policy

Brixham Montessori Friends School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. Brixham Montessori Friends School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, tuition assistance, athletics, and other school administrated programs.

Smoking Policy

The School supports a smoke-free environment. Therefore, smoking is not permitted on School grounds or at School events where children are present.

Student Directory

A student directory has been provided in the orientation packet for the convenience of our school population. **This information is confidential and private, and should not be reproduced without the approval of the Head of School.** Parent contact information, including the on-site parent mailboxes, is not to be used for personal and/or business solicitation and marketing. In addition, the online secure community website also contains this school directory and should not be used for personal and/or business solicitation and marketing. **Every effort must be made to maintain the confidentiality and privacy of our students and families.**

Student Record Policy

Student records will be made available by written request of parents or legal guardian. All records are kept confidential and secured as required by the State of Maine.

Transportation and Car Seat Policy

As required by State Law, all children under the age of eight years or weighing less than 80 lbs. **must arrive and depart from school in a regulation safe car seat or booster.**

Tuition Policy for the 2017-2018 Academic School Year

The BMFS Board of Directors has established policies governing billing and payment so that the school may meet its financial obligations and so that each family's commitment to the school is clear. The school's budget & operations depend on fulfillment by all parents and/or guardians of their Tuition Enrollment Contracts. **Students are enrolled for the full academic year, and there will be no waiver, release, reduction or cancellation of payment obligations, nor any refund for prior payments for any absences, withdrawal, departure or dismissal after April 1st, 2017** unless one of two conditions is met as stated in the Tuition Withdrawal Policy below.

Tuition Payment Plans for the 2017-2018 Academic School Year

The BMFS school year is considered to be continuous from September through June. The September through June tuition is divided into equal payments (annual, semi-annual, or monthly) according to a plan agreed upon and committed to in the Tuition Enrollment Contract. Payments are due on the 1st of each month as outlined below. **Allowances will not be made for phasing-in, illness or vacation.**

Plan A: Annual Tuition due by July 1, 2017

Plan B: Semi-annual Tuition due by July 1, 2017 and November 1, 2017

Plan C: Nine monthly tuition due July 1, 2017, August 1, 2017, September 1, 2017, October 1, 2017,

November 1, 2017, December 1, 2017, January 1, 2018, February 1, 2018 and March 1, 2018

Explanation of Fees for the 2017-2018 Academic School Year

Application Fee: A non-refundable \$50 fee for each new applicant must accompany the initial application.

Tuition Deposit: A \$100 non-refundable registration fee is due and payable with the Annual Registration Form due February 1, 2017 for returning students and March 15, 2017 for new students. A 10% tuition deposit is due with a signed copy of the enrollment contract on April 1, 2017.

Fees, costs, and charges (“Fees”) in addition to tuition may be incurred during the school year for which the parent or guardian is responsible. Such additional Fees may include, but are not limited to, aftercare charges, field trip costs, diagnostic testing, and educational services. An incidental account must be set up to cover Fees with any credit left on the account refundable at the end of the school year. Incidental accounts should start with a credit of \$25 balance for the toddler program, credit of \$50 balance for the 3-6 program, and a credit of \$200 balance for the elementary program to be established no later than September 1st or the first day of school.

Payments are due upon receipt of monthly statements, but no later than 5 days past the statement date. A late fee of \$25 for any balance past due will be assessed if payment is not received within 5 days of the statement date. Unpaid balances that are more than 30 days past due will incur a late penalty fee of 1.5% interest per month. A \$25 returned check fee will be charged for any check returned for insufficient funds. **The parent or guardian is responsible for the School’s expenses incurred in the enforcement and collection of the tuition and Fees, including reasonable attorney fees and costs.**

Enrollment Procedure for 2018-2019 Academic School Year

Annual Registration Forms along with a \$100 non-refundable registration fee must be returned to the school by February 1, 2018 for returning students and March 15, 2018 for new students.

