



PARENT HANDBOOK

2017-2018

Saxtons River Montessori School
P.O. Box 98
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www.srmontessori.org

The SRMS Parent Handbook presents academic and administrative policy for the Saxtons River Montessori School. The handbook contains important information that every family is responsible for knowing.

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Mission Statement:

Guided by the Montessori philosophy, the Saxtons River Montessori School cultivates:

- a child's innate curiosity and creativity
- an inclusive, nurturing learning environment
- a sense of community and global citizenship

Faculty & Staff:

Director & Lead Teacher: Maeve Sabine
Office Administrator & Associate Teacher: Diane Allen
Assistant Teacher: Hany Von Gillern
Assistant Teacher: Tori Mitchell
Bookkeeper: Darlene Kelly

Board of Directors:

President: Tessa Daniels
Vice President: Stician Samples
Treasurer: Drew Millikin
Secretary: Courtney Hillhouse
Members-at-large: Susan Still, Bethany Gracia, Jessi Krause-Herron

Weather Cancellation Policy

In the event of winter storms that make driving treacherous, we will usually follow the Windham Northeast Supervisory Union (WNESU) and cancel school when the public schools in Rockingham, Westminster, Grafton, and Athens are closed. If there is a two-hour delay by WNESU, school will open at 10:30am.

In case of early closing of school, parents will be notified. All attempts will be made to keep school open.

SRMS cancellations are not individually listed. Parents can find WNESU closings on the WNESU website www.wnesu.org. Cancellations for WNESU are also announced over radio stations 93.5FM, 96.3FM, 107.1FM and TV 5&31.

SRMS parents have the option to receive “robo-calls” from WNESU for weather related closings and delays. Phone contact info for that option should be placed on SRMS admission forms.

Montessori Philosophy

Education is not what the teacher gives; education is a natural process spontaneously carried out by the human individual and is acquired not by listening to words but by experience upon the environment.

—Dr. Maria Montessori, Education for a New World

Dr. Maria Montessori created the Montessori environment through lengthy, scientific observation of the developing child. Her program was designed to meet the needs of growing individuals, rather than have children meet the needs of her program. She discovered that children have a delight in being self-taught and a love of order and responsibility. By designing a curriculum of beautiful sensorial materials, by which children pass through sequential developmental stages, she allowed children the joy of learning at their own rate, in their own time. She believed in helping the child to prepare not only for school but also for life, through acquisition of a love of learning, self-initiative, internal order, confidence, and independence.

The Montessori environment at SRMS consists of five major areas:

- **Practical Life**—activities relate to everyday life (spooning, pouring, sorting, dressing, self-care, food preparation, etc,) and help the child develop coordination, concentration, order, and independence.
- **Sensorial**—activities that help the child to discriminate between the myriad sensory impressions he or she has received from birth. The child develops the ability to discriminate length, weight, volume, shape, color, smell, sound, touch, and taste.

- **Language**—activities begin in oral language, helping the child enrich his or her vocabulary and develop auditory and visual discrimination. These skills are essential for hearing different sounds and recognizing different letters. As the child shows interest and readiness, he or she moves into writing and reading activities.
- **Math**—activities develop the mathematical mind within each child, beginning with number/numeral knowledge from 0 to 10. Children then move on to concrete manipulative activities learning the decimal system, higher linear counting, and the operations of addition, multiplication, subtraction, and division.
- **Cultural**—activities involving art, science, geography, cultural studies, music, and movement. While the environment offers all of the above to the child, the teachers are trained to respect each child as an individual and to allow for the different developmental time clock within each child. The teachers' central role, therefore, is to establish the environment and then to observe each child within that environment, determining differently for each child when and how to best offer each activity.

A Description of the Saxtons River Montessori School

The Saxtons River Montessori School is a non-profit corporation owned by the parent body for children ages 3 to 6. It is designed to provide children with creative group and individual play experiences within a structured, individualized learning atmosphere under the direction of Montessori-trained teachers. The following is the philosophy of the school taken from the Statement of Intent:

The parents of SRMS, Inc. want to provide a school environment that will:

- *Expand a child's play and learning experience and encourage the child's self-awareness and self-confidence.*
- *Develop a sense of self-discipline and responsibility.*
- *Foster attitudes of mutual respect through cooperative interaction.*
- *Offer problem-solving activities which encourage children to make choices and experience the consequences.*

The school adheres to the basic tenet of Maria Montessori that the full development of self is the child's unique and ultimate goal in life.

