



Parent Handbook

2025-2026

Table of Contents

1. Disclaimer	4
2. All Are Welcome	5
3. Welcome to Bay Farm!	6
4. School Hours & Schedules.....	7
- a. Morning Arrival Time Windows	
- b. Midday Dismissal Time Windows	
- c. Afternoon Dismissal Time Windows	
- Key Dates / Calendar	
- Frequently Needed Contacts	
5. Transportation	9
- Morning Drop-Off	
- Afternoon Pickup	
- Early Pickup	
- Car Seat Safety	
- Driveway Safety	
- Respect & Courtesy	
6. Attendance**	14
- Reasons for Absences	
7. Auxiliary Programs	17
- Extended Care	
- Enrichment	
- Registration for Auxiliary Programs	
- Billing Intervals	
8. Classroom	19
- Birthdays	
- Volunteering	
- Classroom Observations	
- Conferences	
- Homework	
- Progress Reports	
- Testing	
- Conflict of Interest	
- What to Bring (and What Not to Bring)	
9. Communications	26
- Communication Channels	
- Bay Farm Connects - Online Network	
- Bay Farm Bulletin - Email Newsletter	
- Text Alerts	
- Bay Farm Beat	
- Head of School & Assistant Head of School	

- Email & Voicemail	
- Teacher Communication	
- Weather, Snow Days & Emergency Closures	
10. Discipline / Behavioral Standards	24
- Beyond Basic Interventions	
- Ethical Standards	
- Aggressive Behavior	
- Intervention & Referral/Special Needs	
- Bullying	
- Immediate Response	
- Reporting Incidents	
- Situation Triage	
- Investigation Protocols	
- Outcomes	
11. Dress Code	34
12. Enrollment	39
- Admissions Timelines	
- Right-Fit Tuition	
- Contract Changes/Updates	
- Class Placement/Switches	
- Recommendations & Record Requests	
- School Records	
- Enrollment Termination	
- Toilet Training & Admissions	
13. Field Trips	43
- Permission & Notification	
- Means of Transportation	
- Bay Farm Connect Buses	
- Contracted Buses	
- Walking Trips	
- Chaperones	
14. Health Care Plan	45
- Emergency Phone Numbers	
- Designated Adults	
- Procedure for Emergency & Illness	
- Emergency Procedures for Field Trips	
- First-Aid Kits	
- Injury Prevention Plan	
- General Sickness Policy	
- Plan for Managing Infectious Disease	
- Plan for Meeting Individual Needs of Mildly Ill Children	
- Medication Administration	

- Meeting Specific Health Care Needs	
- Concussion Policy	
- Health Forms	
15. Mandated Reporting	53
16. Montessori Parents Association	54
17. Governance.....	56
- Board of Trustees	
- Regulatory Bodies	
- American Montessori Society	
- Association of Independent Schools in New England (AISNE)	
- Department of Early Education & Care	
- License	
- Certification Requirements	
- EEC Site Director	
- EEC Quality Assessments	
- EEC Licensor and Regional Office	
- Town of Duxbury Health Department	
- Non-Regulatory Member Organizations	
18. Privacy Policy	60
19. Healthcare Privacy.....	60
20. Parent Resources	61
21. Acknowledgement Form.....	63

Disclaimer

The policies and procedures set forth in this handbook are not a right or part of the enrollment contract. The procedures herein do not confer any contractual rights on any student, but instead, serve as an aid to the School in its everyday decision-making responsibilities.

Definitions

In this document, the term "parent" refers to both parents and legal guardians.

All Are Welcome

At Bay Farm, we welcome all who join us with open arms, open hearts, and open minds.

Bay Farm Montessori Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, creed, color, ethnicity, national origin, citizenship status, disability, physical challenge, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, weight or any other characteristic.

We expect all members of our community to feel welcome, and we achieve this through the respectful actions of our faculty, administrators, peers, and parents. Our curriculum and literature reflect an age-appropriate approach to realizing this.

We understand that an open, diverse community of learners, able to question, value, and appreciate the human experience is vital to a productive academic environment.

Welcome to the 2025-2026 School Year at Bay Farm!

Welcome to another joyful year at Bay Farm! Whether you are new to our community or have been with us for many years, we are so glad you're here. This handbook is designed to support you as partners in your child's journey through Montessori education.

At Bay Farm, we believe in the power of curiosity, kindness, and connection, and we are deeply committed to nurturing a school environment where every child feels seen, supported, and inspired to grow. We are fortunate for the foresight of Dr. Maria Montessori, and her deep belief in the transformative power of education to contribute to peace, justice, and equity on a global scale, and we remain resolute in our commitment to Montessori education.

I am privileged to have the opportunity to help shape an environment where teachers are respected for the critically important work they do to allow the innate love of learning to unfold in each child. Thank you for entrusting us with this important chapter of your family's story. We look forward to all the learning, joy, and discoveries that lie ahead.

Sincerely,

Gráinne Murray
Head of School
grainne.murray@bfarm.org

Mpafees

Dear Bay Farm Families,

On behalf of the Montessori Parents' Association (MPA), welcome to a new year at Bay Farm! Whether you're joining us for the first time or you're a returning family, we are so happy to have you as part of our vibrant and caring community. The MPA exists to foster connections among families, support our amazing teachers and staff, and enrich the experience of every child at Bay Farm.

There are so many ways to get involved, whether it's volunteering for an event, lending your voice to a committee, or simply showing up to cheer on our students. No contribution is too small, and every act of participation strengthens the wonderful sense of community that makes Bay Farm so special.

We're looking forward to a year filled with meaningful connections, joyful gatherings, and shared memories. If you ever have questions, ideas, or just want to say hello, please don't hesitate to reach out. We're here, and we're excited to grow together.

Warmly,
Lucy Turner
President, Bay Farm Montessori Parent Association
mpa@bfarm.org

School Hours & Schedules

Arrival and Dismissal Times

a. Morning Arrival Time Windows

Elementary I and Elementary II: 8:15 - 8:30

Children's House and Toddler House: 8:30 – 8:45

b. Midday Dismissal Time Windows

Toddler House: 11:50 – 12:05

Children's House: 11:55 – 12:10

c. Afternoon Dismissal Time Windows

Toddler House: 2:55 – 3:10

Children's House: 2:55 – 3:10

Kindergarten: 2:55-3:10 (from upper campus)

Elementary I and Elementary II: 3:15 – 3:25

Frequently Needed Contacts:

- Billing / Financial Questions - businessoffice@bfarm.org
- Questions about your student's health documentation - julie5@bfarm.org
- Enrichment questions - enrichment@bfarm.org
- Curriculum & Student Life questions - kellyc@bfarm.org
- Bay Farm Summer - julie5@bfarm.org
- Admissions & Enrollment questions - admissions@bfarm.org
- FACTS technical questions

Transportation

Morning Drop-Off

Elementary I | 8:15 - 8:30

Elementary I students will be met by their teachers during the arrival window of 8:15-8:30 am. Parents of students in Elementary I should stay left when they enter the campus. Students are dropped off at the main ELI entrance.

Elementary II | 8:15 - 8:30

Elementary II students will be dropped off and picked up directly in front of the Elementary II classrooms at the lower level of the Elementary building.

Children's House | 8:30 - 8:45

During arrivals, please remain in your car and one of your child's teachers will approach your vehicle and remove your child from the car. Please install any car seats on the driver's side of your vehicle to facilitate this process.

There will be two main drop-off points for Children's House. Please drive up to the appropriate spot according to your child's class.

Heron / Sandpiper

Students in Heron and Sandpiper will be dropped off by the rear entrance to the playground (there will be signs) next to Artland.

Kingfisher / Osprey/Egret

Kingfisher, Osprey & Egret students will enter through the various sets of orange doors of Children's House directly after the Great Room entrance.

Toddler House | 8:30 - 8:45

During arrivals, please remain in your car and one of your child's teachers will approach your vehicle and remove your child from the car. Please install any car seats on the driver's side of your vehicle to facilitate this process.

Piping Plover / Tern

Children in Tern and Piping Plover will be dropped off at the top of the Toddler House driveway and escorted to their classrooms.

Snowy Owl

Students in Snowy Owl will drop off at the lower level of the Toddler House and will be escorted to the classroom.

Afternoon Pickup

Afternoon pickup is conducted in the same manner as the morning drop-off and at the same locations. See the schedule below for pickup times.

Midday Dismissal | 11:50 - 12:05

Afternoon Dismissal | 2:55 - 3:10

If you are late dropping off or need to take your child out of school off schedule for any reason, please park and come to the office, where you can sign your child in or out. The office will notify your child's teachers. Then, please drive around to the appropriate classroom door to deliver or pick up your child.

Queuing in the driveway early, especially for Children's House arrival and for Elementary School dismissal, can block traffic for others and cause elevated driveway stress. In order to ensure a smooth traffic pattern, we ask that you arrive no more than five minutes before the designated drop-off/pick up time. If you arrive early, please park in a space off the driveways and wait for your time window to queue.

