



School Constitution

(Parent Handbook)

2024/2025 Edition

All contents reviewed and edited in 2025

(ADDENDUM TO ENROLMENT CONTRACT)

TO BE VIEWED WITH OUR COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

- These protocols will take preference until further notice.

Teddy Bears Montessori: Constitution, and policy documents.



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VISION

At Teddy Bears Montessori we aim to create a safe and loving space for growth and development.

In line with Montessori philosophy, we envision loving and creative beings who are spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, socially and physically independent and ready to consciously embrace their life's journey.

Through a Montessori approach we provide children with the tools to continuously develop their skills for lifelong learning. Treating all individuals with respect and integrity encouraging the understanding of the interconnectedness of life.

“My vision of the future is no longer of people taking exams and proceeding on that certification from secondary to university, but of individuals passing from one stage of independence to a higher, by means of their own activity, through their own effort of will, which constitutes the inner evolution of the individual.”

Maria Montessori, 1948

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Maria Montessori, 1936

“Preventing conflicts is the work of politics; Establishing Peace is the work of education”

We are committed to the educational philosophies and approach originated by Dr Maria Montessori:

- We nurture and promote a commitment to society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights.
- Encourage a learner centered philosophy for the development of each individual.
- Ensure each pupil develops to his or her full potential academically, emotionally, physically and spiritually.

Our school community of mixed age groups encourages our children to work cooperatively within their fundamental three-year cycles in the service of one another, the school and society.

Our educators are traditionally qualified and are trained to offer Montessori methodology.

Our educators, through observation of each individual pupil, are guided to offer children developmentally appropriate activities, based on their individual needs and capabilities.

As role models, our educators strive towards their own continual self development – personally and academically – through observation, reflection and growth towards excellence.

Our approach combined with Montessori philosophy and methodology encourages loving guidance towards excelling to ones' individual full potential.

We accept all children from all religions and cultures, we do not enforce religion upon our children. We teach children about the different cultures and religions and help them have an understanding of all religions and guide them to accept others regardless of different beliefs and cultures.

Teddy Bears Montessori is:

- A School member of the South African Montessori Association (SAMA).

A Family – School Partnership:

We at Teddy Bears Montessori, are committed to promoting an effective family-School partnership through the following principles:

It is our hope that both the School and the families it serves recognize that effective partnerships are characterized by mutual respect, open communication, a shared commitment to collaboration, clearly defined responsibilities and a common vision for each child.

The School:

- Recognizes that its effectiveness in helping the child develop his or her potential is directly influenced by its effectiveness in helping the family to do the same.
- Presents to parents its philosophy, programme and practices, and encourages dialogue that assist parents in clarifying their expectations and goals for the child.
- Keeps parents well informed through ClassDojo, reports, parent-teacher meetings, newsletters, published policies and informal conversations.
- Uses the ClassDojo school management system, allowing parents to log in daily and see their child's progress and communication from teachers.
- Offers and supports a variety of parent education opportunities including suggestions of effective ways for parents to support the educational process.
- Actively seeks the knowledge it needs to work effectively with a diverse parent body.

The Family:

- Acknowledges that participation in the school allows the opportunity to create connections within the school community.
- Selects the school by seeking an optimal match between the child's needs, parental expectations and the school's philosophy and services.
- Supports the School's policies and is involved in the life of the school.
- Values the school's perspective on the child. When concerns arise, the parents seek information directly from the school in order to best address the concern.
- Provides a home environment that supports the development of positive self-esteem, learning attitudes and habits, social and intellectual competence.
- Supports the stability and continuation of the school by fulfillment of these responsibilities and other such as timely arrival and departure, payment, compliance with enrolment agreements and the promotion of enrolment in the school.
- Shares with the school any religious, cultural, medical or personal information that the school may need to serve the child and the family best.

Termite Parent Syndrome and Gossipers

Parents are sincerely requested to never be found guilty of 'eating' into the good foundations, morale and comradery our wonderful parents, staff and ourselves have spent time building up.

Parents may at times be unhappy with some or other matter (it happens to all of us at times), and instead of addressing these issues with the school office, so that the problem can be fixed and we arrive at a harmonious solution, they rather resort to gossiping and create a negative vibe hereby sowing discontent amongst happy parents.