No student may register or attend School until all outstanding tuition and Fees are paid in full in accordance with the selected payment plan. Brixham Montessori Friends School reserves the right to deny attendance and the preparation or receipt of transcripts or progress reports for students whose accounts include overdue balances.

Financial Obligation

The school’s budget and operations depend on fulfillment by all parents and/or guardians of their Tuition Enrollment Contracts. If the school is required to initiate legal proceedings to enforce an Enrollment Contract, the parents and/or guardians will be held liable for the school’s legal costs, including reasonable attorney and collections fees as stated in the Enrollment Contract.

Withdrawal for the 2017-2018 Academic School Year

Parents and/or guardians are responsible for the full amount of the annual tuition stated in the signed Enrollment Contract. Withdrawals, departures or dismissals occurring after April 1, 2017 may result in prorated tuition reimbursement (if tuition payments have been made) or a prorated tuition obligation (if any tuition payments are due and owing) if one of the following two conditions is met:

1. In the case of students attending Brixham for the first time and the student has attended at least four weeks of the academic school year and the School is given **written notice of withdrawal before October 15, 2017**

2. Exceptional circumstances that warrant consideration in the view of the Board of Directors.

Tuition Assistance

The granting of tuition assistance awards is based on financial need, up to a maximum of 50% of tuition cost. Tuition assistance will be awarded for a single academic year. Students are encouraged to reapply each year that they are in the program and efforts will be made to ensure that children are able to stay in the program from year to year.

Tuition assistance awards are available for the September-June academic year and are only available for the **full-time elementary or extended day program/kindergarten** (5-12 year olds).

All parents wishing to apply for tuition assistance are required to fill out the application form. The application form is available on the www.brixhammontessori.org website or in the office. Applications for tuition assistance are due no later than January 15th for the following school year. Estimated family contributions are determined by submitting the application (provided by BMFS) to School and Student Service for Financial Aid, and tuition assistance awards are determined by the BMFS tuition assistance committee. All applications and awards are confidential.

Funds for tuition assistance are limited. It is important that applications for assistance be made only after careful consideration of your need. Tuition assistance awards will be paid out as follows:

- With exception to the final tuition payment, 50% of the total tuition assistance award will be deducted in equal amounts from the tuition payments in accordance with the BMFS Tuition Payment Policy.
- The remaining 50% of the total tuition assistance award will be deducted from the final tuition payment in accordance with the BMFS Tuition Payment Policy.

Volunteerism

Parents need to understand that, as a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization, Brixham Montessori Friends School depends on its parent community to contribute time and expertise to support the school and the Brixham community, and expects parents to volunteer in many different capacities, such as committee work, special events, classroom helpers, and school governance. While no set amount of time is required to fulfill this obligation, parents should enthusiastically support the efforts each parent brings to the community, understanding that a healthy school community is built on each member's willingness and desire to contribute to the emotional and financial well-being of the school. Classroom helpers who volunteer regularly in the classroom are required to participate in a special classroom volunteering orientation usually scheduled in early October. More information about this orientation and other volunteering opportunities will be available in the back to school welcome packets that are sent out in August.