- **Morning Program:** The morning program consists of a mixed-age group of children 3-6 years old. The children begin their day on the playground at 8:30am. It is important to the development of a sense of community that your child arrives on time. After our transition inside at 9am, we gather for a welcoming, morning song circle, followed by a group snack. After snack time, children move about freely and purposefully, working with materials from the various areas of the classroom, sharing a project with a friend, or asking a teacher for a lesson with a new material. The teachers circulate throughout the classroom spaces, giving a lesson, problem solving with a child, listening to a story, or observing. Toward the end of the morning, the children recognize the clean-up song and tidy up their work and the general classroom space. The morning concludes with outdoor activity, weather permitting. Morning program hours are 8:30 AM to 11:30 AM. Half day students should be picked up from the playground between 11:30 and 11:45.
- **Full Day Program:** The full day program begins with the mixed-age group. After the morning program is dismissed, the full day children gather for group lunch followed by afternoon read aloud. The younger children then rest, while the older children have an opportunity to write/draw in a daily journal and to continue and expand on their work of the morning in our East room. The afternoon concludes with outdoor activity, weather permitting. The full day program hours are 8:30 AM to 2:50 PM.
- **Ground Rules for a Montessori Classroom:** Materials are presented to a child when the child is developmentally ready for them. Any child is free to work with any of the classroom materials that have been presented so long as s/he uses them respectfully. S/he may not use the materials in a way that disturbs the activities of others.
- The child may work on a rug or on a table, whichever is suitable to the work chosen, at his or her discretion. Children may not work at the shelves because their presence there would obstruct other's access to the materials
- A child preserves the environment during an exercise and restores the environment after an exercise. S/he is responsible for cleaning up after his own spills once he has been shown how. S/he puts away his own rug after rolling it neatly. If s/he has been working at a table, s/he pushes the chair under the place at the table.
- No child may touch the work of another or interfere with another's activity. This provides security for the child involved in an exercise and allows the child to continue it to completion. The right to initiate, complete, and/or repeat an exercise is protected by this rule. If s/he must leave it temporarily, s/he is confident that his/her work will be as s/he left it when s/he returns.

- Children are not coerced into joining a group activity. It is their right to keep working at individual exercises during group activities. A child is not allowed to interfere or disrupt an activity in which s/he has chosen not to participate, but it is also his right to stand as an observer of group activities.
- Children are neither forced nor encouraged to share with others what they have chosen to work on alone. Generosity develops from within as a child matures and gains self-confidence and a sense of security. If the materials are adequate and the ground rules effective, sharing will come naturally when it is appropriate.
- A child is free to do nothing, if s/he desires, as long as s/he does not disturb the activities of others. S/he may be learning by simple observation, by pondering a question, or by relaxing.

The entire Montessori environment is prepared in a way to make errors self-evident and often self-correcting. As a child internalizes the ground rules, s/he no longer needs the gentle reminders from the teachers.

Operation of School

Before Care: It is not necessary to make prior arrangements in order to use Before Care. It is on a drop-in basis. Families who need to use Before Care may arrive at or after 8:00 AM. If you drop your child off between 8:00 and 8:25 AM, you will be charged \$15.00 for Before Care. The teachers will not be able to accept your child into the classroom before 8:00 AM.

If you use Before Care, you will be billed at the end of the month for which it was used. If you have any misunderstandings about Before Care billing, please email our Office Administrator at admin@srmontessori.org.

Arrival: Morning arrival is between 8:25 and 8:40 am. We begin our mornings on the playground, which helps children transition from parents with ease. Our morning circle begins at 9 AM. It is of the utmost importance to be **on time** every day. This cannot be stressed enough. A late child misses valuable information and transitions that happen between 8:30 and 8:45.

Please walk with your child to our white playground gate, where one of our teachers will meet him/her with a warm “good morning.” Parents have a brief opportunity to exchange important information with the teacher and are welcome to bring their child’s belonging into the cubby space in the East Room prior to circle time.

If you have a surrogate dropping off your child, please make sure they understand the drop-off procedure, including the parking lot protocols.

It is the policy of SRMS, that a parent has access to their child at any time. However, it is important to know that in exercising your right to have access to your child at any time, you may interrupt the routine of the program. So,

please, exercise your right prudently.

It is, of course, very important that each parent, from time to time, see their child in the classroom setting. A **very good way of doing this is to set up an “Observation”, where you get to sit in a special area of the classroom and watch what goes on. This may be arranged through the teachers.** We would like your visit to be pleasant and informative for you as well as comfortable for the children who are working in the classroom. With this in mind, we ask that you follow these guidelines:

Tips on Observing in a Montessori Classroom

1. Please sit in one of the chairs available for visitors. Keep as low a profile as possible so you don't distract the children.
2. Please try to refrain from talking while you are in the classroom. If a child approaches and speaks to you, please respond naturally but briefly.
3. Please do not handle the materials. If you wish to examine them, we will try to provide a time when the children are not in the classroom.
4. Please write down any questions you have so that we can discuss them after your observation.

As a focus for your observation, you might:

1. Observe one child's pattern of work: his/her choices, focus and interaction with other children.
2. Follow the teacher's way of alternating presentation, guidance and observation.
3. Note the range and kind of activities engaged in during the time you are observing.
4. Note the difference in style, energy level and interest from one age range to another.