The Importance of Arriving on Time

We understand that occasional delays happen, but outside of previously scheduled appointments, we ask that all students arrive on time for school each day. Our classrooms come alive the moment students walk through the door. Lessons begin, projects unfold, and the rhythm of the day is set. When a child arrives late, it can be challenging for them to ease into the flow of the morning and can also disrupt the experience for others.

Your partnership in helping your child start the day on time supports their success and the success of the entire classroom community. If tardiness becomes a recurring issue within a term, families will receive a written reminder from the Head of School so we can work together toward a solution. Thank you for your support in making each day a smooth and positive experience for all.

If you arrive after the end of the drop-off period, please come to the main office and sign your child into school. Your child will remain in the office and will be escorted to their classroom by administrative staff.

Late pickup

We want to kindly remind families about the importance of picking up children on time. Our staff is scheduled across a variety of programs throughout the day and delays have a ripple effect that impacts the care of our students.

Please note that the after care program is not staffed to extend beyond the close time of 4pm (Toddler) and 5pm (Children's House & Elementary).

We understand that unforeseen/emergency circumstances can arise. If you anticipate a delay in picking up your child, contact the front desk at (781) 934-7101 ext.10 or by email at frontdesk@bfarm.org.

If you are more than five minutes late to pick up your child, they will be escorted to the after care program at their level. A late fee of \$15 per fifteen minute increment per child, will be added to your billing account. Note, we will first attempt to contact the parents/caregivers listed on your child's record. If we are unable to reach you, we will contact your emergency contacts.

Early pickup

If you are planning to pick up your children early during the school day, please email frontdesk@bfarm.org or call the main office to notify the school. Your child will be picked up and escorted to the main office where you can sign them out.

With safety as a priority, students may not be dropped off or picked up from their classrooms. Arrivals and dismissals outside of the standard drop-off and pick-up time must occur through the front office.

Car Seat Safety

Your child's safety is our top priority, and we follow Massachusetts law and EEC guidance closely when it comes to car seat use and drop-off procedures.

According to Massachusetts law:

- Children under 8 years old or under 57 inches tall must ride in a federally approved car seat or booster seat.
- Children ages 8 to 12 (or at least 57 inches tall) must use a properly fitted seat belt, ideally in the back seat of the vehicle.

Driveway Safety

Please note that the center parking lot of campus is closed to allow for employee parking. Limited parking is available on the lot adjacent to the pool. Please use the proper safety precautions when transporting your child to and from Bay Farm Montessori Academy. Drop-off and pick-up times may be longer, especially at the start of the school year.

Please remember that all driving surfaces on campus are shared by cars, bikes, and pedestrians. All drivers on campus should exercise extreme caution and patience. Drive slowly on campus at all times and be aware of other cars and pedestrians. The campus speed limit is 10 miles per hour.

According to Massachusetts state law, drivers should refrain from using cell phones while operating a vehicle. This remains in effect during arrivals and dismissals at school. Students should remain seated in their car seats while waiting to be dropped off to minimize any risk of injury in the event of sudden stops, vehicle movement, or accidents.

Respect & Courtesy

Please refrain from engaging teachers in conversation during arrivals and dismissals. Verbal or written aggressive behavior or language towards staff is not permitted at any time.

Attendance

It is important for all children to attend school daily unless they are ill. Children thrive on consistency. Coming to school every day on time is essential to the development of every student. Our teachers prepare a rich educational environment with daily rituals, activities, and experiences that are crucial to learning. Children who arrive to school late or miss more than a few days each year negatively impact the work of the school and the progress of the students. We track the attendance and arrival time for all students, and this information will be noted on all progress reports. For students Kindergarten and older, parents will be notified by the school once a student has accumulated 6 absences in a term. A meeting with the Head of School will be required after a child has reached 12 absences.

Timelines and regular attendance are important at Bay Farm. Chronic absences, tardiness, and early dismissals are likely to have a negative impact on your child's school experience and on the work of other students and teachers in your child's classroom. However, we understand and appreciate that extra caution needs to be taken by everyone to ensure the health and safety of our community. If your family faces any challenges in delivering your child to the school in a timely manner, please reach out to us. We can help.

Reasons for Absences

Vacations/Appointments

We strongly encourage families to schedule vacations and appointments during school closures whenever possible. Any requests for extended or recurring optional absences must be submitted in writing to the classroom teachers and the Assistant Head of School. While the school will make reasonable efforts to accommodate such requests, it reserves the right to deny them if they are deemed not to be in the best interests of the child, the classroom, the program, or the school as a whole.

If you are going away and would like work to take with you, classroom teachers must be given at least 72 hours to determine if preparing work will be possible.

Illness

If you suspect your child is ill, please do not send them to school. If your child will miss school, please notify the front desk that they will not be in attendance. If possible, provide the reason for the absence. Bay Farm is required to report cases of

communicable diseases to your child's class parents, and in some instances, to the department of health.

Absenteeism for K-6 students

The Massachusetts department of education defines chronically absent as missing at least 10% of days enrolled (e.g., 18 days absent if enrolled for 180) regardless of whether the absences are considered excused, unexcused and/or for disciplinary reasons. At Bay Farm we believe in the power of a strong partnership between the school and parents. Should your child miss 8% of school days we will work to develop a positive solutions-focused plan with parents to help remove barriers for attendance. In the unlikely event that a solution cannot be found, expulsion may be considered.

Students in the upper grades are responsible for work assigned when they are absent. Absences and incomplete work will be factored into their grades and noted on the progress reports.

If your child is unable to attend as a result of a chronic illness, mental or physical, we will work with your district's public school and your child's health team in the following way to give special considerations for students with disabilities:

- We will support an evaluation by your district's educational team to secure an evaluation which will be able to determine eligibility for special education or related services if there is reason to suspect the student has a disability that impacts his/her ability to attend school regularly.
- If an extended absence is deemed necessary, the Bay Farm team will help the family find a temporary or permanent therapeutic environment to ensure that your child's academic needs are being met.
- If your child is ultimately able to return to Bay Farm, the School Counselor will work with your child to help with reintegration into the school environment.

Auxiliary Programs

Extended Care

If you need to extend your child(ren)'s experience at Bay Farm on a regularly-scheduled basis, we offer an Extended Care Program. This program offers Before Care in the morning starting at 7:30 am and After Care from 3:00 or 3:15 until 4:00 pm for Toddler House and until 5:00 for Children's House, Elementary I, and Elementary II.

Please note that although After Care is not an extension of the academic day, school day rules and safety measures are followed at all levels. After Care at the Toddler and Children's House levels is calm and play-based and often held on the playground, weather permitting. Upper Campus students attending After Care can also expect outdoor play time, weather permitting. When indoors, students will have the opportunity to participate in peaceful activities such as doing homework, playing board games, drawing, and completing puzzles.

Enrichment

Bay Farm's Enrichment Programs are thoughtfully designed to offer our students a wide range of structured extracurricular activities. These programs and activities are designed for students from Children's House to Elementary II and include opportunities to learn new skills, explore talents and passions, and enhance physical and social well-being. Various programs are offered each season, and we are always interested in developing new activities based on the desires of our students and the talents of our community.

Registration for Auxiliary Programs

Extended Care registration typically opens in August for the Fall Semester and October for the Spring Semester.

Bay Farm Summer registration opens in March. *Auxiliary Programs are billed separately through the **Homeroom registration platform**.*

Billing Intervals

Billing and financial matters at Bay Farm Montessori Academy are managed through the School's Student Information System (FACTS SIS). For any questions regarding your billing account, please contact the Business Office at businessoffice@bfarm.org.

Tuition

Tuition is billed based on the payment schedule selected at the time of enrollment. Families may choose from the following options:

- **Annual Payment:** A single payment covering the full year's tuition and fees, due by **June 1**. No installment plan fees apply.
- **Semi-Annual Payments:** Two payments, with invoices issued in **June** and **November**. An **installment plan fee** applies.
- **Monthly Installment Plan:** Eleven payments made monthly from **June** through **April**. An **installment plan fee** applies.

Billing and financial information for Bay Farm Montessori Academy is managed through the School's Student Information System (FACTS SIS). Questions about your billing account can be directed to businessoffice@bfarm.org.

Classroom

Birthdays

We believe that your child's birthday is a very important day. These special days help children understand where they are in time and remember the important events that have taken place during their lives. Please send party invitations and birthday presents directly to friends at their homes rather than through the classrooms. Email and home addresses can be located on the parent portal. We encourage all students in the class to be included in birthday parties when possible.

How We Celebrate:

Teachers or room parents will contact you to schedule your child's celebration in the classroom. You are welcome to send a birthday treat for all students in your child's class. When sending snacks to school, parents should avoid pre-packaged sugary items, items containing high fructose corn syrup, sugary drinks (soda, juice boxes, chocolate milk), items with artificial food dyes (ie: Red 40, Yellow 5, and Yellow 6), and heavily processed snacks. Instead focus on whole foods such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy.

