



Nido Family Handbook

Updated September 2024

Please sign our Nido Family Handbook Agreement form at the bottom of this document

Mission Statement

Boundary Bay Montessori School strives to provide a unique learning experience based on the principles researched and developed by Dr. Maria Montessori. At BBMS our mission is to help each individual child reach their fullest potential within a rich and stimulating environment. We recognize that each child is a unique being and see our role as facilitators in developing a love of learning.

Educational Philosophy

Montessori is a scientific method of education developed by Dr. Maria Montessori over one hundred years ago. This method emphasises the simple truth that children learn best when allowed to discover concepts on their own. As children move from area to area within a carefully prepared classroom environment, they absorb knowledge through their activities. Dr. Montessori believed children go through specific developmental levels, during which they exhibit different learning characteristics and needs. The role of the educator is to observe and gently guide children, facilitating their learning and instilling a deep sense of personal independence and responsibility to self, to others, and to nature.

Who We Are

Nestled in a pastoral setting between the mountains and the ocean in the heart of rural Ladner, our school provides opportunities for natural curiosity, child-led exploration, and an abundance of safe risky-play.

The Nido Environment

The first three years of life are the most fundamental in the development of human beings and their potential. It is a period when the core of personality, social skills, and human values are developed. An understanding of the child's development allows Montessori environments to meet the needs of the infant and foster a sense of belonging, independence, and language acquisition enabling children to feel able and capable, in a safe and well prepared environment.

The Nido environment is divided into five parts: practical life, language, large movement, hand-eye coordination and creative expression. This is where our young children learn how to take care of themselves, their environment and each other. In toddler communities, we focus heavily on using social context to develop independence through language and movement. Children learn how to interact cooperatively with other peers through courtesy and direct conversation. Members of our toddler communities are immediately introduced to a respect for individuality, as instructors consider the unique personalities of each student.

Once a child reaches 30 months, they may transition to the Casa class, if independent toileting is in place. Upon the age of 36 months, children must transition to the Casa class, as mandated by Fraser Health.

Guiding and Caring Strategies

The term Nido means “nest” in Italian, which resonates with the idea of warmth and security. Nido classrooms in Montessori provide a calm, nurturing, responsive, and home-like environment for the youngest students. The Nido class takes care of all developmental needs of infants with warmth and care from expert staff so that the children can fulfil their potential harmoniously. Nido recognizes the importance of nurturing the abilities of children in the initial stages of development and works towards it. They understand that children develop mentally, physically, and emotionally, absorbing everything from their environment when they are free to explore the world around them. Nido makes all this possible for the infants by setting up a prepared and inviting environment, in which the children are free to explore their surroundings without adult intervention.

We fully embrace and put into practice the principles of the BC Early Learning Framework, the BC Early Childhood Educators Code of Ethics, and First Peoples Principles of Learning. We acknowledge and respect the diversity of belief systems of families in our program.

Emotional and social well-being builds a foundation for all other areas of learning. Our role as educators is to nurture and care for children in a respectful way, offering guidance as needed. We strive to create safe spaces for children so they feel comfortable exploring their wide-ranging emotions.

Children learn about the world around them through observation and imitation. We use a variety of strategies to teach pro-social behaviours, including modelling, role playing, stories, and working cooperatively.

While supporting children's challenging behaviours, we are guided by an 'Image of the Child' that views children as inherently intelligent and capable. Our communications with children are fluid and responsive, aiding the child while not entirely solving their conflicts for them.

We also recognize that at times the needs of the group will take precedence over an individual child's preferences. Our responsibility lies in caring for each child's precious heart and mind while also meeting the needs of the group.

Working together with families, we can teach children to be resilient, not just physically, but also emotionally. When incidents arise, your child's teachers will discuss their observations with you and together, create a support plan toward resolving the problem. Please note, if your child is not able to fully participate in our daily routines and requires one-on-one attention due to an injury, we ask you to keep your child at home until they are able to resume activities, as we do not have the teacher capacity to offer one-on-one attention in such cases.