Dismissal: Parents of morning students should pick up their child between 11:30 and 11:45 AM. If you come earlier, you run the risk of cutting short important social time for your child; if you come later you may interfere with the lunch, cleanup, and set-up for the afternoon. A late fee of \$1 per minute will be assessed for late pick-ups.

Parents of full-day students should pick up their child between **2:45 and 3:00 PM.** **Late fees will be charged for late pick-ups.**

We plan on significant outside time every day, weather permitting. Generally your child will be on the playground when you arrive to pick him/her up. In inclement weather pickup is at the front door. Please postpone conversing with other parents until you have picked up your child.

Teachers will alternate dismissing at the gate. They will usually give a brief comment about your child's day at school. For more extended and private conversations, you

would be contacted later in the day.

When you arrive at the playground gate, the teacher will call your child over, and the child will be released to you. You are responsible for your child's safety in the parking lot.

Please keep in mind that morning pick-up is 11:30 - 11:45 and afternoon pick-up is 2:45 - 3:00. The midday pick-up is important because the full-day children are transitioning to lunch time. In the afternoon, the teachers need to be free to complete planning and administrative duties. We know that sometimes things happen that might interfere with pick-up times. If this is the case please call and let the teachers know. Isolated occurrences of late pick-up are understandable. **The late pick-up fee of \$1.00/minute will apply if habitual late pick-up occurs.**

No child will be released to any person other than the parent unless the teachers are notified prior to dismissal time. Unknown persons will be asked by teachers to offer identification as verification of the identity of the individual.

If you have a surrogate picking up your child, please make sure they understand the dismissal procedure.

Art work that the children have completed in school will be on the porch and may be picked up at this time. The number of crafts/papers is not an accurate indication of all work done in school. **The majority of activities at SRMS have no paper product.**

Absences: Prior notice of absences is helpful, when possible.

Carpooling: SRMS encourages carpooling whenever possible. Please inform the school in writing of your arrangements before the carpool begins.

Designated Driver Policy: If someone other than a child's parent or regular driver is collecting a child from school, the parent must send a written note, in advance, informing the teachers of the change. This rule applies even if a child is going home to play with another child from school. Forms are on the porch if occasions occur for change in pick-up.

Parents are advised to personally introduce all substitute drivers to the school staff, in advance. Persons unfamiliar to the staff will be asked to show identification. Parents are asked to explain this policy to their substitute drivers. This rule has been established to prevent child abduction and is enforced for the protection of your family. It is a state law.

Communication: Communication is an essential element in establishing a good relationship between parent and teacher. However, in an effort to keep arrival and departure transitions smooth, we have set the following guidelines:

Please try to avoid passing information verbally to the teachers during arrival. This is a time of greeting for your child. If you have information for the teachers essential to the operation of the school day, please email maeve@srmontessori.org before the school day begins or phone the school (869-3349) before 8:20 AM, or hand a note to the teachers as you drop off your child.

For other matters, such as concerns about your child's progress, the best way to reach our teachers after school hours is by email.

Trial Period: The first four calendar weeks of a child's enrollment at SRMS will be a trial period for each child and for the school. The family and/or the teachers may make a decision for withdrawal during this trial period, without requiring additional payment.

At any time, during the year, if a child's behavior runs contrary to the philosophy and/or rules and regulations of the school (e.g., aggression, consistent classroom difficulties, etc.), the teacher(s) will meet with the parent(s) to discuss and implement a planned approach to assist the child. After a defined period of time utilizing this plan, the parents and teacher will meet again to discuss the plan. If satisfactory progress has not been made in modifying the behaviors, it will be the prerogative of the school to ask that the child be withdrawn.

Extended Absence from School: If you need to keep your child out of school for an extended period of time, (for example, a trip or long illness), it will be necessary for you to inform the teachers with a written note or email. In the note please give the reason for the absence and include the dates of departure and date of return to school.

Conferences: Conferences will be scheduled in the fall and the spring each year. Parents may request additional conferences as needed or desired. **Please note:** The Montessori method encourages individual growth and skill mastery at each child's own pace. The teachers will not evaluate a child's progress with respect to any set of standard achievements or compare your child's progress with that of other children.

Parents/Child Nights and Family Events: Parents/Child Nights will be scheduled and are not listed on the school calendar. Please read the monthly school newsletter for the dates of these and other important community events. Parent/child nights provide opportunities for the children to share the activities and materials they are learning at school with their parents. Parent education evenings may be scheduled periodically throughout the year when subjects of interest come up. Please see the Director if you have an interest in a subject for Parent Education.

Observation: Parents and other interested persons are encouraged to observe the class in action. The observation period begins in November. Please arrange your observation ahead of time with the staff. Observation is most successful when adults are as discreet and quiet as possible. Observation guidelines will be furnished to you when you come to observe.

Snack: Each family provides snack for their own child on a daily basis. This snack should not be considered a substitute for a healthy breakfast.

Discipline: Discipline to meet the needs of the individual child will always be handled in a constructive manner. In no case will physical punishment be inflicted. Persistent

discipline needs will be discussed between the teachers and family.