Importantly, avoid snacks containing peanuts or tree nuts due to allergies to help us keep our students safe.

Try to avoid any items that are messy or require utensils that the child can't easily manage with ease, or alternatively provide any serving utensils, plates, spoons, napkins, etc., that are necessary for the treat. Note, balloons, hats, and/or gift favors are not appropriate for in-school birthday parties

The Celebration

Parents are invited to attend our special celebration in honor of the birthday child. At Bay Farm birthday celebrations include a time honored tradition that includes "Birthdays Walks". During the celebration students hear all about the birthday child's journeys around the sun. The teacher/room parent may ask you to bring photographs representing each year of your child's life to incorporate into the celebration.

Volunteering

Throughout the year there will be opportunities to volunteer in your child's classroom. Your child's teacher or your room parent will coordinate these activities.

Classroom Observations

We encourage all parents to observe their child's classroom. Parents may visit and/or observe their children at the child's classroom at any time. We ask, however, that you please call the front desk to schedule your visit so that the school may manage the number of adults in the classroom at any given time. We encourage parents to visit for at least a half hour in order to experience a meaningful observation. During observations, please take a "fly-on-the-wall" approach. Sit in an observer chair where you have a good view without interacting with the children more than necessary. Observation guidelines will be given to you when you sign in at the office.

Observing a working classroom help parents understand and appreciate how Montessori education works in practice and facilitates insight into the educational goals and strategies of the school. Follow-up questions for the teachers may be sent via email, or shared at conference time, rather than during the observation.

Observations will be open after the first six weeks of school to give our students time to adjust to the new school year.

Homework

The elementary teachers at Bay Farm Montessori Academy want to work with you to make homework a valuable learning experience. We want our students to develop the habits, skills, and attitudes to complete and submit assignments that represent their best personal effort. Other positive outcomes of homework are building time management and healthy work habits.

Homework is intended to reinforce the concepts being learned in class rather than teaching a new concept. The goal is to empower our students to take full responsibility for managing their time and their work. Some of our younger students may need support managing their long-term projects. This is completely understandable though the work should ultimately be completed by the student. There is no homework expectation for Toddler and Children's House students though we do encourage you to take time to read to your child on a regular basis.

Elementary I:

Students will have a homework folder that travels between home and the classroom. This helps children to keep track of their assignments. Homework will be sent home on Monday and returned on Friday. In addition to reading (or being read to) for at least 15 minutes a night, students can expect spelling, math, grammar, and occasional long-term projects.

Elementary II:

Homework is distributed in homework folders on Monday and is due on Friday. All attempts should be made by students to complete each assignment to the best of their potential. Parents do not have to check to make sure each assignment is 100% correct, but please review it to make sure it is neat, directions are followed, and that the work is of the caliber of which the student would be proud. Each week, all children will be responsible for daily reading, grammar, spelling, math, and occasional writing, cultural, and science assignments; longer-term projects will be ongoing. Spelling tests will be once a week. Students will also be tested on cultural and science material periodically.

Progress Reports

In addition to the full Montessori curriculum appropriate to their developmental level, all of the children enrolled in our Children's House and Toddler programs engage in a range of self-selected and teacher-led activities, physical activity, outdoor play, self-help skills, problem solving, decision making, and lessons on safety, health, and hygiene. Our classrooms also provide access and exposure to curricula on social, cultural, and individual diversity. Our progress reports address not only your child's academic progress but also these other areas of development.

You will receive your child's/children's progress reports by email. Toddler House through Elementary II will receive progress reports twice a year if your child is typically developing, or three times per year if your child has documented special needs. In addition to narratives, averages will be provided for each academic subject area. Progress reports provide a picture of a student's strengths, efforts, and skill level in the many facets of curriculum and personal development. If you have any questions regarding progress reports, please contact your child(ren)'s teacher(s) for more details.

Parent/teacher conferences are held twice a year and at these meetings, the teachers will discuss your child's progress reports with you. Please refer to the school calendar for exact dates for your child's level. Designed to enhance communications between home and school, conferences are also scheduled on an as-needed basis, when staff and/or parents have concerns or questions that are best addressed in a conference. Whenever possible, both parents should attend conferences.

Conferences to include the Head of School can be arranged through your child's classroom teacher or by contacting the Head of School.

Each lead teacher has a communication plan and informs the parents of this plan at the beginning of the school year. In this way, parents know how (by telephone, email, etc.) and when (before school, after school, lunch time) communication with their child's teacher will be most effective.

Progress reports and conference dates are listed on the school calendar.

Testing

The school uses NWEA MAP Growth testing in grades 1 through Elementary II to get a snapshot of the longitudinal progress each child makes. Students undergo a week of testing each spring. This is just one subjective measurement of each child's growth in each subject area and can identify areas that need further attention.

Conflict-of-Interest

To avoid any conflict-of-interest Bay Farm employees are not permitted to engage in employment with BFMA families or students from any program in which they work. Faculty and staff who seek to provide services to a currently enrolled student or family, who is not currently under their care at school, must first get written approval from the Head of School. This written approval must be obtained for each currently enrolled student or family.

Examples of work needing approval:

- Tutoring or private lessons for current students outside of school hours;
- Nannying and/or babysitting students or siblings of current students
- Providing consulting services to a company or organization which is owned by, or which employs, a current BFMA student or parent.

What to Bring (and What Not to Bring)

What to Bring:

Water Bottles: Children will need a full, reusable water bottle to school each day for use at lunch. Children will be using their water bottles throughout the day and will serve themselves water whenever they are thirsty.

Snacks: A snack should be a healthy treat, such as dry cereal, raisins, crackers & cheese, yogurt, pudding, popcorn, trail mix, pineapple, grapes, plums, or other fruits, sliced veggies & dip, rolled cold cuts, cheese. Candy, soda, and highly processed and sugary foods are not permitted at school.

Lunch: Students should bring an individual, healthy lunch for their own consumption. Food cannot be shared under any circumstances and should be eaten with utensils sent from home.

All children remaining past 12:00 pm should bring a lunch box and a drink. Lunches should be healthy foods that do not require refrigeration or heating.

The students eat with each other in the classroom or outside. Please include all utensils they need.

PEANUT ALERT: More and more children are being identified as being allergic to peanut products. This is one reason why *children are not allowed to share or trade food items with each other*. Bay Farm Montessori Academy is not a nut free school.

Do not send in glass bottles. Refillable water bottles are the best. For independence, please put food in a container that can be easily opened.

We encourage but do not force eating. Please send foods that your child likes and can eat in a reasonable amount of time.

Show and Tell

Home Sharing (Children's House, Kindergarten, and Elementary I): Your child(ren)'s classroom will provide information regarding the specific Show & Tell schedule and expectations. Please leave toys at home.

What NOT to Bring:

Cell Phones and Electronics: While students may bring electronics such as cell phones, iPads, etc. to school, they will need to be turned off and kept in backpacks throughout the school day, which includes Extended Care.

Sports Equipment: Please check with your child's teacher before allowing your child to bring in any sports equipment. For the safety and well-being of all, we reserve the right to limit or prohibit the use of equipment brought in from home. All play/sports equipment entering school must be clearly labeled with the student's name. The staff cannot be responsible for loss or damage.

Communications

Communication Channels

Bay Farm Connects - Mobile App

Bay Farm Connects is a mobile app and online platform that gives you a window into your child's classroom while connecting you to the classroom community. This platform is completely private by invite-only. **This will be your go-to source for information about your child's class.** Whole school communications are also posted here. Examples of classroom communications shared on the Connects app are housekeeping updates, teacher updates, pictures from your child's class, and parent education. A list of Bay Farm events can also be accessed from the lower right corner of the app.

Bay Farm Bulletin - Digital Newsletter

Every Friday night, you'll receive the Bulletin in your inbox, with information pertaining to the entire school community. This will include upcoming dates to remember, event information, and other announcements. Be sure to check your inbox each Friday. This email will come from communication@bfarm.org.

We strongly recommend checking Bay Farm Connects and reading the Bay Farm Bulletin each week so that you know what is going on at school. Please make a plan with your child's caregivers to ensure everyone is on the same page and has access to the above information channels.

Text Alerts

Your family will be enrolled in our Text Alert system for important reminders, snow days/inclement weather alerts, or emergencies.

Bay Farm Beat

The Bay Farm Beat, a school magazine that covers all things Bay Farm, is published annually. This publication features our programs including, specialists and enrichment programs, parent education, alumni news, and more. If you would like to highlight anything in our Bay Farm Beat, we ask that you submit your stories to communication@bfarm.org.

Head of School and Assistant Head of School

Please feel free to reach out to Bay Farm's Head of School, Gráinne Murray (grainne.murray@bfarm.org/extension 12), or Assistant Head of School, Kelley Collins (kelleyc@bfarm.org/extension 38), for any reason; they welcome parent visits and are always open to your feedback.