This sort of behaviour will achieve nothing good.

We sincerely ask our parents to work along with us to build a safe haven for their children and not to break down the good we do by 'slandering' the school. If you are genuinely unhappy, please address the situation with the school office so that a solution may be found.

We would also appreciate if parent's squash any such negative talk should it filter past their ears.

The Montessori philosophy concentrates on the positive and not negative. Let's fix the negative, and not break down the positive! You are always welcome to come and talk about anything at any time.

SCHOOL HOURS

School hours are from 7:00am to 17:30pm

Office hours are from 11:00am to 14:00pm – should you wish to see the Head of School after hours please make an appointment in advance.

The classrooms will be open at 7:00am. Please do not drop off your child before 7:00

The Nursery & Preschool children need to be at school by 8:00am AT THE LATEST. Please adhere to these starting times so that there is no disruption caused to the children already working.

The school day will run until 12h30 in Nursery & the pre-school.

DO NOT leave children outside the School gates before 7:00 and leave as we will not take any responsibility should something happen.

AFTERCARE (3/4day or Full Day Packages)

Is available for Half/ 3/4 day/ Full day children. This service is at an additional fee. Aftercare options are until 15:00 or 17:30 the latest. Children fetched late from aftercare more than 3 times per term will no longer be able to use this service. Late collection penalties will be invoiced to your account.

Aftercare is available on a casual basis, as per the Aftercare Agreement. However, notice must be given in advance in order to use this facility or to cancel this service.

Any person whose account is in arrears will not be able to use the aftercare service until the account has been settled.

WE DO NOT OFFER HOLIDAY CARE

PERMISSION FOR OTHERS TO COLLECT YOUR CHILD FROM SCHOOL

Unless we receive specific permission from you to do otherwise, we will only release your child to yourselves as parents. We must receive a note, SMS or in an emergency a phone call, from you in order to release your child to someone other than yourself. This rule applies to children going home with school friends as well. Parents are requested NOT to give their school gate code to their child or anyone else.

ATTENDANCE AND ABSENTEEISM

All children, even our youngest, are expected to attend school on a daily basis, arriving before the start of the school day at 8am.

Children are expected to be in class by 8:00 a.m. and to be present in class for the full school day and at other required school activities.

Late arrival is disruptive and inconsiderate to the rest of the class, and nothing can be more disruptive to a child's education than irregular attendance.

Consistency and routine are important to every child's development. We depend on your family's full support in this area.

EARLY COLLECTION

At the beginning of the year, new Nursery school & pre-school children may need to be fetched early until they have adjusted to their new environment and built up the physical stamina for the school day.

If this is the case, please arrange a suitable time with your child's directress/ our Principal. All other children are to adhere to the school times.

We understand there will be occasions where you will need to take your child out of school early for a doctor's appointment or similar obligation. To ensure that your child will be ready, please inform your child's directress in the morning or leave a written message in the message book or send a WhatsApp to the Principal 0829284411.

STARTING SCHOOL

Many young children and their parents feel a bit nervous when they leave one another in an unfamiliar situation. A few tears may even be expected. If this is your young child's first year at our School, we encourage you to visit before starting at the school to allow him or her to become familiar with the new setting.

Be reassuring as you talk to your child about his or her new school.

On the first day of school, please don't linger too long in the class or the playground or react with alarm if your child is hesitant about the separation. It is very important to reassure him about where you will be during the day, and by what time you will pick him up later. Some children may be sad for a little while during the first few days, but kind words and reassurance almost always alleviate their fears. The teachers are wonderful in helping children through these situations.

DAILY NEEDS AT SCHOOL

- Nursery /Pre-school: An extra set of clothing to be kept in a zip-lock bag labeled with your child's name in your child's school bag at all times.
- A plastic lunch box and water bottle that the child can open – please see “FOOD / SNACK” section on what to include in the lunch box.
- A healthy snack and lunch are required to be sent daily. Unless you have opted for your child to eat the school lunch provided at an additional cost.
- Toddlers and sleepers in the Pre-school classes are required to bring a blanket for sleep time. This is to be clearly marked with your child's name. All sleep blankets are to be taken home every Friday to be washed and returned on Monday.