Clothing: Please provide your child with comfortable, easy-to-care-for clothing. In order to help your child become independent, it is helpful if the clothing and shoes can be easily managed by your child, him/herself. (I.e. belts, tight buttons on pants, shoes with laces and overalls are hard for small children to use.) Your child will be working and playing hard, so be prepared for spills (soil, paint, glue, etc.) on clothing.

Each child should have an extra set of clothes, labeled with their name on each item, and in a plastic bag to be left at school for emergency changes. If your child is prone to accidents, please provide two sets so that borrowing from another child may be avoided. The suitability of the extra clothes should be checked throughout the year as your child grows and as the seasons change.

The children will play outdoors, everyday, (weather permitting) and should be dressed accordingly. In the winter, boots, mittens, hat, and snowsuit are essential.

Children may not wear muddy, wet, or dirty boots or shoes into the classroom and should have footwear that they can easily put on and take off by themselves. Please provide a pair of slippers or indoor shoes for your child to wear in the classroom and leave at school. Please make sure that these have soles (to avoid slipping) and that they stay on the child's feet. (Clogs frequently are kicked off the feet when the child is walking.)

Clothing and/or gear associated with commercial characters, weapons of all kinds, and other personal toys should be left at home, with the exception of a small “snuggly” toy for rest time, if your child stays for the full day.

Birthdays: A child celebrates his or her birthday by participating in a “Birthday Walk.” The purpose of this event is to allow the child to better understand why they have turned a year older; to recognize how they have grown and changed; and to allow their friends to join in this special celebration. **The birthday walk consists of the birthday child walking in a circle around the sun, carrying the globe, as many times as she or he has traveled around the sun in reality.** To introduce the concept of time and heritage, parents are encouraged to make a timeline poster using one photo from each year of the child’s life, with a short sentence explaining each photo. With this, children begin to develop a sense of personal history and begin to sense their place in a bigger picture. Parents and extended family are welcome to come to school for their child’s birthday walk to narrate the child’s time line. **Please note:** There will be no special birthday snack. We have found that this helps the children focus on what is really important. Families are encouraged to bring a special book from home to share with us during their birthday circle. Please do not use the mailboxes for birthday party invitations unless the entire class is invited. When not all children are not included in the invitations, feelings can be hurt. A family list will be provided to all families so you may use the mail instead.

Medical: Parents are required to sign the medical release form included in the enrollment packet prior to the start of school.

No medical treatment other than minor first aid will be given at school. In case of a medical emergency, staff members will call a rescue squad and the child's physician in addition to the parents or guardian. State regulations require that staff members fill out an accident form if a child has an injury. Parents will be asked to initial this form.

The teachers and the state Public Health Office should be notified of any communicable disease or condition in the student or immediate family, or anything of this nature to which the child has been exposed.

SRMS requires that sick children be kept home. The teacher may request that a parent pick up a child who seems ill or has become ill at school.

The school must be notified when a child is sick so the teachers can be on the look out for symptoms in the other children. The teachers are at school by 7:45 AM, or, you can call the school and leave a message (869-3349).

State regulations require that we receive written instructions regarding medications. If your child needs medication please indicate in writing what medicine your child is taking, when, the dosage, and whether or not it should be refrigerated.

Injuries and Incidents: If a child is involved in a non-emergency related incident, the child's family will be notified at the end of the day. We invite the family to call the teachers with any follow-up concerns or questions after school hours.

The Parent Cooperative

From the start, the non-profit Saxtons River Montessori School has been a corporation owned by the parent body. When our children join our school community, so do we, the Parents. With the active cooperation and participation of parent volunteers, we are able to minimize expenses and keep the cost of tuition down. We are able to support our staff and each other, and model for our children the meaning of *community*.

The parents of SRMS elect a Board of Directors to oversee the financial health and operation of the school. The Board of Directors is comprised of a minimum of four members: President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. The Board of Directors is responsible for hiring the teachers and other such staff as deemed necessary for the successful operation of SRMS. School finances also are overseen by the Board and handled by the Board or other such person as delegated by the Board.

Due to the cooperative nature of the school, each family is expected to do the following:

- 1. Pay tuition on time.**
- 2. Promptly read and/or respond to all newsletters, notifications, and requests.**

- 3. Contribute to the school wish list.**
- 4. Participate in events, including fundraising.**
- 5. Volunteer to do jobs. (*A list will be provided.*)**
- 6. Attend all school meetings.**
- 7. Help with building cleaning and maintenance.**

Family Cleaning Weekends - Buy Out Option

Parents typically commit to two to three school cleanings per year. Each weekend cleaning takes approximately 2.5 hours of deep cleaning with two adults present. It is often difficult for families to clean the school with accompanying children in the classrooms. If you would like to “opt-out” of your cleaning responsibilities, please contact our Office Assistant, admin@srmontessori.org. The fee for the year will be \$150 on your tuition bill.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the operation of the school and your part in it, the members of the Board are only an email or phone call away. If you have any questions regarding your child and his or her school activities, the teachers are always happy to hear from you.