Email & Voicemail

Teachers check their voicemail and email at the beginning and the end of the school day. Please do not rely on voicemail or email to communicate transportation changes for your child. Rather, call the front desk and be sure to speak with a person. Please note that it may take 24 hours for a teacher to respond to your email or voicemail message.

Teacher Communication

The best way to reach your child's teacher is via email. Since they are actively teaching throughout the day, please allow 24 hours for a response.

Bay Farm faculty and staff are not permitted to engage in School communications through their personal cell phones or email addresses. Please contact teachers via the school's communications channels.

For urgent matters during the school day, call the Front Office at 781-934-7101 ext. 10 and speak with the person at the Front Desk, who will be able to reach the classroom.

Weather, Snow Days & Emergency Closures

In the event of an emergency or severe weather preventing Bay Farm from opening or requiring an early dismissal, Bay Farm will communicate school closing news via the following methods:

1. You will receive an email at any parent email addresses on record.
2. You will receive a text message at any parent mobile phone numbers connected to your child's record..
3. Unexpected school closures are posted on the school's social media sites and on Bay Farm's website.
4. Unexpected school closures are posted with the local news affiliates.

If the weather is bad and the school is open, families are encouraged to use their own best judgment and to travel at their own discretion.

If you have any questions or concerns related to communication, please contact Alyssa at alyssag@bfarm.org.

Discipline/Behavioral Standards

Purpose

The goal of our behavior management policy is to support the social-emotional development of young children in a safe, nurturing, and respectful environment. We understand that children often act out in response to unmet needs expressed through behavior. Our response to behavioral challenges is based on the developmental age of the child and is grounded in guidance, empathy, and education.

Guiding Principles

- We approach behavior management as a learning process, not a punitive response.
- We prioritize safety for all children.
- We support children in learning to express their needs in respectful, age-appropriate ways.
- We view each behavior as a form of communication.
- We collaborate closely with families to ensure consistency and understanding.

Response to Behavioral Challenges

Toddler & Children's House Programs

We recognize that behaviors such as biting, hitting, pushing, and other forms of physical expression are common in early childhood development and often emerge from limited verbal skills, impulse control, or frustration.

1. Immediate Safety Measures

- If a child bites, hits, or harms another child, staff will intervene immediately to ensure safety.
- The child who was hurt will be comforted and cared for with empathy and attention.
- The child who exhibited the behavior will be calmly and firmly guided away from the situation, with simple language to reinforce boundaries (e.g., "Teeth are not for biting. That hurts.").

2. Observation and Documentation

- Staff will observe and record patterns of behavior to identify potential triggers, such as transitions, fatigue, overstimulation, or difficulty with communication.
- A confidential incident report will be completed and shared with families of both children involved.

3. Developmentally Appropriate Guidance

- Teachers will model gentle hands and respectful communication.
- Children will be offered alternatives and taught appropriate ways to express feelings, such as using words, gestures, or visuals to communicate needs.
- Conflict resolution and empathy are taught through modeling and storytelling in daily routines.

When behaviors become highly dysregulated (such as persistent biting) and pose a risk of harm to other children, parents/caregivers of the student will be contacted to pick up their child for the day. This time away allows the child to self-regulate and provides an opportunity to work on behavior management strategies. To protect privacy we do not disclose the names of children involved in the incident.

Elementary I & Elementary II Programs

As children mature they become more socially active and more aware of the needs of others. Our Elementary classroom communities are grounded in respect, safety, responsibility, and a love of learning.

1. Aggressive Behavior

- If a child hurts another child deliberately, the parents of both children are notified by phone.
- The child who was hurt will be comforted and cared for with empathy and attention.
- The child who exhibited the behavior will be calmly and firmly guided away from the situation.
- The parents of the child who injured another may be asked to pick up their child if their child's behavior continues to cause or threaten harm.
- Repeated incidents of physical harm will be managed on a case by case basis and may result in suspension and/or expulsion from school.

2. Other Behavioral Challenges

Bay Farm will hold students accountable for any actions involving lying, cheating, vandalism, or stealing. Consequences will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

3. Observation and Documentation

- Staff will observe and record patterns of behavior to identify potential triggers at school. Parent involvement will help identify potential triggers outside of school.
- A confidential incident report will be completed and shared with families of both children involved.

All Students

Individual Support Plans

If a child displays ongoing behaviors that pose a risk to self or others, the teaching team, along with the School Counselor and the Assistant Head of School, will create a plan that may include additional observation, professional consultation, and specific strategies to support emotional regulation and skill development. The Head of School is made aware of individual student support plans in real time.

Family Communication

parents will be informed of any incidents involving their child, either as the initiator or recipient of a behavior.

For repeated or escalating behaviors, a meeting will be scheduled to develop a collaborative support plan tailored to the child's needs.

When Behaviors Persist

While our goal is always to support children within our program, there may be instances when the frequency or severity of behavior requires additional strategies. In rare cases, if safety cannot be ensured despite consistent interventions and support, either a temporary reduction in schedule or a temporary break from attending school may be recommended until the behavior has been remediated. Families may also be referred to external resources or specialists as an additional layer of support.

Employee Standards of Care

Bay Farm does not tolerate verbal or physical abuse from its employees. This policy is consistent with the Department of Early Education and Care's guidelines for discipline including, but not limited to, the following:

- Corporal punishment shall not be used. This includes spanking.
- No child shall be subjected to cruel or severe punishment, humiliation, or verbal abuse.
- No child shall be denied food as a form of punishment.
- No child shall be punished for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet.

Intervention & Referral/Special Needs

The teachers and Learning Support Team members work to meet the individual needs of all students at Bay Farm, though there are times when the staff is unable to meet the specific needs of a child. Below is an outline of how we work to meet the social, emotional, and learning needs of our students, and if the team is unable to meet the student's needs in house, external referrals or recommended placements elsewhere may be made.

The Learning Support Team (LST) is comprised of:

- School Counselor/Learning Support Team Leader
- Learning Support for Toddler House & Children's House (Michele McKale & Julie Hurley in consultation with the Assistant Head of School. Kelley Collins)
- Learning Support for EL I & EL II (Kelley Collins)
- Lead Teacher

Determining if a student needs support:

If a teacher feels a student needs social, emotional, behavioral, and/or academic support, classroom teachers observe and fill out an "Individual Child Observation Form." If the teacher is concerned, the School Counselor will be brought in for Social/Emotional Observations and the Assistant Head of School will be brought in for academic issues. The EEC Site Director will also observe on the Lower Campus for social, emotional, and academic concerns. After all parties observe, a meeting of the Learning Support Team ensues, a plan is developed, communicated, and then implemented.

Services provided by the School Counselor:

Direct Intervention in the Classroom (TH, CH, & ELI): The Counselor supports the social, emotional, and/or behavioral needs of the student in the classroom as the needs occur in real time. This allows the Counselor to facilitate teachable moments directly after a need has presented itself. This helps with skill rehearsal & retention.

Individual Student Meetings (ELI and ELII): The Counselor meets with a student in her office on a weekly, biweekly, or monthly basis. During these meetings, the Counselor teaches the student social, emotional, and/or behavioral skills. The Counselor focuses on teaching the skills the child has identified they would like to improve, as well as the skills the child's teacher has requested the child work on.

It's common for students to request temporary (1-3) meetings with the Counselor. Students typically request temporary meetings when they need guidance managing issues such as peer conflict or distressing situations. A student must receive approval from his or her teacher to have these meetings, and parent email consent is not necessary.

Group Lessons (EL I and EL II): The Counselor gives several types of group lessons over the course of the school year. The groups are as follows:

- Compassion for Self and Others
- Growth-Mindset
- Peaceful Conflict-Resolution
- Parent Support & Psychoeducation: The Counselor provides parents with the social, emotional, and/or behavioral education they may need
- Referrals to Outside Providers: The Counselor helps parents connect with outside providers (specifically neuropsychologists, individual therapists, and family therapists).

Care coordination with external providers: The Counselor coordinates care with external providers (typically neuropsychologists, individual therapists, and family therapists) to keep student support methods consistent in school.

Services provided by the Learning Support Team:

Direct Intervention in the Classroom: The Learning Support Team provides the following support while in the classroom (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Assist students with completing academic works (TH, CH, EL I, & EL II).
- Teach students executive functioning skills (CH, EL I, & EL II).
- Help develop abbreviated or compacted homework assignments for students (EL I & EL II).
- Help facilitate test taking in separate settings (EL I & EL II).
- Teach students fine/gross motor skills (TH & CH).
- Help address language deficits/sensory concerns (TH & CH).
- Student Learning Plans (SLP): SLPs are created for students who need consistent support from the Learning Supporter in the classroom. SLPs are Bay Farm's version of an Individualized Education Program (IEP). SLPs are internal documents which are only distributed to parents per parent request. Teachers are responsible for informing parents an SLP has been created for their child. Students who receive outside speech or occupational services are required to have an SLP. This allows the Learning Supporter to coordinate care with outside providers so as to keep student support methods consistent in school. Students who do not receive outside support but who work consistently with a Learning Supporter are given SLPs per the determination of the teacher.

