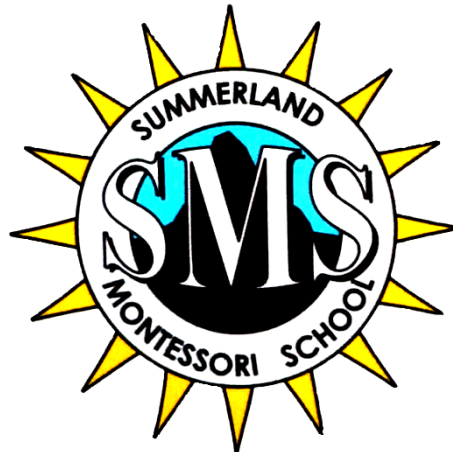


Summerland Montessori School
Nurturing the Joy of Discovery and the Love of Learning

Kindergarten to Grade 6

PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK



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Sponsored by the South Okanagan Montessori School Society

September 2025 – June 2026

This then is the first duty of an educator: to stir up life but leave it free to develop.
Maria Montessori

*Learning the right answers will get a child through school. Learning how to become a
life-long independent learner will take her anywhere!*

Mission Statement

The Summerland Montessori School (SMS) incorporates Montessori philosophy and current best teaching practices to create our unique school character. There is a greater emphasis on Montessori philosophy and practice in the younger grades (Kindergarten to Grade 3). As the students mature and master key concepts, more traditional teaching is encouraged to help prepare students for their future educational career.

Goals and Objectives

The main objective of the SMS is to provide a carefully planned, stimulating environment which will help children to develop within themselves the attitudes, habits, skills and ideas essential for a lifetime of independent, creative thinking and learning.

The SMS believes in educating the whole child by supporting emotional, social, academic, physical and moral development of each student. We offer daily physical education, daily enhanced French instruction, exposure to music, and the arts. We also encourage our students to mature into community-minded citizens.

The goals for the students are:

- To develop a positive attitude toward learning
- To build excellent study habits for a lifetime of learning
- To develop inner discipline, a sense of order and self-motivation
- To develop a conscience that will help the child become a contributing member of the global community.

Organizational Structure

The South Okanagan Montessori School Society administers the Summerland Montessori School. The South Okanagan Montessori School Society is a not-for-profit registered charity operated by a Board of Directors. The Board is comprised of volunteer members of the school, and greater community, and is elected by its membership each year at the Annual General Meeting held in the fall.

The Board is responsible for the overall administration of the society and its programs. The Board abides by the Society's Constitution, a copy of which is available from the Board Secretary or Head of School.

The Head of School is responsible for the planning and implementation of the school program and the day-to-day operation of the classrooms.

Our staff includes elementary teachers (Kindergarten – Grade 6), our full-time French instructor, educational assistants, and a full-time administrative assistant.

Kindergarten and Grade 1 must have reached 5 and 6 years of age, respectively, by December 31st of the year of enrollment. Government funding regulations require that parents supply the school with their child's birth certificate for proof of age and documentation that one parent is a Canadian citizen. Independent schools do not receive government grants for students whose parents are not Canadian citizens, landed immigrants or permanent residents; therefore, such students will be charged additional tuition.

Kindergarten

- Monday through Friday full days. **5 years old by Dec. 31st**

Grades 1-6 must attend full time.

Upon enrollment there is a one-month probation period. A student whose conduct is in conflict with the character of the school may be subject to dismissal. The Head of School, in consultation with the Board of Directors, will make any decision regarding dismissal.

Policies and Procedures

Arrival and Dismissal

AM	8:00	School opens
	8:30	Instruction begins
	10:00 -10:30	Snack/recess
PM	11:50- 12:20	Recess
	12:20- 12:45	Lunch
	3:00	Class dismissed
	3:15	School closed

Attendance and Punctuality

Regular attendance and punctuality are mandatory for the following reasons:

- To maintain consistent work habits and continuous progress for your child
- To minimize classroom disruptions for children and teachers
- To meet the Ministry for Education's requirements for minimum hours of instruction
- To receive our full provincial funding (which is based upon number of hours of actual attendance with the exception of sick days).

If students are habitually late, staff and the Head of School will work with parents to address the issue.

If your child will be late or is unable to attend, please inform the school prior to 8:15 a.m. of that day that your child will be absent.

Birthdays and Classroom Celebrations

As in other schools, birthday parties and exchanges of gifts are to take place outside the school setting. Unless an entire class is being invited, birthday invitations need to be handed out discretely.