Rules and Regulations

I. Organization

A. Membership

1. Each family with a child currently enrolled in SRMS is to be represented by one voting member of the corporation. The representative must be a parent or guardian of the child.
2. The membership, at annual and/or special meetings, will vote on amendments to the by-laws, elect Board members, and transact any other business that comes before the meeting.
3. The Board of Directors will be responsible for determining the rules and policies of the school, for providing operating space and insurance, and for hiring the teachers and such other staff as deemed necessary for the successful operation of the school.
4. The teaching staff is responsible for planning and implementing the curriculum and overseeing all classroom functions.
5. The Board of Directors is responsible for overseeing all other functions necessary to insure continuing operation of the school.

B. Meetings

1. There will be one annual meeting of the membership and special meetings will be held as needed. At least one week's advance notice will be given for the annual meeting, and at least 48 hours notice will be given for special meetings. All parents are encouraged to attend.

2. The Board of Directors meets a minimum of four times a year. Time and place are announced in the newsletter. All parents are welcome to attend.
3. Minutes of the Board meetings are available by request. Contact our Office Assistant for more information.

II. Admission and Registration

A. *Entrance Requirements*

1. Children must be at least 3 years old, before September 1 of the current school year.
2. Children must be able to assume responsibility for their own toileting.

B. *Priority of Enrollment*

1. Students who have been approved for readiness by the teaching staff.
2. Current students who have returned registration forms and fees as required.
3. Siblings of current students and alumni who have returned registration forms and fees as required.
4. New students who have returned registration forms and fees as required.
5. Priority will be given to families who express the wish for their child to attend SRMS for the full 2-3 years.

C. *Forms and Agreements*

1. All forms included in the enrollment packet must be completed and returned before the child is allowed to enter SRMS.
2. Each child shall have either immunization records appropriate for his or her age by September 1, or waivers signed by parent(s) if immunization is not chosen by the family, or by the family doctor if immunizations are not given for medical/health reasons.
3. Parents must agree to abide by the by-laws, contracts, and all rules and regulations of SRMS.

III. Tuition and Fees

A. *Application and Registration*

1. There will be a non-refundable application fee of \$25 with every enrollment application.
2. There will be an annual, non-refundable registration fee of \$200 for new students and \$100 for returning students, applied toward tuition for every student enrolled in the school regardless of the date of admission. A \$100 registration fee is charged for a sibling enrolled in the same year.
3. Tuition payments for the year in progress must be paid in full by June 1 of that school year in order to retain a place for the following school year.

B. *Scholarships*

1. SRMS offers scholarships when possible. Interested families should complete an application and include necessary information for a scholarship when they enroll their child for the fall. Decisions on scholarships are generally made in

the summer months after your child has been accepted.

C. Payment Schedule

1. Tuition may be paid on any one of the following schedules:
 - a. Annual—one payment due August 1 preceding start of school
 - d. Monthly—ten payments due on the first of September through June.
All payments for the current year are due on or before June 1, at the latest, regardless of the date of enrollment.
2. Checks must be made payable to Saxtons River Montessori School, Inc. They can be mailed to SRMS, PO Box 98, Saxtons River, VT 05154, or they can be paid at school when school is in session.
3. Tuition rates are set on an annual basis. The payment due each pay period is an installment on the annual amount and is not the tuition for that specific month. Pro-rated tuition charges will be calculated for students entering the school subsequent to the beginning of school.
4. Payments made after the 10th or postmarked later than the tenth day of the month in which payment is due will be assessed a late payment fee of \$5 per student per program.
5. If a check is returned unpaid to SRMS for any reason, the writer of the check will be required to reimburse any handling charges incurred by the school. In addition, late payment fees will be assessed.
6. If tuition payment is 90 days or more past due, the child will be dismissed from SRMS pending fulfillment of past due payment.
7. Full or accelerated payments may be made at any time.
8. A pro-rated portion of payments will be refunded if a child must be withdrawn or dismissed during the four-week trial period.
9. If a child is to be withdrawn from the school other than during the four-week probationary period, the family is responsible for payment of tuition for one month following written notification of withdrawal or dismissal.
10. Exceptions to any of these policies must be requested in writing and may be approved only by the Board of Directors.

IV. School Health Policy

A. Managing Head Lice Cases

Saxtons River Montessori School recognizes the Vermont Department of Health's Recommendations on the Management of Head Lice and agrees with the general information and treatment recommendations. The following procedure has been developed to manage head lice cases at SRMS:

1. Any student suspected of head lice will be examined. Any student identified as having head lice will be discouraged from having close contact with others and their parent/guardian will be called.
2. A note will be sent to all parents regarding the case. Confidentiality will be maintained. Literature about treating and managing head lice and will be made

- available.
3. Students will be readmitted to school with a written confirmation that treatment has been completed. Each returning student will be examined for the evidence that the treatment was performed.