Please do not pack big blankets or pillows as these take up a lot of space.

- Potty training children are to have; wetwipes and at least 3 sets of clothing in the bag at all times.
- Babies / toddlers are to have at least 5 diapers, 3 extra set of clothing, wetwipes and bum cream in their bags at all times, their milk for the day and any meals that they need for the day.

All items must be clearly marked with your child's name on it, this includes: snack boxes, water/bottles, shoes, clothing, bags, blankets, dummies etc..

TOYS

Toys should not be brought to school. They are most often lost, fought over, or broken. Any toys brought to school will be confiscated and sent home at the end of the day or end of term.
Children may not wear nor bring makeup to school.

LOST PROPERTY

A lost and found area is kept in each classroom. Please ask your child's directress to help you find any lost items. Items not claimed by the last day of the school year will be donated to charity.
Please label all of your child's belongings clearly.
Please return any items taken home by accident that do not belong to your child, this includes other children's belongings as well as school material.

FOOD & SNACK

All children are expected to eat breakfast at home before arriving at school. The children bring their snack and lunch to school every day in a clearly labeled lunch box. We place great emphasis on the importance of good nutrition as the first step to a lifelong wellness education program. Snack and lunch is a very important part of not only your child's school day, but of his/ her wellness education as well, and we need to count on you to work with us to teach your child about health and nutrition.

Obviously, we all want to pack lunches that our children will eat. The challenge is to help them discover that wholesome, sugar-free foods can taste even better than junk food and don't have the negative effects on our bodies. With younger children, it is a good idea to prepare food in small, easy-to-handle servings, such as cutting sandwiches into quarters, slicing up fresh fruit, and preparing bite sized slices of cheese.

**Please do not send your child in with sugary desserts or drinks as these will be taken away and sent home.
FOOD & SNACK CONTINUED...**

Please, NO FIZZY DRINKS! Juices, Energade, Sweets, chocolates, cake, excessive amounts of biscuits, fizzy drinks and similar will be taken away from your child and sent home at the end of the day. Please notify us of any specific dietary requirements and restrictions. Please provide an alternative option for your child for birthday celebrations should this apply. The children usually enjoy a treat of a small piece of cake for birthdays and popcorn or chips. No party packs allowed. Children tend to quickly develop the habit of drinking water too and this is a healthy option. Filtered water is available for the children and staff to drink throughout the day. Please send a filled bottle that seals securely with water – these can be refilled at school throughout the day. All uneaten foods, which can be contained, will be sent home. You may want to monitor your children's lunch boxes to see what they like and dislike, and to determine the correct amount of food to pack.

BIRTHDAYS

Children love to celebrate their birthdays with their friends. We have a special birthday ceremony in which we tell the class the story of the birthday child's life/ Celebration of Life. Please send in a photograph of your child at each year of his life. It is especially nice to send in a special treat in honour of your child's birthday. Small muffins, biscuits, chips or popcorn to share etc. work well, but try to keep sugar to a minimum. It is only necessary to send ONE small treat per child in the group. You are also under no obligation to send any treats.

Extra Curriculum activities

Extra murals are offered at an additional cost and run independently from the school. The school takes no responsibility for extra mural activities. Payments are to be made directly to the extra mural service providers.

A list of extra mural & Intra Mural activities will be available at the office.

Extra mural activities are subject to change.

Security and Safety:

PLEASE remember to **close all gates** upon entering and exiting the grounds. Do not just drop off your child in the parking area and drive off, walk your child to class and make sure that your child is safe with a member of staff.

Please DO NOT send strangers to collect your children without making arrangements with your child's teacher as we will not allow your child to go with anyone other than parents.

For security reasons please do not hold the gate open for anyone unless you are absolutely certain that they are a parent **already registered** at our school. I understand that this may be difficult as you do not want to be rude, but for security reasons we do not allow members of the public access on the property unless they have an appointment – Please keep in mind that is a security measure to ensure the safety of our children. Be vigilant when dropping off and collecting your child.

Please do not share your personal gate code with your child or anyone unless that person will be collecting your child on a regular basis. Kindly inform us if you need us to change your code for security purposes.

Kindly note that your gate access code is linked to your account.