Referrals to External Providers (All Levels): The Learning Supporters help parents connect with external providers (specifically tutors, speech pathologists, & occupational therapists).

Bullying

Bay Farm Montessori Academy prohibits bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation in any capacity. Bay Farm considers accusations of bullying very seriously.

Bullying Prevention / Incidents of Bullying

Each year during the school counselor's social-emotional learning lessons, EL I - ELII students are taught how to prevent bullying and respond to incidents of bullying should any incidents occur on campus.

Students, staff members, and / or parents who have concerns about incidents of bullying should take action in accordance with the bullying policy outlined below:

Immediate Response

When witnessing or learning of an incident of bullying, teachers intervene immediately, separate the students involved, and encourage respect, grace and courtesy, while practicing standard behavior management techniques.

Reporting Incidents

Faculty and staff are required to report incidents of suspected/reported bullying to the school counselor as soon as possible via email. The head of school, director of education, and classroom teachers of the affected student and the alleged bully are notified at the same time.

Students are strongly encouraged to inform a teacher if they believe they have been bullied. We understand that children may report such incidents to their parents instead. If your child shares something like this with you, please contact the school counselor or the Head of School as soon as possible. If a student reports the incident directly to the school counselor or the teacher, the school counselor will document the report internally, and contact parents of the affected student and the parents of the alleged bully.

Situation Triage

Prior to completing a formal bullying investigation, the school counselor, head of school, and / or assistant head of school, will assist the teachers in determining how to restore a sense of safety and security to the affected student and to protect this student from potential further incidents.

Triage steps may include:

- Modifying the affected student's school schedule;
- Identifying a safe person for the them to confide in at any point during the school day;
- And / or creating a safety plan for the student.

Investigation

Following notification regarding the incident, and the subsequent potential triage steps, the school counselor will contact the parents of the affected student. The school counselor will ask the student's parents for permission to interview their child privately. The school counselor will also inform the parents of the school's bullying investigation protocols including what to expect during an investigation process.

The investigation process will then be completed by the school counselor. Confidentiality will be maintained and interviews will be conducted privately, away from the classroom and other students. These interviews will include the affected student, the alleged bully, and any witnesses (students and staff).

Investigation Protocols

Parents are not allowed to attend student interviews to ensure an impartial environment, enabling students to share their accounts candidly and without undue influence. The school counselor conducts interviews solely with the involved students to gather objective testimonies regarding campus behaviors without parental observation. Bay Farm aims to allow students to recount events openly, free from external pressures that may introduce bias.

Information about bullying incidents will be shared only with those directly affected and their parents. The school will update parents of involved students and share findings upon completion of the investigation. To protect all Bay Farm students and maintain the investigation's integrity, parents should not discuss the investigation with other members of the Bay Farm community.

The school counselor will document relevant information from interviews in a confidential file. All interview records are confidential and not available for review by third parties or parents without signed authorization from involved parties.

The school retains the right to inform its staff about investigation details as deemed necessary to ensure the safety of all students involved in the incident.

Failure to adhere to these protocols may be viewed by the school as a failure to support the positive relationship necessary for the school's educational mission as outlined in the enrollment agreement.

****Outcomes****

The school counselor will assess whether bullying has occurred based on the evidence collected during student interviews.

If it is determined that bullying did not occur, the school counselor will communicate the outcome of the investigation to the parents of the alleged victim, providing relevant findings and outlining a plan for supporting the student moving forward.

If bullying is confirmed, the school counselor will notify both the parents of the victim and the parents of the individual identified as the bully. A support plan for the victim will be shared with the victim's parents, while a disciplinary action plan will be communicated to the parents of the bully. Relevant findings from the investigation will be disclosed to both sets of parents, considering factors such as the age of the bully, the nature of the conduct, and any mitigating or aggravating circumstances when formulating these plans.

The school counselor will conduct weekly check-ins with the victim for one month following the incident to assess whether the bullying has ceased. Additionally, the counselor will provide referrals for external counseling for students identified as bullies or perpetrators.

Suicide Prevention

Bay Farm's School Counselor is trained to recognize warning signs of suicidal ideation and will serve as the primary point of contact for students identified as at risk. Parents will be informed by the School Counselor following a thorough assessment of the student.

The School Counselor will adhere to professional guidelines when working with at-risk students, ensuring effective communication with staff, parents, families, and external providers. They will also facilitate the reintegration of students who have been absent due to suicide risk, hospitalization for mental health treatment, or recovery from an attempt.

Privacy and discretion will be maintained at all times.

Dress Code

Elementary School:

It is our intention to create and foster a safe, orderly academic setting in which students can concentrate on their educational endeavors. Our goal is to support the most pleasant, positive, and successful experience for our students at Bay Farm. We trust our parents to work with their children to dress appropriately for school. Please empower your child to make good clothing choices for school.

Here are some guidelines:

- Please dress appropriately for the occasion, considering the weather, and our planned activities for the day.
- Refrain from wearing clothes that others might find distracting or offensive.
- Our shoes should protect our feet during activities like recess, field trips, and physical education.

Learning to dress appropriately is part of growing up. We endeavor to work with parents to help our students make wise clothing choices. Above all, we want to work together to maintain a safe, respectful, and constructive learning environment.

Toddler and Children's House:

Your child should be able to get in and out of his/her clothes with minimal assistance. Since the children use the playground daily, we suggest play clothes for school: pants, jeans, sweat suits, warm dresses, and tights. For changing or use of the toilet, please avoid jumpsuits and overalls because they are very difficult for a small child to get in or out of. For the same reason, please do not dress children in "onesies". Please send your child in sneakers or tennis shoes. Children should bring slippers for the classroom. Please keep jewelry and other accessories at home.

Please label all of your child's belongings, including clothing, shoes, lunchboxes, backpacks, etc. Misplaced and unidentifiable items are placed in the lost and found.

Children are not forced to remove or add clothing. We do offer assistance, when needed, to help children change clothes when they are soiled, wet, or uncomfortable. Our students are encouraged to change their own clothes and work on dressing skills and independence at school; we ask that parents encourage the same independence at home.

Winter Attire

Please purchase boots and snowsuits that your child can put on and take off easily. Hiking boots and high-tops usually require adult assistance. Please avoid attire that your child has difficulty managing by him/herself. All children need to wear boots to and from school on a daily basis from about November through March. We go outdoors every day, even in snowy weather. In addition, all children need to wear snowsuits/snow jackets and pants, hats, and mittens to school during winter months.

Agriculture and PE Attire

Dressing appropriately for different activities is an important practical life skill. Please help your child make good shoe and clothing choices for PE days. Students should wear comfortable clothes in layers according to the weather. Footwear should be appropriate for sporting activities. Students will also need to wear appropriate clothing and footwear for Agriculture, including boots and outerwear that can get dirty.

Enrollment

Admissions Timelines

Current Family, Sibling Enrollment - Applications Due: December, 2025

New Student Enrollment Applications Due: January 31, 2026

Right-Fit Applications Due: January 31, 2026

Re-Enrollment Contracts Sent: By February, 2026

Re-Enrollment Contracts Due: February 28, 2026

New Enrollment Decision Letters: March 10, 2026

New Enrollment Contracts Due: March 28, 2026

Right-Fit Tuition

The goal of Right-Fit Tuition is to make it possible for families who believe in Bay Farm Montessori's mission to enroll their child. Tuition Assistance awards under the Right-Fit program are based on a third party financial algorithm, and are not determined by any individual at the school.

Decisions regarding Right-Fit Tuition Assistance are confidential and are not disclosed to any members of Bay Farm's faculty, staff, or Board, except for the Right-Fit Committee. When presented to the Finance Committee for review and approval, the details of these determinations are generally anonymized to protect privacy.

Right-Fit is determined annually and requires a new application every year. Returning families who do not submit their re-enrollment contract according to the admissions timeline may lose their Right-Fit award.

Deadlines and other application information is shared annually with current and prospective families.

Contract Changes/Updates

Enrollment contracts signed at the start of the school year are binding legal documents. The School's Finance Committee is required to review and approve any changes to enrollment contracts, including contract releases or refunds.

To request a change in your child's schedule, please contact the enrollment office at admissions@bfarm.org. If the changes are approved, the Business Office will create an addendum to the contract to be signed by all parties.

Class Placement/Moves

Class placement notifications are shared in early August. Prior to placement, we carefully consider the composition of each class, including gender balance, age distribution, and individual student needs. Please note that the school cannot accommodate specific requests for class placements.

Classroom switches are rarely granted, as changing a child's placement can significantly affect classroom dynamics and must be advantageous for the entire class. If you would like to request a change, please submit a written letter to the enrollment office, admissions@bfarm.org, outlining your reasons.