Students are invited to participate in many celebrations throughout the year including but not limited to: Thanksgiving, Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day and Easter. Families are encouraged to participate and share their cultural celebrations with the children. Please arrange specifics with the Head of School or classroom teacher.

Bathroom Routines

All students must be able to use the washroom independently before joining any school program.

Clothing/Dress Code

The students are required to wear neat, tidy clothing in good repair. Clothing must always cover midriff and lower back.

Students are required to have a spare set of labeled clothing and appropriate accessories (mitts, hats, sunscreen etc.) at the school at all times. Outdoor footwear must be removed upon entering the school and clean indoor footwear is required.

Communication

Communication between student, parent, and staff is critical for the success of the student and school. The SMS is committed to creating an atmosphere of trust and open communication. To achieve this goal, we:

- Send home a Parent Notice each Thursday
- Post sign-up sheets for upcoming activities
- Send home yearly swimming, professional development, and holiday schedules
- Maintain a school Facebook page
- Notes in child's planner/monthly newsletter

Student Evaluation and Parent/Teacher Conferences

Student evaluations are issued 3 times per year in November, March, and June.

Parent and Teacher conferences are held in November and April to coincide with the issuing of student evaluations. Parents are encouraged to attend to discuss their child's progress. Parents are welcome to seek a teacher's help or input regarding their child's progress at **any** time during the year.

Conflict Resolution

There are times where problems arise within our school community. In order to maintain the trust and integrity of school and home relationships the following procedures will apply.

1. Concerns will initially be addressed with the teacher involved.
2. If the concern or problem is not satisfactorily addressed, then the parent or student should contact the Head of School.
3. If the problem or concern has still not been dealt with satisfactorily, the parent or student may contact the Board of Directors directly.
4. If the problem or concern involves a policy or financial matter, then the student or parent may contact the Board of Directors directly.

Child Abuse and Neglect

Any concern regarding child abuse and neglect that the staff of the SMS has about a child will be reported to the Ministry of Children and Family Development. If a child is believed to be in immediate danger, the police will be contacted as well.

Staff will reference *The BC Handbook for Action on Child Abuse and Neglect* in regard to what constitutes abuse, how to recognize abuse, how to respond when children disclose abuse, and how to report abuse or neglect concerns.

A copy of *The BC Handbook for Action on Child Abuse and Neglect* is available at the SMS office.

Discipline

In the SMS classroom children are respected, listened to, and trusted. The classroom and curriculum are created to foster the development of inner discipline by allowing students to work to their abilities and allowing them to use materials without interference from others. This method of instruction reduces the incidence of problem behaviour and the corresponding need for discipline.

Regardless, there will occasionally be the need for discipline. Students' feelings will always be respected while working through any discipline issues.

The teacher and student will address minor misbehaviour that interferes with the orderly educational process in the school. The teacher will first try to redirect the child's behaviour. After repeated misdemeanors the teacher will contact the parent and, together with the student, they will work towards resolving the discipline issue. The teacher will also contact the Head of School who will document the concerns. Examples of minor misbehaviour include disrupting the classroom, rudeness to peers or teachers, abusive language, use of inappropriately loud voice or failing to finish work.

Major misbehaviour is repeated behaviour that demonstrates the willful intent to hurt self or others, to damage property and purposeful defiance or cheating. The parents will be notified of the offending behaviour and the issue will be addressed within 24 hours. The student, parent and teacher will develop a "corrective action plan" which will indicate what rule was broken, how the student will correct his or her behaviour and make amends, and the time frame within which improvement must be observed. The student, parent and teacher will sign the agreement.

If all other avenues have been exhausted, a student may be asked to withdraw from the program or may not be allowed to return under the recommendation of the teaching staff, the Head of School, and the Board of Directors.

Bullying

SOMSS recognizes the rights of students to be provided with a safe, caring, and orderly school environment. It is the responsibility of staff, working together with parents, to ensure that students are educated about acceptable behaviour and provided with timely intervention in the event that unacceptable behaviour has taken place.

SOMSS is committed to protecting students' physical safety, helping them make social connections, and fostering inclusiveness. SMS will provide students with protection from all forms of bullying regardless of their gender, race, culture, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

Students are expected to exhibit acceptable behaviour while at school, at a school-related activity, or in other circumstances where engaging in the activity will have an impact on the school environment.

Acceptable Behaviour

Students will be instructed, in a way that takes into account their age and maturity, as to what is acceptable behaviour. Acceptable behaviour is being kind and respectful to all other students, and dealing with conflicts appropriately.

Unacceptable Behaviour

Unacceptable behaviour is any behaviour that is intentionally trying to hurt another person, physically, emotionally, or socially. Unacceptable behaviour includes bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, intimidation, threats, and violence.