Upon infestation of more than 20% of the classroom, the situation will be considered an outbreak. The school will close for 48 hours for cleaning and to prevent lice survival. Assistance will be asked for help in examining students upon returning. For all other recommendations and guidelines see Recommendations on the Management of Head Lice, Vermont Department of Health.

B. Exclusions of Children from School

Please keep your child home and inform the school for the following:

1. Your child is unable to take part comfortably in regular activities
2. Your child has signs, symptoms or been diagnosed with a contagious illness
3. Your child has an axillary (armpit) temperature of 100°F or greater
4. Thick, white or yellow/green discharge from eye(s)
5. Earaches with fever and behavior change, or pain lasting more than 3 days
6. Sore throat with a fever and/or having difficulty swallowing
7. If your child has been diagnosed with an infectious illness or condition

V. Guidelines for Volunteers

In order to ensure the safety of our children, and to comply with the requirements of Vermont State Licensing, volunteers who either work with the children on a regular basis or who on occasion may be alone with the children are required to:

1. Have the standard criminal background check
2. Be familiar with and agree to follow the school's policy on discipline
3. Sign a statement of understanding declaring that they do not have a history of child abuse

VI. Guidelines for Field Trips

We encourage parent participation for special outings.

1. Permission from the parent with emergency contacts listed is required for children to go on field trips. A notice will be provided for each field trip.
2. Transportation for field trips are done on a parent-volunteer basis (along with staff). The school requires proof of maximum liability insurance of \$100,000/\$300,000 and a valid driver's license.
3. SRMS does not have its own transportation so the school does not carry a separate insurance for this purpose.
4. Car seats for each child are required and must be provided by the parents for the day of the field trip. Also, no child will be allowed to sit in the front seat of vehicles.
5. Should parents choose not to have their child participate, the child should be kept at home as the school will not provide alternative activities.

VII. Policy Regarding Disruptive, Dangerous or Threatening Behavior

These behaviors include students, staff, parents and others,

- **Disruptive Behavior:** Any behavior that continuously disrupts the orderly or “normal” running of the class, and or schedule and cannot, or has not been controlled with a reasonable amount of verbal intervention or other minor discipline
- **Dangerous Behavior:** Any behavior that places self, others or staff at serious risk of physical harm, and cannot be stopped or controlled with a reasonable amount of verbal intervention or minor discipline
- **Threatening Behavior:** Verbal threats and/or an overt action, such as a raised fist, or object, with a perceived threat of striking an individual or another object, in a violent manner.

It is the policy of the Saxtons River Montessori School to: Identify the behavior first, if possible, to intervene, with verbal intervention, or minor discipline, and to report behavior to the appropriate persons. Also to make a plan with parents, guardian, officials, or a concerned party to correct any of the above behaviors, before the behaviors become out of control.

When behavior has gone beyond, or suddenly escalates without warning, and is deemed so by a qualified staff, board member or parent, SRMS will:

- Contact the concerned party or authority for immediate removal
- Impose a mandatory 24 hour suspension
- During the suspension SRMS will put together a 3 person team and conference with concerned parties to determine the next steps in course of action

Saxtons River Montessori School
14 Westminster Street
Saxtons River, VT 05154

Bylaws of Saxtons River Montessori School

Approved 5/31/2016

ARTICLE I.

Section 1. Name: The name of this Corporation shall be Saxtons River Montessori School, Inc.

Section 2. Place of Business: The Corporation shall have its principal office and

place of business at Saxtons River in the County of Windham and State of Vermont.

Section 3. Fiscal Year: The fiscal year of the Corporation shall begin on July 1 and end on June 30 in the succeeding year.

Section 4. Non-Discrimination: The Saxtons River Montessori School does not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, in any of its activities or operations. We are committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our staff, students, families, volunteers, and vendors.

Section 5. Books and Records: The Corporation shall keep correct and complete books and records of account and shall also keep minutes of the proceedings of the Board and committees having any of the authority of the Board.

ARTICLE II. MEMBERS

Section 1. Members: Any one parent or guardian whose child is **currently** enrolled in the Saxtons River Montessori School shall be a member of the Corporation.

Section 2. Voting Rights: Each family of a child currently enrolled in the Saxtons River Montessori School shall have the right to vote at any annual or special meeting of the Members, and may cast one vote per currently enrolled child.

Section 3. Annual Meeting:
The annual meeting of members shall be held before June 1st of each year at the office of the Corporation or such other place as may be designated in the call. In the event that the annual meeting shall fail to take place at the time so designated through oversight or otherwise, a subsequent meeting may be held as the postponed annual meeting and any business transacted or elections held at such postponed meetings shall be valid as if transacted or held at the annual meeting.

Section 4. Special Meeting: A special meeting of the members may be called by the order of the President of the Board of Directors at any time and shall be called by the President or the Secretary upon the request of any two directors or upon the request of one-tenth of the members. The call for any such special meeting shall contain a statement of the purpose for which such meeting is to be held.