Recommendations & Record Requests

When transitioning your school aged student from Bay Farm, requests for transcripts and/or teacher recommendations should be sent to frontdesk@bfarm.org. Requests should be requested with ample time to complete. This paperwork is processed as quickly as possible, but may take a minimum of two weeks to process..

Recommendations to other schools are confidential documents and are not shared with parents.

School Records

Information contained in a child's record is privileged and confidential. Access to this record will not be granted to individuals not involved in your child's education unless you, as the parent, provide written consent. The only exceptions are authorized employees of the Department of Early Education and Care for Toddler and Children's House students. We will inform you if the records are subpoenaed for any reason. As a parent, you have the right to review your child's record at any time. In some limited cases, certain records may be with the head teacher and not immediately available, but they will be provided to you within two (2) weeks.

The school will provide copies of your child's record at no charge.

All requests for the release of records should be submitted at least two weeks in advance of when they are needed. Please direct these requests to frontdesk@bfarm.org to ensure timely delivery of the records.

Enrollment Termination

The school will always hold the interests of all students in mind when making enrollment decisions and does not take the decision to terminate enrollment lightly. Other causes that may result in enrollment termination, include:

- The health and safety of the child cannot be assured at school.
- The health, safety, and experience of others cannot be assured due to the child's behavior.
- The child's developmental or academic needs cannot be met with reasonable accommodation(s) at the school.
- Failure on the part of parent(s) to provide information regarding recommended accommodations for the diagnosed needs of a child.
- Failure on the part of parent(s) to follow through on recommendations made by the faculty and/or Head of School concerning evaluations, counseling, etc.
- Parent(s) of a child threaten or deliberately endanger a staff member or child.
- Breach of Enrollment Contract.
- Excessive tardiness and/or absenteeism.
- Lack of payment of tuition.
- Refusal by parent or child to follow school policies.
- Failure on the part of parent(s) to complete child's file as required by the Department of Early Education & Care and outlined in this handbook (may result in suspension and, if not remedied, unenrollment).
- If the school determines that the actions of the parents make a positive relationship with the school or its employees impossible.
- If the school determines that the actions of the parents interfere with the school's accomplishment of its mission.

Parents will be notified of the enrollment termination in writing (and in person when feasible) with the circumstances and reason for termination. A copy of the letter will be placed in the child's record. Termination of enrollment by the school or the family does not end the family's contractual financial obligation to the school.

Toilet Training & Admissions

Per Massachusetts state law, a child's developmental relationship to toilet training is not considered when enrolling or placing the child at the School or in a program.

Field Trips

Students K-6 take a variety of field trips and excursions throughout the year.

Permission & Notification

For trips planned more than four hours in advance, all classroom teachers and specialists will email families to let them know the details of a trip, including location, time of travel, adults in attendance, whether chaperones are needed, and more.

Means of Transportation

Bay Farm Connect Buses

In most cases, transportation for field trips are supported by the use of the School's two Multi-Function School Activity Bay Farm Connect buses, which are driven by trained Bay Farm employees or trained parent volunteers.

Training for driving the Bay Farm Connect buses includes training and a road test. Drivers of the vehicles and the vehicles themselves are fully insured by the School.

The Bay Farm Connect buses may transport a total of 28 children at one time.

Contracted Buses

In cases where the group size is larger than the allowed capacity for the Bay Farm Connect buses, or in cases where certified drivers are not available, Bay Farm uses contracted bus services, generally First Student Charter Buses.

Walking Trips

For trips close to campus, such as the trails near School campus, it is not uncommon for groups to walk.

Chaperones

We sometimes ask for volunteer parent chaperones. If you are willing to participate in field trips, please call your room parent to sign up. On trips where you will be alone with groups of students, a CORI background check is required and can be arranged through the School.

Health Care Plan

Bay Farm requires certain medical examinations as a condition of admission and enrollment, as required by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (DEEC).

Emergency Phone Numbers

Health Care Consultant—Dr. Jeanine Stanwood, 36 Shops at 5 Way, Plymouth (774) 608-3700

Fire Department—(781) 934-5693 (business) or 911 (fire/ambulance)

Police—(781) 934-5656 or 911 (emergency)

Emergency Health Care—Beth Israel Deaconess Plymouth Hospital – (508) 746-2000

Designated Adults

Gráinne Murray, Head of School

Kelley Kasak-Collins, Assistant Head of School

Julie Hurley, EEC Site Director

Procedure for Emergency & Illness

Parents/emergency contact person will be called to pick up the child from school if necessary due to illness or accidents. An ambulance will be called in an emergency.

Parents will be notified as illness or emergency dictates, for consultation, pick up, or to alert that the child has been transported to hospital due to emergency. If parents cannot be reached, we will alert the emergency contact person(s) on file.

Emergency Procedures for Field Trips

Local field trips: Teachers will carry any medication that may be needed by students on the field trip and a First Aid kit. In the event of an accident, the staff member in charge contacts the school, which then alerts the parent, emergency contact, physician, etc. One of the administrators meets the children/parents at the designated hospital or location to facilitate emergency procedures.

First-Aid Kits

First-aid kits are located in each classroom and are clearly labeled, and replenished on an annual basis in August and as needed throughout the year. Each staff member is trained in First Aid and CPR and is equipped to address minor injuries. When off campus, we maintain a First-Aid kit and medication as needed by specific children.

Injury Prevention Plan

All staff members are trained and instructed to remove any hazard from the indoor or outdoor environments and/or to task maintenance for outstanding issues. A central injury log is maintained and managed via the school's student information system.

Safe Sleep Policy

Supervision of children is as important when they are sleeping as when they are awake in our programs, especially when the child is an infant. All infants are placed on their backs when they take their naps, unless their physician orders otherwise. Such physicians' orders must be given in writing to the school. A teacher is always present in the room during nap time, and that teacher checks on the children every fifteen minutes to ensure that all children are safe and that infants are on their backs.

General Sickness Policy

Children who come to school must be well enough to participate in all aspects of their scheduled school day.

Bay Farm reserves the right to make decisions concerning a child's health, based on observation and knowing the child's normal behavior. If a child does not attend school during the day, they shall not participate in after school activities.

Children may not attend school if they have any of the following:

1. An elevated temperature (100.4 or above)
2. A suspicious rash
3. Sore eyes or earache with discharge
4. Upset stomach, vomiting, diarrhea, or fever within the past 24 hours
5. Contagious disease (strep throat, conjunctivitis, bronchitis, etc.)
6. Active lice outbreak
7. Green mucus discharge from the nose or mouth
8. A hacking cough or severe respiratory illness

In the event of an outbreak of a communicable disease, parents will be notified in writing or by phone, depending on the severity of the outbreak and our health care consultant's advice.

Children who have been ill should not return to school unless they are symptom-free and ready for full participation in our active program. They must be free of fever for 24 hours before they return to school. A note from a physician may be required in the case of injury or communicable disease.

Plan for Managing Infectious Disease

The wellness of the school community depends on staff observations of children's health issues. Any child suspected of having a communicable disease, as defined by the Health Department, will be sent home.

The school reserves the right to refuse re-admittance to any child who does not appear well enough to return. There is no tuition reimbursement for days missed due to illness or injury.

Plan for Infection Control

1. All children are taught, directed, and supervised in hand washing after using the bathroom, before and after lunch, and after recess or specials.

2. All staff are instructed to wash hands after using facilities themselves or assisting children with bathroom needs. Teachers wear gloves when assisting with clothing changes due to bathroom accidents.

3. Bathrooms are cleaned daily.

4. All tables are washed before and after lunch.

Plan for Meeting Individual Needs of Mildly Ill Children

- We encourage frequent hand washing and proper use of tissues.
- Mildly ill children receive "TLC" liberally, as well as observation, liquids, and rest.
- These children will be monitored for fever and changes in behavior. If a child is not able to participate in regular classroom activities, the front desk will call the parents to pick up their child.

Medication Administration

Bay Farm employees are First Aid and CPR certified.

Prescription Medication:

- Prescription medication must be brought to the school in its original container and must be labeled with the child's name, the name of the medication, the dosage, the number of times per day, and the number of days the medication is to be administered. This prescription label will be accepted as the written authorization of the physician.
- The school will not administer any medication contrary to the directions on the label unless so authorized by written order of the child's physician.
- The parent must fill out the Authorization for Medication Form before the medication can be administered.

Non-Prescription Medication:

- The school needs a Medication Consent Form on file to administer oral non-prescription medication. The parent must fill out the Authorization for Medication Form, which allows the teacher to administer the non-prescription medication. The authorization must be renewed on a weekly basis.
- Authorization from parents is also required for non-prescription medication that is used occasionally to treat mild symptoms (e.g., acetaminophen, ibuprofen). The school must have written authorization, and this must be renewed annually.
- The teachers will make every attempt to contact the parent prior to administering non-prescription medication unless the child needs the medication urgently, or when contacting the parent first may unreasonably delay the appropriate care.