If you have questions or concerns about our guidance policies, please speak with us so that communication remains open.

Nido program

In the Nido classroom, we focus heavily on using social context to develop independence through language and movement. Children learn how to interact cooperatively with other young children through courtesy and direct conversation. Members of our Nido community are immediately introduced to a respect for individuality, as educators consider the unique personalities of each student.

Children between the ages of 1-3 years need to move and explore everything. They are still in the parallel play stage, so while they enjoy being around others, they do not naturally engage in group activities. Toddlers absorb information from sights, sounds, smells, textures and tastes without formal lessons.

Hands-on learning materials are placed in sequence throughout the classroom to enhance the toddler's ability to be independent, to use fine and gross motor skills, to recognize sensory impressions, and to increase language and cognitive skills. They use manipulative materials, which demonstrate cause-and-effect relationships and one-to-one correspondence. Children are encouraged to use language to express their needs and to begin to understand others.

The activities of Practical Life encourage the children's independence in regard to caring for themselves and their surroundings, and the lessons of grace and courtesy. The lessons of grace

and courtesy are the activities that set Montessori programs apart from that of others. Through the adult example, children learn appropriate, respectful actions and words to use with the people around them.

Everything in the toddler community is a lesson: be it a greeting or changing a diaper. We allow a child to take care of himself as much as he is able. These activities aid the development of concentration, coordination of movement, order and independence, and help to integrate the child's personality, developing trust and feelings of self-worth. These activities appeal to children in the sensitive periods of order, imitation, and self-awareness.

Practical Life activities also involve toddlers in the care of the environment. Students dust, dry spilled water, and water plants. They also enjoy sweeping, mopping, table washing, folding, flower arranging, sowing seeds, and raking leaves. Traditionally, toddlers are not allowed to do these activities for themselves. The key is to scale the activities down and to make it possible for them to care for themselves and their environment independently. The daily maintenance of the toddler community can (and should) involve the work of the children. They take great delight in this work.

Nap and Rest Time

We have scheduled time for resting during the afternoon, for all children. The session begins with soothing music and some mild relaxation exercises and ends with a restful nap. BBMS provides a sleeping cot or crib, and you are asked to provide a bed sheet (for cribs use) and a blanket or sleep sac. Linens will be returned to you at the end of each week for home laundering. Those children who do not need to nap are encouraged to join the relaxation session and rest for 20 minutes, and then can enjoy some quiet activities or read books.

Hours/schedule

School Operations

i. Office Hours

Office hours are 8:00-4:00 Monday to Friday. When phoning the school, if your call is not received during this time, your message will be returned promptly. Messages left outside of these hours will be returned the next school day.

ii. School Hours

Table 1. School Hours	
Nido Program	7:30 am – 3:30 pm

iii. Weather Closures

In the case of school closure due to inclement weather (snow) and power outages (wind), families will be informed through our communication system by email/text on a daily basis as to the school’s operational status. Generally, this communication will occur at approximately 7:00 am each morning of the school closure. In addition, the Head of School will contact the radio stations CBC (88.1 FM) and News 1130 (1130 AM; <http://www.news1130.com>) to provide a school closure notification.

Winter Weather (including wind chill) with proper winter outdoor clothing

-5 degrees C or warmer	Full 30 minutes
-5 to -10 degrees C	Reduced outdoor time
Below -10 degrees C	No outdoor time

Summer Weather (including humidex) - Air Quality higher than ‘6’ children will not go outside

UV higher than ‘5’ children will not go outside

30 degrees C or below	Full 30 minutes
30 - 40 degrees C	Reduced outdoor time
40 degrees C or above	No outdoor time

Gradual entry

Gradual entry is an allocated period of time to facilitate the Nido-aged child’s immersion into our program, typically taking place over the first 3 weeks of school. Please note that we realise scheduling can and may be adjusted according to the social/emotional readiness of your child. If you feel your child will need a little more time to adjust, please speak with us. Classroom directresses may also recommend adjustments to entry depending on the needs and developmental stage of the child.