Parking

Please do not block the driveways or school gate, ensure to park your car in the allocated parking and NOT in the street. Parents may park on the pavement directly outside the school if the parking lot is full, please do not block the road or park on the neighbors pavements. Children are to be dropped off promptly and collected as quickly as possible to avoid traffic congestion. For security reasons please do not chat or linger in parking areas (If parents need to speak to a directress, a separate appointment to see her must be made as arrivals/home time is a busy time of the day.)

Phone Calls

Please do not contact teachers on their personal phones during or after school hours. Leave a message for teachers or contact them after work cycles in the message book or via the school whatsapp number as they are busy teaching during the work cycle and will not answer their phones. Please contact the office 082 928 4411

COMMUNICATION

Between home and school:

All communication will be sent in English.

During the school year we will send home all sorts of letters, notes, newsletters, and announcements. Most correspondence and newsletters including notices will be sent via WhatsApp, email, or via Child Cloud to you. Please READ these so that you are informed as to what is happening at school.

Please inform us should any of your contact details including your physical address change, alternatively you can update your details via email to admin@teddybearsmontessori.co.za .

Please be sure to read any notices on our notice board/ ClassDOJO/ WhatsApp.

If you have any concerns or questions, please speak to us – it is the only way we can help you to help your child. If your child needs help or we are concerned about something, trust that we will speak to you and try to find a solution together.

Please inform your child's teacher if you have left a note in your child's bag, as they may not get the opportunity to randomly check all bags as this takes time away from the children.

What did your child do at school today?

Have you experienced frustration when asking this question? Did you get the common answer, “nothing” or possibly they tell you everyday that they did the same thing such as play dough or spooning beans - Don't be alarmed.

We can assure you that your child is very busy at school doing a variety of learning activities designed to support his development. Young children often have difficulty talking about what they do at school. They have done so many things that they often cannot sort out the specifics. Sometimes they don't remember the name of the materials that they used, such as the trinomial cube, the metal insets, or the addition strip board. In addition to the difficulty children may have talking about their school experience, you may have noted that not many papers come home. They can be doing complex math, word building, writing in a sand tray or on chalk boards, geography, and science lessons, all with manipulative materials that will have no paper work to show you their progress.

So how can you find out what your child is doing in school?

1. Log into ClassDOJO and view your child's work progress and notes from their teacher.
2. Ask your child questions that are more specific. “Did you do a counting lesson today? Did you build the tower or work with colours?”
3. Read a Montessori book.
4. Talk to your child's teacher.
5. Come to school meetings and Parenting Labs
6. Play school with your child at home. Sometimes children will show you through their play what they are

learning.

7. Be patient. In time it will be obvious that your child is growing and learning everyday.

INDIVIDUAL PARENTS MEETINGS

It is very important for teachers and parents to establish and maintain close communication.

Please feel free to ask questions or discuss anything related to your child's progress.

We ask, however, that you understand that the teacher's responsibility during school is to the children. Morning arrival in particular is a very sensitive period when the teachers are greeting each child and setting a calm, pleasant tone for the day. Interruptions need to be kept to a minimum. You can correspond via a note or via Child Cloud and the teachers will get back to you by phone, Child Cloud or will send a note to set up a meeting as needed. Please make an appointment if you intend to meet with a teacher via [Calendly.com/teddybears](https://calendly.com/teddybears). Parents are urged not to hang around during group/class time as this sets the impression that the child can leave with you and also disrupts the entire class.

Times are allocated for parents to get feedback from teachers regarding progress to date. Notification of days and times will be sent out closer to the time.

Reports

Written reports are given at the end of the second and fourth terms for the Nursery/Preschool School.

FUNDAMENTAL GROUND RULES

As a school founded on the Montessori ideals, we assume that every person deserves respect. We expect children to demonstrate kindness, courtesy, and respect toward the school and fellow children, parents, teachers, and staff. The goals of Montessori education is to establish safe, warm, and caring environments within which we teach children positive and appropriate ways to handle situations, rather than to assume that misbehavior and punishment are inevitable; to develop a strong sense of self-discipline, responsibility and courtesy; to develop an atmosphere conducive to peaceful studies.