Section 5. Notice: Notice of the annual meeting of members shall be given by the

Secretary at least seven days prior to the date thereof by mail, telephone, or personally. Notice of a special meeting of members shall be given in the same manner no less than forty-eight hours prior to the time of such meeting.

Section 6. Quorum: One-half the total number of members constitutes a quorum, which will equal one-half of the number of children enrolled. At any meeting of the members, one-half of the whole number may adjourn any meeting at any time and any adjourned meeting may be held without notice. Where a quorum is present at any meeting, a vote of the majority of members present shall decide any question brought before any such meeting except as otherwise provided by law or by these bylaws. In the event that an annual meeting, duly warned, should not consist of a quorum, the issues to be decided may be decided by a majority vote of the members present at the meeting.

ARTICLE III. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. Numbers, Powers, Duties: The business and property of the Corporation shall be managed by its Board of Directors, which shall consist of between five (5) and thirteen (13) Directors chosen from the community. A majority of the Directors at any time shall be family members of current or former students at the school. The school's Director shall be a non-voting member of the board ex officio. No contracted employee of the Corporation or spouse of any employee may serve as a Director of the school.

The Board of Directors may delegate certain of their powers, rights or privileges to committees of the Board for carrying on the business of the Corporation. Such committees may be composed of members of the Board of Directors and/or other members of the school and community as deemed necessary by the Directors. The President of Board of Directors and school's Director may serve as ex officio members of all such committees.

Section 2. Nomination, Election, Term, Term-Limits: The Board shall elect new Directors to fill any vacancies.

Directors shall be elected for three (3) year terms on a rotating basis.

No member of the Board of Directors shall serve for more than two (2) complete and consecutive elected terms, which shall not include the time a Director is elected to complete the term of another Director.

In the event a board member fails to attend three (3) consecutive

meetings, or more than one-half of the meetings in a year, without providing a reasonable explanation, the Board may consider that member to have resigned from the Board of Directors.

Nomination: Any member of the community may nominate an individual to serve as a Director. A vote by a majority of the members shall bring the candidate onto the Board.

Section 3. Meetings: Regular meetings of the Board shall be held at least six (6) times a year and may be scheduled more often by the President.

Section 4. Special Meeting: A special meeting of the Board may be held, whenever called by the President at the request of two (2) Directors. Notice of special meetings shall be given by mail, email or written notice not less than two (2) days prior to such special meeting.

Section 5. Quorum: A majority of the Directors at a meeting shall constitute a quorum, which shall be sufficient to decide on any question brought before the meeting, except with respect to amendments to these bylaws. In the latter case, a quorum shall consist of two-thirds (2/3) of the Directors and a vote of the majority of those present shall be sufficient to decide a question. Decisions made by less than a quorum are subject to review at the next Board of Directors meeting. Directors may vote remotely when engaged in the discussions and question by phone, web-cam connections, or other.

Section 6. Participation at Meetings by Telephone: Any one or more directors may participate in any meeting of the Board, and any one or more committee members may participate in any committee meeting, by means of a conference telephone or similar equipment allowing all persons participating in such meeting to hear each other at the same time. Participation by such means shall constitute presence in person at the meeting.

ARTICLE IV. Officers

Section 1. Election and Appointment: The officers of the Corporation shall consist of a President, a Vice President, a Treasurer, a Secretary. Officers shall be members of the Board of Directors, and shall be elected by the Directors.

Section 2. President: The President is also the President of the Corporation and shall preside at all meetings of the Directors. The President shall have general supervision, management, control of the business and activities of the Corporation and shall perform such other duties as the Directors shall from time to time designate. The President shall be an ex officio member of all committees.

- Section 3.** Vice President: The Vice President shall preside at Board meetings in the absence of the President, and shall assume other responsibilities as assigned by the President. In the event the President shall resign from office, the Vice President shall become the Acting President until a new President is elected as provided herein.
- Section 4.** Treasurer: The Treasurer shall be responsible for the care and custody of the financial assets of the Corporation and shall have and exercise under the supervision of the Board of Directors all the powers and duties commonly incident to this office. The Treasurer shall assure that all books and accounts are accurately kept, and shall present a full and detailed financial statement to the Board at a regular meeting each fiscal year. The Treasurer shall be Chair of the Finance Committee. The Board President will serve in this role in the absence of a Treasurer.
- Section 5.** Secretary: The Secretary shall cause to be given proper notice of all meetings of the Board of Directors, and shall keep record of the appointment of all committees of the Board of Directors. The Secretary shall keep or cause to be kept a record of minutes of all meetings of the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee. In the absence of the President and the Vice President, the Secretary shall preside at meetings of the Board of Directors.
- Section 6.** Director. The Board of Directors shall select an individual to be Director of the school who shall be the professional, institutional, and educational leader of the School.
- Section 7.** Vacancies, Resignations, Removal: Vacancies in elected offices shall be filled at the next meeting of the Board of Directors, or as soon thereafter as is practicable.
Any officer may resign at any time by delivering a written resignation to the President or the Secretary. The acceptance of any such resignation unless required by the terms thereof shall not be necessary to make the same effective.
Any officer elected or appointed by the Board may be removed by the Board, through a majority vote, whenever in its judgment the best interests of the Corporation would be served thereby.

