



SMS Newsletter

Winter 2023



Happy Winter! Despite the taste of spring we had in early January, winter is the season! Please be sure to keep a hat and pair of gloves or mittens in your child's coat cubby so that they have what they need when it's time to play outside, because we DO play outside, even when it's cold!



Bring a Grown-Up to School Day

Our Family Event scheduled for Friday, March 31 will be "Bring a Grown-Up to School Day." This will be a chance for parents or grandparents to join us in the classroom for the morning to see what your child is up to every day, meet their friends, and observe the classroom.

The children will show you how they do some of their favorite activities and might even give you a lesson or two. The timing for this event has changed to 8:00—1:00 to allow families flexibility to choose their arrival time and decide how much of the morning they will participate in.

We'll wrap up our morning with an early lunch and then play outside before school closes at 1:00 for a scheduled staff meeting. More details to follow, but make sure you've got this one on your radar—you won't want to miss it!



Registration Week

It might be cold outside, but it's almost time to start looking ahead to summer and the next school year, believe it or not! Registration for our summer program will open the week of March 20 and contracts for next year will also go out.

We have a small waitlist for next year with more inquiries sure to come, so please be sure to return your contract by Friday, March 31 to guarantee your child's space in the classroom.

There is a \$200 tuition deposit due with your signed contract, but you will also have the option to roll your current deposit over to next year. More info to follow.



Kindergarten Info Meeting

If you are interested in learning more about our kindergarten program, you are invited to attend an informational meeting on Friday, February 3 at 3:00pm. This meeting is open to parents of rising kindergarteners (children who will be 5 on or before September 30) and anyone else who is curious about how kindergarten works in a mixed-age classroom.



Blue Ridge Wildlife Visit

We are very excited about an upcoming visit from the folks at Blue Ridge Wildlife Center! A BRWC representative will be visiting us at school with some of their "wildlife ambassadors" to present the educational program, "Wild Virginia!" From their website:

"Get up close and personal with your wild neighbors and learn all about their natural history. This program focuses on animals that live here in Virginia and interesting facts and stories about their lives. Ambassadors may include: fox, skunk, opossum, squirrel, bat, snake, turtle, raptor."

This program will take place on Thursday, February 9th during our regular morning work period and will not affect drop-off or pick-up times.



Snow Days

As we move deeper into winter the chances of snow days and inclement weather delays increases. Be sure to sign up for text alerts from the school by texting the word EZALERTS to 571-416-8618. We will also send an email and post on our Facebook page when we are closed or have a change to our pick-up or drop-off times due to bad weather.

Unfortunately, we have already used up our built-in snow days and subsequent make-up days when we were closed for Covid and then the flu! We will address any additional closures as they arise and let you know how the days will be made-up or compensated.

Friendly Reminders

Important

1. Please write the date on your child's lunch bag every morning. Tape is located in the basket above the lunch bag shelf.
2. Children should be bringing their beige "cubby bags" to school each day with their water bottle and snack inside. These bags should be brought into the classroom, not left on their coat hook.
3. Nap blankets and toys go home on Fridays and should be returned, clean, on Mondays.
4. Children need to be signed in and out each day.
5. If there is a change to your child's schedule, please write a note in the yellow notebook at the sign-in shelf, or send an email with the change.
6. Tuition is due on the 1st of the month. If the 1st is on a weekend, tuition is due the next Monday.



Tuition Payment Methods

Starting in February, we will no longer accept payment via credit or debit card through QuickBooks. You will still receive an invoice through QuickBooks, but will need to select "bank transfer / ACH" or pay via paper check made out to Shenandoah Montessori School.

We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause, but the processing fees are crazy! We are looking into alternative options for online billing and payment that are less expensive for everyone involved.



Nap Toys and Blankets

If your child stays for nap, please encourage them to select both a blanket and stuffed toy that can stay at school all week long. It's so much easier for us to set up the room for nap when each child's blanket and toy are already stored on their cot and we don't have to check cubbies and backpacks for different toys every day. Thank you!

Remember!!!

Inclement Weather Policy

Weather-related closures may affect scheduled dates. We follow Frederick County Public Schools (FCPS) with regards to weather-related closures, delays, and early dismissals.

- ⇒ If FCPS is closed due to inclement weather, SMS will be closed.
- ⇒ If FCPS opens 1 or 2 hours late, SMS will open at 9:00 or 10:00am.
- ⇒ If FCPS closes early, SMS will close at 1:00pm.
- ⇒ If FCPS cancels after school activities, SMS will close at 3:00pm.

Text EZALERTS (all caps, no spaces) to 571-416-8618 to be added to our text message service. Parents will be emailed about closures and weather-related changes to our schedule and we also post the information on our Facebook page.



Annual Update of Records

It is a state licensing requirement that all children's records be reviewed annually for accuracy and corrections. During our Registration Week (March 20-24) you will be asked to review your child's Registration and Emergency Contact Form and confirm that all contact info is correct and up to date.

Upcoming Dates on the Calendar

January

16 Martin Luther King Jr. Day (SCHOOL CLOSED)

February

3 Kindergarten Information Meeting 3:00

9 Visit from Blue Ridge Wildlife Center 10:00

20 Presidents' Day (SCHOOL CLOSED)

March

20-24 Registration Week / Annual Update of Records

31 "Bring a Grown-Up to School Day" / Lunch School closes at 1:00

April

7-14 Spring Break (SCHOOL CLOSED)