When anyone at Teddy Bears Montessori finds it difficult to follow the school's expectations about interpersonal conduct, we will quickly bring the child, family, and staff together to work toward a solution.

We follow an approach based on empowerment, mutual respect, and trust. Neither corporal punishment, nor physical or emotional intimidation, is allowed at our School. If anyone consciously or flagrantly violates the social contract regarding safety, kindness, and courtesy, our response is to identify the appropriate and natural consequences of their actions. For example, if something is broken, it must be replaced or repaired, preferably not by the parents alone, but by the child whose actions led to the damage.

Any child who repeatedly breaks the ground rules, or who on even one occasion endangers the health and safety of others, may be asked to leave the school, temporarily or permanently by the Principal.

We have worked together to create a system of ground rules and discipline that is firm, fair, and consistent in order to help children maintain the school's values and character. All children are expected to adhere and respect them to protect one another.

Our ground rules are essentially the same at every level of the school, although the language and emphasis changes somewhat for the older child.

- Be kind and gentle to one another. Hands are for helping, not hurting.
- Everyone has a right to privacy and concentration. Please don't disturb anyone who is trying to concentrate on their work.
- Everyone has a right to their personal belongings. Please do not touch anything that is not yours without the owner's permission. If you accidentally lose or break something, please replace it without a fuss.
- Everyone here has the right to feel safe and secure. Please don't express anger or upset feelings in a way that insults or threatens someone else.
- Everyone here has the right to be physically safe. Please don't do anything that might hurt or endanger anyone.
- No one is allowed to fight, shout, swear, push, trip, or use any other aggressive behaviour.

- Use the playground equipment as intended.
- Let everyone who wants to play join in your games.
- Stop chasing or playing scary games when asked.
- Please don't tackle or trip one another in any games.
- Keep sand and sand toys in the sandbox.
- Do not throw sand or bark.
- Do not leave your teacher's supervision without permission.
- Please do not play carelessly or roughly.
- Play ball games in the designated play areas.
- Keep sticks and stones on the ground, never throw them.
- Please put all balls, ropes, and other outdoor equipment away when you are finished playing with them.
- Respect one another: We expect everyone at our School to treat everyone else in the school community—staff, children, and parents—with kindness and respect both in words and actions.
- Respect authority: We expect children to comply with teacher's directions. We further expect children to use the Peace Table to resolve conflicts.
- Attendance at school: Children must attend each and every class daily (from beginning to end). They may not skip school, nor skip any class.
- You must arrange to arrive at school promptly every day.
- Dress: We expect children to dress appropriately, and in good taste, within the uniform guidelines.
- Skate Boards, Scooters and Roller Blades are not allowed at school.
- No cell phones, or games/toys, are allowed at school.

Transportation

Teddy Bears Montessori Preschool does not offer transport services.

Staff are not permitted to transport children to and/or from school. Please do not request that they do this for you.

A list of numbers for public transport drivers used by other students can be provided, please request this from the office. These drivers do NOT work for Teddy Bears Montessori, the school takes no responsibility for any damage or incidents caused by making use of public transport.

Admission Policy

Preamble

Teddy Bears Montessori Preschool is an independent school dedicated to delivering high quality Montessori education.

We are committed to the educational philosophies and approach originated by Dr Maria Montessori:

- We nurture and promote a commitment to society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights.
- Encourage a learner centered philosophy for the development of each individual.
- Ensure each child develops to his or her full potential academically, emotionally, physically and spiritually.

Our school community of mixed age groups encourages our children to work cooperatively within their fundamental three-year cycles in the service of one another, the school and society.

Admission and Enrolment

This admission policy, as adopted by the school from time to time, has been drafted in accordance with section 29 of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 and the National Education Policy Act No. 27 of 1996.

The admission and enrolment of students to the school is at the discretion of the Principal who may refuse a student's admission to the school without giving reasons therefore or may grant temporary or provisional enrolment to the school subject to further terms or conditions which the Principal may impose. The Principal may, at his/her own discretion, cancel enrolment in accordance with the Schools Conditions and Policies as set out in the Enrolment Forms and Parent Handbook.

For the sake of clarity, this admission policy, together with the Enrolment Contract and the Parent Handbook, regulates the enrolment and admission of the student to our school, the relationship between the school, the student, yourself and/or the payer once the student is admitted and enrolled with the school.