Emergency Preparedness

Earthquake drills, fire drills, and lockdowns are practiced regularly. Emergency evacuation plans are posted at each exit in the school. Parents are encouraged to make themselves familiar with the exit routes and meeting places.

Field Trips

Field trips are organized as an enhancement to the curriculum at the discretion of the teacher and Head of School. Field trips fall into two categories: local community field trips and out-of-community field trips. The procedures for each can be different.

Local community field trips include the library, swimming, skating, museum and other local Summerland attractions. Parents are made aware of the details and schedules of these field trips and do not require a signed permission slip. A signed permission slip will be held in the student's file to allow them to walk to destinations within Summerland.

Examples of out-of-community field trips include: Vernon Science Centre, Kelowna Museum, and the Symphony. Consent forms with details of the trip, including estimated time of departure and arrival, as well as a liability waiver are sent home prior to the outing. If a child is unable to participate in a school field trip it is the responsibility of the parent to arrange for alternate care for that day.

Parents are welcomed and encouraged to participate in field trips, and we often require drivers. Please speak with the Head of School regarding appropriate auto insurance and safety regulations.

Health Care

Parents are required to inform the school if their child has, or has come in contact with, a communicable disease such as, but not limited to, the flu, measles, chicken pox, or whooping cough. The school cannot admit a child who is apparently ill. If your child shows symptoms of illness while at school, the parent or designated emergency contact will be notified and requested to remove the child immediately.

All students must be able to use toileting facilities independently. The SMS does not have appropriate diapering spaces or staff designated for that role.

It is critical that parents provide the school with accurate and updated emergency contact numbers.

Items on Loan from the School

Musical instruments, CD's, books, videos and other materials may occasionally be loaned to a student. The student is responsible for the safe return of the borrowed item or the purchase of a replacement for a lost or damaged item.

Items from Home

Books and other educational materials that may be of interest to the students are welcomed in the classroom as "show and tell" items. Video games and electronic devices are not allowed. The Summerland Montessori School is a "weapon-free" zone (for example no toy guns, swords, sticks etc.). Please ensure that all materials are clearly labeled with the owner's name.

Lost and Found

Parents are requested to **label all the students' belongings** such as school shirts, hats, mitts, scarves, swimsuits, skates etc. to ensure that they are returned to the owner. All lost items are placed in the lost and found box. These items are donated during certain times of the year.

Parent Participation

Parent participation is essential to the success of the school and there are many ways which parents can become involved in the school community.

All parents are encouraged to join the South Okanagan Montessori School Society at the Annual General Meeting.

Each fall the school hosts a parent meeting. Attendance is strongly encouraged. At this meeting the following positions are filled, and committees are formed.

Fund-raising Committee

The fundraising committee is responsible for arranging events that raise funds for school projects (Silent Auction, Garage Sale, Flower orders etc)

Maintenance Committee

The maintenance committee is responsible for the general upkeep of the school. Volunteer work can include putting up shelves, painting, yard work or changing light bulbs.

Hot Lunch Committee

The Hot Lunch Committee is responsible for menu selection, cooking, and cleanup after the meal on Fridays, as well as baking commitments where required for fundraising events.

Parents in the Classroom

Parents are welcome to visit and observe the classroom. The school advocates parent participation in the delivery of curriculum. Parents can give presentations on unit appropriate material, engage children in activities that lend support to the unit and share special or unique talents and expertise with the students and teachers.

If a parent has a concern about any classroom practice it should be addressed with the teacher or Head of School in private.

Snacks and Lunch

Children are encouraged to bring nutritionally balanced lunches and snacks in reusable, environmentally friendly packaging. Junk food and candy are strongly discouraged. Lunches are eaten under the supervision of the classroom teacher or lunch hour monitor.

School Closures

The SMS observes all provincial holidays, Christmas, spring and summer breaks, and professional development days throughout the year. The school schedule is emailed to parents during the back-to-school process.

Vacation

The Head of School must be notified at least one month in advance if students will be absent for an extended period of time. This allows the teachers enough time to prepare units for the student to take with them.

Tuition, Fees, Volunteer Requirements

- **For returning students**, September's first tuition installment (dated for February 9, 2025), the and the first payment of the Supplies & Activities fee (post-dated for July 25, 2025) must be submitted no later than February 9, 2025. These payments are non-refundable. Early confirmation from returning students is essential for the effective operation of the forthcoming year. If a family currently has a student enrolled in the school or has a student who completed all grades and graduated from our school, this fee is waived for subsequent sibling enrollments. If siblings did not graduate from the school, this fee will be applied for subsequent sibling registrations.
- **For new students:** Upon registration, a \$200.00 Acceptance Fee (for new families only) is required. September's tuition and the first payment of the Supplies & Activities Fee (postdated for July 25, 2025) must accompany the acceptance fee and enrollment forms. These payments are non-refundable. A student is not deemed enrolled until all registration requirements, including payment of tuition and fees have been fulfilled.