Parent involvement

Parent collaboration and involvement in your child’s learning leads to a deeper understanding of our program and a stronger connection to your child’s learning community. Please connect

with our volunteer coordinator, if you wish to help out with various class and school tasks: volunteering@bbmschool.ca.

Personal Items: What to Bring

The following is a list of personal items your child should have at school at all times:

- If your child sleeps in a crib: a crib-sized sheet & blanket or sleep sac;
 - If your child sleeps on a cot: a blanket;
 - An extra change of clothes: including pants, t-shirt, sweater or sweatshirt, socks;
 - A hat or baseball cap, as well as sunscreen (during summer months);
 - Rain gear: muddy buddy or coat & rain pants, boots;
 - Hat, mittens & snow boots (during winter months);
 - Diapers (if needed): including baby wipes and other products you may use when changing your child;
 - Pull-Ups: if your child is in the process of toilet training or in the final stages and you are using pull-ups, please ensure there is ample supply at the school daily;
 - Indoor shoes or slippers with a rubber sole.
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- Children have their own cubbies at school where you can store these items.
 - Please label each item clearly with your child's name.
 - Keep in mind that the cubby space is limited.

Please do not bring toys from home

Contacting Directresses

i. Communications

Every Friday a newsletter will provide calendar and current school event updates. Information on special events specific to individual classrooms will be detailed here or via the classroom Directress' own email notification.

ii. School Calendar

Our annual School Calendar is available on our website under the tab "community".

iii. Bulletin Boards

Bulletin boards are located in the Nido/Casa lobby, and on the porch of the Elementary building.

iv. Meeting with Classroom Directresses

When you, as BBMS parents, have any questions regarding your child’s education in any way, the first step is to speak directly with their Teacher. Disrespectful or aggressive language is not acceptable between parents and Teachers, including email communication. If you wish to register a complaint, please give some initial consideration to how you regard the seriousness of the matter. If your complaint is of the more serious matter, please address your complaint in writing or in person to the Head of School, Kate Baldwin. Classroom Directresses can be contacted as follows:

Table 4. Classroom Email Addresses	
Nido	nido@bbmschool.ca
Casa-Preschool	preschool@bbmschool.ca
Casa-Kindergarten	kindergarten@bbmschool.ca
Nido/Casa Manager	manager@bbmschool.ca
Head of School (Kate Baldwin)	headofschool@bbmschool.ca

What to do when your child is sick

Please click [here](#) to read our Health, Illness and Medication Policy.

Celebrations

Whilst we recognise that celebrations are important to children, we tend to steer away from overly commercialised holidays such as Halloween and Valentines Day. We do however celebrate each child’s birthday with a “trip around the sun” - providing an opportunity to celebrate the uniqueness of each child.

Observations and Tours

Parents of classroom children are welcome to observe through our one-way window during school observation week. Educational or prospective student tours take place throughout the year, between the months of October - May.

School Policies and Procedures

Please visit our website to read our school's policies. Click on the tab "Community", followed by "Communication". The policies listed below are covered therein:

Active Play Policy

Behavioural Guidance Policy

Emergency Plan and Procedure Policy

Health and Safety Policy

Health, Illness and Medication Procedure Policy

Missing and Wandering Children Policy

Nutrition Policy

Repayment Agreement Policy

Reportable Incident Procedure Policy

Safe Release of Children Policy

School Bus Transportation Policy

Screen Time Use Policy

Transportation Policy

Nido Family Handbook Agreement

I, _____ the undersigned, have carefully read and understood the preceding document (Nido Family Handbook) and agree to abide by its terms and conditions. I also understand that failure to comply with these terms could result in the withdrawal of my child from Boundary Bay Montessori School.

Name of Child: _____

Parent's Name: _____

Signature of Parent: _____ Date: _____

mm/dd/yyyy