Topical Ointments and Sprays

Topical ointments and sprays such as petroleum jelly, sunscreen, diaper rash ointment, and insect repellent will be administered to the child with written parental permission and instruction. The signed statement from the parent will be valid for one year and must include a complete list of any topical non-prescription medications to be administered.

All Medications:

- Due to concern over possible allergic reaction, the first dose of any new medication must be administered by the parent at home. Teachers will not administer the first dose of any medication.
- All medication must be given to the teacher directly by the parent.

- All medication will be stored out of reach of children. All medications that are considered controlled substances must be locked and kept out of reach of children.
- The classroom teacher will be responsible for the administration of medication. In their absence, the level coordinator will be responsible.
- The school maintains written records of the administration of any medication (excluding topical ointments and sprays applied to unbroken skin). These records will include the child's name, the time and date of each administration, the dose, and the name of the person administering the medication. This completed record becomes part of the child's student file.
- All unused medication is returned to the parent if possible, or disposed of in accordance with

Department of Health Guidelines.

- Student's individual health care plans must be followed as outlined in the plan. All plans must be complete before any treatment may be administered by an employee.
- Students with individual health care plans will have separate bags as needed for their medication. Each bag will contain the medication, individual health care plan, and medication administration list. The classroom teacher is responsible for making sure this bag travels with the student to all activities while at Bay Farm including, but not limited to: specials, recess, extended care, and enrichment.
- The EEC Site Director will work with the classroom teachers to ensure accurate record keeping in regards to Individual Health Care plans, other medications, and allergies as needed.

Meeting Specific Health Care Needs

All known allergies are posted in each classroom, as well as on each child's record in the office. The source of this information is the Health Record and the Authorization & Consent Form, which initially lists all allergies known at the time of admission. Over the course of the year, we take note of any new allergies identified, and contact parents with observations.

As allergies are reported, all staff members are informed about which children have specific dietary restrictions.

Concussion Policy

If your child has been diagnosed with a concussion, a doctor's note outlining required modifications should be brought to the front office upon your child's return to school. The School will work with your child's physician to develop a graduated re-entry plan that includes rest, re-entry, reintegration, and return. Should a child need modifications beyond the standard four weeks, the Student Support Team will work together to develop a Student Support Plan.

More detailed information about the School's concussion protocols can be found [here](#).

Health Forms

Required Medical Examinations as per the Department of Early Education and Care (DEEC):

1. The School may only admit a child if provided with a written statement from a physician that indicates that the child has had a complete physical examination within one year prior to admission, or the school obtains such a statement within one month of admission, or the school obtains a written verification from the child's parent(s) stating that they object to such an examination on the grounds that it conflicts with their religious beliefs.
2. The physical examination required upon enrollment is valid for one year from the date the child was examined and must be repeated annually. Along with evidence of the child's annual physical examination, the school must receive updated immunization and lead screening documentation.
3. Pursuant to Department of Public Health regulations, all children, regardless of risk, shall be screened for lead poisoning at least once between the ages of nine and 12 months, and annually thereafter until the age of 48 months. The school must obtain within one month of admission of the child, a statement signed by a physician or an employee of a health care agency stating that the child has been screened for lead poisoning, or a written verification from the child's parent(s) that they object to such an examination on the grounds that it conflicts with their religious beliefs.
4. For all children admitted to care prior to 12 months of age, the school must obtain, before the child turns 13 months old, a statement signed by a physician or an employee of a health care agency stating that the child has been screened for lead

poisoning, or a written verification form from the child's parent(s) that they object to such an examination on the grounds that it conflicts with their religious beliefs.

5. The school requires, at admission, a physician's certificate that each child has been successfully immunized in accordance with the current Department of Public Health's recommended schedules against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (whooping-cough), poliomyelitis, measles, and such other communicable diseases as may be specified from time to time by the DEEC. No child shall be required to have any such immunization if his parent(s) object(s) thereto, in writing, on the grounds that it conflicts with their religious beliefs or if the child's physician submits documentation that such a procedure is contraindicated. (The foregoing are requirements of the Department of Early Education and Care.)

Children who do not have current signed and dated forms and immunizations will not be allowed to enter in the fall and may be suspended from school until the required forms are provided or all immunizations are up to date, unless there is a health reason or religious objection.

Toileting and Diapering Procedure

1. The Teacher invites the child to retrieve their diaper from their cubby. The child carries a diaper into the bathroom with guidance from the Teacher.
2. The Teacher removes the mat from the wall and places it on the floor. The Teacher places a piece of changing paper on the mat and wears latex gloves while encouraging the child to pull down their pants.
3. Teaching staff may assist a child with pulling down their pants if necessary. The child may then be asked to lie down on the mat or asked to help pull tabs of the diaper open. Children may also stand for diapering when possible. Once the diaper is removed, the child should be encouraged to sit on the toilet.
4. After sitting on the toilet the child may use toilet paper to wipe themselves, and then flush the toilet. The Teacher then uses the child's individually marked wipes to clean the child. The soiled wipe and diaper are placed in a plastic bag.
5. A clean diaper is then placed on the child. The child is encouraged to pull up their pants. The adult will then remove the changing paper from the mat and put it in the plastic bag. The Teacher then removes their gloves and places them in the plastic bag. The bag is then sealed with a knot. The child is asked to throw the bag into the trash.

6. The Teacher then uses disinfecting spray on the mat, letting it air dry. Adults and children both wash their hands at the bathroom sink with liquid soap and running water. Hands are dried with individual or disposable towels.

7. The Teacher checks off the child's name on the diaper chart (Toddler House Only). And both the Teacher and the child leave the bathroom. Any soiled clothing is removed and replaced with a clean item. The soiled clothing is placed in a plastic bag which is sealed with a knot by the Teacher. The bag is then placed in the child's backpack to be taken home.

8. Any school owned clothing is laundered and replaced.

Mandated Reporting

All employees at Bay Farm are considered mandatory reporters of suspected child abuse or neglect.

Massachusetts law requires mandated reporters to immediately make an oral report to DCF when, in their professional capacity, they have reasonable cause to believe that a child under the age of 18 years is suffering from abuse and/or neglect. A written report is to be submitted within 48 hours.

More details can be found in the mandatory reporting standards, but the Child-At-Risk-Hotline telephone number is 800-792-5200.

Montessori Parents Association

The Montessori Parents' Association (MPA)

Bay Farm Montessori Academy's MPA is committed to supporting the teachers, staff, families, and children at Bay Farm to achieve the school's overall mission and philosophy. The MPA is made up of volunteers who believe in positively helping build a strong, connected, inclusive, and just community of all families, past, present, and future in support of educating our children in a vibrant Montessori community.

Essential Functions of the MPA

Engagement

The MPA works to ensure all Bay Farm community members feel welcomed and supported. With the overall goal of creating a school that welcomes all mission-aligned people, we engage the school community through conversations, outreach, and events.

- Welcome new and current families to Bay Farm
- Connect new families with existing families through programs and events
- Work with the school and board committees to support alumni engagement
- Oversee room parents responsibilities and coordinate activities
- Coordinate volunteers for special programs and events

Events

The MPA organizes several essential events for the school community and provides visible support for other school-wide events with the goal of 100% family participation.

Parent Education

The MPA promotes participation in school-hosted parent education events.

Development & Outreach

The MPA is not a fundraising organization of the school. However, the MPA does support the school and Board of Trustees' Development Committee in meeting yearly fundraising goals and aligning interests of the school.

Get involved! Parents may also get involved at the school through many activities, such as the following:

Participating in the classroom:

- reading to children
- giving a cultural presentation

- cooking
- demonstrating a skill
- speaking about a profession

Participating outside the classroom:

- chaperoning a field trip
- offering an enrichment activity
- helping out with the arts program
- assisting on Campus Beautification Day
- attending Montessori Parent Association meetings and events

Serving on Board Committees:

- Financial planning (Board Finance Committee)
- Campus and facilities planning (Board Facilities Committee)
- Fundraising and Development (Board Development Committee)

Please contact the Development Office at development@bfarm.org for more information or to get involved.

Volunteers who may have unsupervised contact with children must submit to and clear a Criminal History Systems Board (CHSB/CORI) check before engaging in their volunteer activities.

Each program level has different volunteer needs. To find out more about how you can volunteer in your child's classroom, please contact your child's lead teacher.

Governance

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees of Bay Farm Montessori Academy is responsible for the long-term health and viability of the school. In this capacity, the Board sets goals and policies, hires and evaluates the Head of School, and works closely with the school's administration on such things as long-term planning, finances, fund-raising, and facilities.

Most of the Board's work is done in committees; and many of these committees are open to interested members of the school community. Participation in board-level committee work is a standard route for members of the community to become familiar with school governance issues and to be considered for trustee-ship. Bay Farm trustees serve three-year terms (usually more than one). At present, most trustees are current or former Bay Farm parents; but this is not a requirement. A Trusteeship Committee identifies and stewards prospective new board members who meet the needs of the long term board succession plan. The Board as a whole votes to appoint new members.