ARTICLE V. Committees.

- Section 1.** Standing Committees: The Board of Directors shall appoint the members of the Standing Committees specified in this article. Each Committee may be comprised of Directors, faculty, staff, alumni, and other community members. All Standing Committees will be chaired by a

Director.

A committee acts by majority vote and may appoint sub-committees or task forces. The Standing Committees and their sub-committees shall regularly report on their activities to the Board of Directors according to the schedule and standard operating procedures established by the Board President. The Standing Committees shall be as follows:

- a. Finance Committee
- b. Development Committee

Section 4. Finance Committee: The Treasurer shall act as the Chair of the Finance Committee. The Finance Committee shall supervise the financial affairs of the Corporation and shall make recommendations to the Board of Directors with regard to operating and capital budgets, salaries, benefits, tuition and fee charges, investments, and other business affairs. The Finance Committee may appoint a separate investment sub-committee to review and report on investment of the Corporation's funds.

Section 5. Development Committee: The Development Committee shall have general oversight of the fundraising plans, both long-term and annual, of the Corporation. The Development Committee may appoint a separate capital campaign and/or planned giving sub-committee to implement long-range plans.

Section 8. Ad Hoc Committees: Additionally, there may be such special or ad hoc committees as the Board may establish from time to time. Such committees shall report regularly to the Board.

ARTICLE VI. Conflict of Interest Policy.

The Board of Directors affirms that the Directors, officers, administrators, faculty and other employees of the School have an obligation to exercise their authority and to carry out the duties of their respective positions for the sole benefit of the School. They should avoid placing themselves in positions in which their personal interests are, or may be, in conflict with the interests of the School. Where a potential conflict of interest exists, it shall be the responsibility of the person involved or any other person with knowledge to notify the Board of Directors of the circumstances resulting in the potential conflict so that the Board of Directors can provide such guidance and take such action as it shall deem appropriate. Areas of potential conflict of interest are:

1. Financial Interest.

- (A) Ownership by the individual directly or indirectly of a material financial interest in any business or firm (i) from which the School obtains goods or services, or (ii) which is a competitor of the School.
- (B) Competition by the individual, directly or indirectly, with the School in the purchase or sale of property or any property right or interest.
- (C) Representation of the School by the individual in any transaction or activity in which the individual, directly or indirectly, has a material financial interest.
- (D) Any other circumstance in which the individual may profit, directly or indirectly, from any action or decision by the School in which he or she participates, or which he or she has knowledge.

2. Inside Information

Disclosure or use by the individual of confidential information about the School, its activities or intentions, for the personal profit or advantage of the individual or any person.

3. Conflicting Interests other than Financial

Representation as director, officer, agent or fiduciary of another company, institution, agency or person in any transaction or activity that involves this school as an adverse party or with adverse interests.

4. Gifts and Favors

Acceptance of gifts or favors from any firm or individual that does or seeks to do business with, or is a competitor of, the School under circumstances that imply reasonably that such action is intended to influence the individual in the performance of his or her duties.

No Director who directly or indirectly is involved in a potential conflict of interest shall be counted in determining the existence of quorum at any meeting of the Board where the potential conflict is considered, nor shall the Director vote on any action of the Board regarding that potential conflict.

ARTICLE VII. Indemnification of Directors and Officers.

The Corporation may indemnify any person made, or threatened to be made, a party to any action or proceeding, whether civil or criminal, by reason of the fact that he, his testator or intestate is or was a Director or Officer of the Corporation, and the Corporation shall advance the expenses of such person in defending such an action or proceeding, except to the extent specifically prohibited by law. The Corporation may make provision with respect to such indemnification of or advancement of expenses to officers or directors by agreement or by resolution of the Board.

Notwithstanding the foregoing provisions of this Section 1, no such indemnification or advance of expenses shall be made if the same would constitute an act of self-dealing or a taxable expenditure within the meaning of Sections 4941 and 4945, respectively, of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, or such other statutory provisions as shall from time to time correspond thereto.

ARTICLE VIII. Amendment of Bylaws.

These bylaws may be amended, altered or repealed by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the Board of Directors, subject to ratification or rejection by the members at the next annual or special meeting.

Parents' Statement of Understanding

I have read the Saxtons River Montessori School Handbook for the current school year and I understand and agree to abide by the rules and regulations and the bylaws of SRMS.

Parent's Signature_____

Date _____

Parent's Signature_____

Date _____

Guardian's Signature_____

Date _____

Please return this signed page to SRMS on/before August 30th.
Thank you for your cooperation.