2017-2018 BMFS School Calendar
175 student days 185 teacher days

August			
M-Tr	28-31	Teacher Work Days, 7:30am-3:30pm	
Tr	31	BMFS Classroom Peek and Playground Popsicles, 2-3pm	
September			
F-M	1-4	Labor Day Weekend/No School	
T	5	First and Second Year Students 3-6 Phase-In, 8:45am-11:45am Extended Day Year Phase-In, 12:30pm-3:30pm Home Visits for Toddler Program, 8:30am-3:30pm First Day of School for Elementary Program	
W	6	First Day of School for 3-6 Program Home Visits for Toddler Program, 8:30am-3:00pm	
Tr-F	7-8	Phase-In Days for Toddler Program	
T	12	UE Field Trip to Mt. Major, lv 8:45am	
F	15	BMFS Family Barn Dance and Dessert Potluck, 6pm-8pm	
F	22	BMFS Parent Reception, 6:30-8:30pm	
W	27	Early Release/Staff Meeting, 12noon	
October			
W	4	Program Level Meetings, 3:30pm-4:30pm	
F	6	Strategic Planning Work Groups/No School, 7:30am-3:30pm	
M	9	Columbus Day/No School	
T	10	School Day Open House, 10am-11am	
W	11	3-6 Field Trip to the Music Hall, "Guess How Much I Love You," 9:30am show	
F	13	BMFS Grandparent and Special Friends Day <i>(Elementary, 10:30-11:30am & Extended Day (K), 12:30pm-1:30pm)</i> BMFS Family Pumpkin Hayride, 3:30pm and 4:30pm	
Sa	21	BMFS Harvest Festival and Open Classrooms, 2pm-4pm (rain date: 10/22)	
W	25	Early Release/Staff Meeting, 12noon	
Tr	26	UE and LE Field Trip to America Stonehedge, lv 9am	
November			
W	1	Program Level Meeting, 3:30pm-4:30pm	
Tr	2	BMFS Parent Education Curriculum Night, 5pm-7pm	
F	10	Parent-Teacher Conferences/No School (Veteran's Day)	
W-F	22-24	Thanksgiving Break/No School	
December			
W	6	Strategic Planning Work Groups, 3:30pm-4:30pm	
TBD		BMFS Holiday Choral Concert, 6pm-7pm	
M-W	18-20	BMFS Holiday Teas Monday: Whitney and Barbara, 9am Tuesday: Ann and Dorothy, 9am Lower Elementary, 2pm Wednesday: Meg and Jen, 9am	
Tr	21	Holiday Break Begin	

January

W	3	School Resumes Program Level Meetings, 3:30-4:30pm
Tr	11	UE Field Trip to Gulf of Maine Research Institute, lv 8:15am
M	15	New Student and Tuition Assistance Applications Due Martin Luther King Day/No School
T	23	Extended Day (K) Parent Information Session, 8:30am
Tr	25	BMFS Parent Education Curriculum Night, 5pm-7pm
T	30	Lower Elementary (Gr 1-3) Parent Information Session, 8:30am
W	31	Early Release/Staff Meeting, 12noon

February

Tr	1	Returning Student Registration Due
Sa	3	New Student Classroom Visits for Toddler and 3-6, 8:30am-12noon
W	7	Board/Staff Strategic Planning Meeting, 3:30pm-5:00pm
Tr	15	BMFS "Back to School" Night for Elementary & Extended Day, 5pm-6pm
M-F	19-23	Winter Break/No School

March

F	9	Professional Development Day/No School
M	12	UE and LE Field Trip to Merrill Auditorium, "Charlotte's Web," lv 9am
Tr	15	New Student Registration Due
Tr	22	New Parent Orientation, 7pm-8pm
F	23	Parent-Teacher Conferences /No School

April

Su	1	Tuition Contracts Due
W	4	Strategic Planning Work Groups, 3:30pm-4:30pm
M-W	9-11	BMFS Spring Teas Monday: Whitney and Barbara, 9am Tuesday: Ann and Dorothy, 9am Lower Elementary, TBD Wednesday: Meg and Jen, 9am Upper Elementary, TBD
M-F	16-20	Spring Break/No School

May

T	8	UE, LE and 3-6 Field Trip to the Music Hall, "The Fourth R- Rhythm," 10am show
TBD		BMFS Annual Benefit Auction, 6pm-10pm
TBD		BMFS Spring Festival with Elementary Drama/Musical, 2pm-4pm
F	25	Early Release/Program Level Meetings for Elementary, 12noon
M	28	Memorial Day/No School

June

TBD		BMFS String Recital, 2pm-4pm
W	6	UE Field Trip to Boston, lv 7:30am
Tr	14	BMFS Graduation, 6pm-7pm
F	15	BMFS Last Day of School Family Beach Day & Picnic/Early Release at 12noon
M	18	Teacher Work Day, 7:30am-3:30pm