The essence of Bay Farm Montessori Academy is embodied in the shared ideals and goals of the many individuals who work and volunteer at the school. The Board of Trustees encourages all interested members of the community to join in the work of maintaining and improving our school. To find out more, please contact the Head of School, Gráinne Murray at grainne.murray@bfarm.org.

Regulatory Bodies

Bay Farm receives licensing and accreditation from numerous agencies, government entities, and private educational institutions. Each of these bodies has its own set of regulations and requirements to which Bay Farm must comply.

American Montessori Society

Bay Farm is an accredited institution by the American Montessori Society. In order to maintain that accreditation, our Standards and Procedures must be in line with the accreditation standards established by the American Montessori Society. A visiting team from AMS periodically reviews our compliance with standards and visits the school to validate that we align our operations with our stated mission. These visits occur every ten years.

Association of Independent Schools in New England (AISNE)

Bay Farm is an accredited institution by AISNE. In order to maintain that accreditation, our Standards and Procedures must be in line with the accreditation standards established by AISNE. A visiting team from AISNE periodically reviews our compliance with standards and visits the school to validate that we align our operations with our stated mission. These visits occur every five years.

Department of Early Education & Care

Bay Farm is a licensed childcare provider in the state of Massachusetts. The Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) licenses Bay Farm and provides a set of regulatory requirements by which we operate the Toddler House and Children's House programs. EEC regulations supersede any existing Bay Farm Standard, procedure or practice.

License

Bay Farm is licensed by the EEC for 27 Infant/Toddlers and 100 Preschool students. License requirements can be found here:

General Overview of Licensing

<https://www.mass.gov/child-care-program-licensing>

EEC Regulations and Policies

<https://www.mass.gov/lists/departments-of-early-education-and-care-eeec-laws-regulations-and-policies>

Massachusetts Law CMR 7.00

<https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2017/10/17/606cmr7.pdf>

Certification Requirements

All faculty working in Toddler House or Children's House must adhere to the certification requirements of the EEC. This includes all specialists who teach in those programs and staff who regularly substitute or work in those programs.

Bay Farm tracks certification requirements and facilitates the process of staying current on certification requirements, but staff are ultimately responsible for ensuring their compliance with certification requirements. Failure to adhere to EEC regulations regarding certification requirements may result in separation from employment at Bay Farm.

Further information about certification and qualification requirements can be found here:

Educator Eligibility Requirements

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/eeec-professional-qualifications-certification-eligibility-requirements>

Applying for Educator Certification

<https://www.mass.gov/guides/apply-for-eeec-professional-qualifications-certification>

EEC Site Director

Julie Hurley is Bay Farm's EEC Site Director and is responsible for ensuring that our EEC-licensed programs adhere to the regulations outlined in CMR 7.00.

EEC Quality Assessments

There are several assessments conducted on a regular basis by the EEC Site Director, Facilities Director, Director of Education, Director of Finance/Operations, and Head of School to ensure that the EEC-licensed programs are meeting expected regulatory requirements. These include observations of classrooms, maintenance inspections, administrative reviews, and more.

Assessment schedules and tasks are maintained via the school's project management software, Jira.

EEC Licensor and Regional Office

Bay Farm is licensed by the Department of Early Education and Care Southeast Office (Region 5), 1 Washington St., Suite 20, Taunton, MA 02780, Phone: (508) 828-5025, Fax: (508) 828-5235.

Bay Farm's EEC Licensor is Patricia Weldon, patricia.weldon@mass.gov, 508-967-3430.

Town of Duxbury Health Department

Bay Farm Summer, the school's summer camp program, is operated under a recreational camp license through the Town of Duxbury Health Department and is subject to Massachusetts 105 CMR 430.00. Questions regarding the School's camp licenses may be directed to Bay Farm Summer Program Director Julie Hurley, julie5@bfarm.org.

Non-Regulatory Member Organizations

Bay Farm is a member of several independent school organizations, including Montessori Schools of Massachusetts (MSM) and the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS), which offer professional development programs and best practices which we watch regularly to continually improve our systems and our programming.

Privacy Policy

With the increasing deployment of digital learning systems, digital records, and other computer- and network-based systems, it is important for you to understand how we protect private information.

Bay Farm Montessori Academy does not sell any private family or student information. When choosing vendors, we carefully evaluate the vendor's own privacy practices to ensure a similar level of privacy concern.

Any information stored by Bay Farm Montessori Academy is deemed necessary to maintain an effective and efficient operation for the sake of your family and our students.

Although private educational institutions are not legally bound, Bay Farm Montessori Academy strives to adhere to the established legal privacy frameworks related to educational records and private and confidential information, including, but not limited to: the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA).

Healthcare Privacy

Data Breach Notification Law (DBNL): Bay Farm Montessori Academy adheres to the Massachusetts Data Breach Notification Law, which instructs Massachusetts businesses and non-profit organizations in the manner of handling data breaches. The law defines personal information as a resident's first name and last name or first initial and last name in combination with any 1 or more of the following data elements that relate to such resident:

- (a) Social Security number;
- (b) driver's license number or state-issued identification card number; or
- (c) financial account number, or credit or debit card number, with or without any required security code, access code, personal identification number or password, that would permit access to a resident's financial account.

Personal information does not include information that can be legally obtained from publicly available sources, such as addresses or birthdays, tuition amounts, etc. In the event Bay Farm has reasonable reason to believe that any of the above pieces of information has been received by an unauthorized party, it will notify all required parties as defined by the DBNL.

Parent Resources

There are many opportunities to learn about what happens in your child/ren's classrooms. Choosing a Montessori education for your child is the first step in what can be an ongoing process of education for families. Learning more about Montessori philosophy and child development is an excellent way to grow with your child and to better understand the inner workings of his/her classroom.

Parent Education

Participation in Back-to-School Nights, Moving-Up Night, and Parent Education presentations is helpful and important. Our teachers are eager to share information about the best books, websites, and courses on both Montessori education and child development. You may find your local library is the best place to start.

Many parents of our alumni are happy to talk about the Montessori education and experience their children had at Bay Farm and beyond. Call the Office (x10) if you wish to connect with an alumni family.

Below is a list of books that you may find helpful in understanding Montessori:

The Absorbent Mind by Maria Montessori

Perhaps the must-read book on the Montessori Method, The Absorbent Mind by Maria Montessori explores her philosophy and method.

How to Raise an Amazing Child the Montessori Way by Tim Seldin

For a new parent's guide to Montessori learning, How To Raise an Amazing Child the Montessori Way by Tim Seldin is a great guide.

Teach Me To Do It Myself: Montessori Activities for You and Your Child by Maja Pitamic

As the title suggests, this book is all about helping your child become a self-reliant learner and person.

Montessori Madness! A Parent's Argument for Montessori Education by Trevor Eissler

This book offers a parent's insight to the Montessori Method. It delves into how education systems can be improved and how politicians and administrators can look at education differently.

Montessori: A Modern Approach by Paula Lillard

For parents, educators, childcare professionals, and others interested in the Montessori way, this book explores the basics of our philosophy to look at the relevance of these ideas in modern times.

Montessori Learning in the 21st Century: A Guide for Parents and Teachers by Shannon Helfrich

This book helps parents and teachers examine how the Montessori approach pertains to modern education.

Montessori Play and Learn; A Parent's Guide to Purposeful Play from 2 to 6 by Lesley Britton

The Montessori Philosophy is built around child-centric learning. This book is an in-depth guide for parents of young children to explore the Montessori Method at home through a wide variety of activities and games.

How to Talk so Kids Can Learn by Adele Faber

This book is centered around creating conversations with your children that inspire an excitement to learn.

Conscious Eating by Gabriel Cousens, M.D.

Organic gardening, healthy cooking, and smart eating are a big part of the Montessori curriculum. This book explores information about nutrition, enzymes, and how food fuels your body.

Montessori: The Science Behind the Genius by Angeline Stoll Lillard

In this book, Angeline Stoll Lillard shows that science has finally caught up with Maria Montessori. Lillard presents the research behind eight insights that are foundations of Montessori education, describing how each of these insights is applied in the Montessori classroom.

Acknowledgement Form

Please review the Parent Handbook carefully, then read and sign the online Acknowledgment statement in your Back to School Paperwork.

This is to acknowledge that I/we have received a copy of the Bay Farm Montessori Academy Parent Handbook. I/we understand that compliance with the policies and procedures in this Handbook is a condition of my/our child's enrollment and that I/we should consult the Head of School regarding any questions not answered in the Handbook. Since provisions spelled out in the Handbook are subject to change, I/we further understand that revisions to the Handbook may supersede or eliminate one or more existing policies and that all such changes will be communicated in writing. I/we will be responsible for updating my Handbook upon receipt of revisions or inserts.

If you have any questions about this please email communication@bfarm.org.