Supplies and Activities Fee

For Kindergarten – Gr 6 the Supplies/Activities Fee is \$500 for the school year.

This fee covers the cost of all school supplies, field trips (swimming, skating, bowling), and a class photo.

If you are enrolling for the first time, your Supplies and Activities fee also includes your first SMS t-shirt.

Once a student is enrolled, a position is reserved for the entire year. The school's operating budget is dependent on the income received from tuition. Therefore, the school cannot consider reducing fees for absence or withdrawal from the program unless written notification is received a minimum of 90 days prior to withdrawal **(in all cases September's tuition fee and the 1st half of the Supplies & Activities fee are non-refundable deposits).**

Parents are strongly encouraged to attend a Summerland Montessori School Community Meeting held in September to receive an orientation to the school and the non-profit Society that operates it.

Volunteer Hours

Parent support is essential to the fiscally responsible operation of the school and therefore parents are required to either volunteer as per the list below or can contribute \$20/hour to the Society in lieu of volunteering.

Volunteer activities are many and can include driving on field trips, cleaning toys, laundry, helping with the reading program, hot lunches, and many more. Volunteer opportunities are posted throughout the year. Volunteer hours not fulfilled will be billed at the end of the school year.

Grade Level	Volunteer Hour Requirements/ Monthly Tuition Payment
Kindergarten	Option 1: 0 hours= \$500 Option 2: 30 hours= \$450
Grade 1-6	Option 1: 0 hours= \$425 Option 2: 30 hours= \$375

Bursaries

As part of our commitment to providing an affordable education option to families, we have an extensive bursary program to help lower-income families with the cost of tuition. If you would like to apply for a bursary, please contact the office for an application form. The completed form will be reviewed by the Head of School, who will then meet with you to discuss available options.

Sibling Discounts

SMS is pleased to support families with more than one child to ensure that we remain an affordable option for all families. When the tuition discount is applied it will always be to the oldest child(ren) enrolled. Families with two children enrolled will be offered a discount on the older child's tuition, assuming the older child is Grade 1 to Grade 6. Kindergarten tuition is not eligible for a discount.

Sibling Discount	
1st Child K-6	All other siblings (Grade 1-6)
Regular tuition	Tuition payment \$200.00

**Summerland Montessori School
2025/2026 Tuition Schedule**

Please indicate **Option 1** or **2** for volunteer hours AND **Option A** or **B** for tuition payment frequency.

Kindergarten

Schedule	Grade	A. Monthly Payments	B. Lump sum payment (5% discount)
<input type="checkbox"/> Option 1: Monday through Friday (S&A Fee-\$500) <i>0 volunteer hours</i>	Full-time Kindergarten	<input type="checkbox"/> \$500	<input type="checkbox"/> \$4250.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Option 2: Discounted tuition Monday through Friday (S&A Fee-\$500) <i>30 volunteer hours</i>	Full-time Kindergarten	<input type="checkbox"/> \$450	<input type="checkbox"/> \$3825.00

Grade 1 -5

Schedule	Grade	A. Monthly Payments	B. Lump sum payment (5% discount)
<input type="checkbox"/> Option 1: Monday through Friday (S&A Fee-\$500) <i>0 volunteer hours</i>	Gr. 1-5	<input type="checkbox"/> \$425	<input type="checkbox"/> \$3612.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Option 2: Discounted tuition Monday through Friday (S&A Fee-\$500) <i>30 volunteer hours</i>	Gr. 1-5	<input type="checkbox"/> \$375	<input type="checkbox"/> \$3187.00

Grade 1 - 6 Sibling Discount for 2nd or more enrolled students

Schedule	Grade	A. Monthly Payments	B. Lump sum payment (5% discount)
<input type="checkbox"/> Option 1: Monday through Friday (S&A Fee-\$500) <i>0 volunteer hours</i>	Gr. 1-6	<input type="checkbox"/> \$250	<input type="checkbox"/> \$2375
<input type="checkbox"/> Option 2: Discounted tuition Monday through Friday (S&A Fee-\$500) <i>30 volunteer hours</i>	Gr. 1-6	<input type="checkbox"/> \$200	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1900

****Fees are subject to change each school year**