You will receive the Welcome pack including the Parent Handbook once your child's application has been accepted. The school therefore agrees to enrol the student, for the duration of their Nursery/preschool school education, subject to the terms and conditions and re-enrolment fees as stipulated in the Enrolment contract and Parent Handbook, and subject to your agreement hereto.

The student will only be formally enrolled at the school when: The registration fee (non refundable) & The Deposit equivalent to one month's school fees (non-refundable) has been paid, the enrolment contract has been fully completed and signed, and all relevant documents have been received by the school.

You acknowledge that it is a privilege for students to attend an Independent Montessori School such as ours, and not a right.

As such you agree that you, the students' Parents/guardian and the Payer, are responsible for the full payment of all fees as set out above and in the Fee's Structure, which sets out all the fees payable, annexed hereto.

Matters Relating to the Immigration Act 2002

As defined in the Immigration Act. In terms thereof (S39), Teddy Bears Montessori may not provide training or instruction to an illegal foreigner (a person whose presence in South Africa is in contravention of the Immigration Act), or a foreigner whose status does not authorize him or her to receive such training or instruction.

If the Immigration Act applies to you, please take note of the following:

Conditional Admission:

- Where you are unable to provide documentation supporting the fact that your Child is permitted to study in South Africa, we reserve the right to deny your Childs admission to the School, and/or his or her continued enrolment.
- In circumstances where Supporting Documentation is believed to be forthcoming in a reasonable period of time, we may admit your Child to the School on condition that you provide us with the Supporting Documentation within a period not exceeding 6 months.
- Supporting Documentation includes the following:
 - o Temporary Visa or Permanent Residency Visa; or
 - o Proof of Application for above to the DHA

Admission Process

An Application Request form is to be completed and submitted to the school (this is NOT an Enrolment form).

Upon acceptance, you will receive the Enrolment Forms that must be completed and returned to the school and a non-refundable Registration fee is charged for administration and must be paid at the time of registration as well as one month's school fees equivalent to one months school fees (non refundable)

Fees are charged in advance for the month. And are payable over 12 months, termly x 4 or annually settled the current Dec for the following year.

Registration requires the parents to furnish the school with the following copies:

- Complete and signed Enrolment form for enrolment, initialed on each page.
- Students Birth certificate
- A vaccination/immunization certificate, with all pages and the students name clearly visible
- Medical Aid details
- A current report/assessment from previous school (if applicable)
- Proof of residence for the parents
- Proof of residence for the payer
- Both parents identity documents
- Payer's identity document.
- Proof of payment of registration fee, deposit equivalent to one month's school fees, annual fee, term fee or monthly fee.

Admission of Non-Citizens

Non-citizens will be admitted to the school provided that parents are in the possession of a temporary or permanent residence permit. A certified copy of the original permit must be submitted with the application.

Enrolment

Once a student is enrolled at Teddy Bears Montessori Preschool they will:

- Receive a blended tuition.
- Adhere to Teddy Bears Montessori's values and policies.
- Be taught in the language of instruction that is English.
- Adhere to the Code of Conduct for Learners and the Dress Code.
- Respect the school leaders and staff at all times.
- Refrain from bringing any illegal substances/weapons into the school grounds.

Parents/Payers Obligations

In order to fulfil our obligations, we need your co-operation. Without detracting from any specific obligations and agreements contained in the Enrolment forms and Parent Handbook, you are required to:

- Encourage the student in his/her studies, and give appropriate support at home
- Keep the school informed of matters which affect the student
- Maintain a courteous and constructive relationship with school staff
- Attend meetings and otherwise keep in touch with the school where the students interests require you to do so
- Participate in school events

Placement will only become final when all of the above has been processed and signed by the enrolment department/ Principal.

Disability / LSEN Policy

Teddy Bears Montessori Preschool can offer remedial or bridging/LSEN classes arranged in advance at an additional cost to do so with qualified staff.

We are however willing to do a 1-week (5 day) trial with the student, on condition that we receive approval from the Child's Therapist, to observe how the child copes within the environment.

The school is currently NOT wheel chair friendly and nor do we have a disability ablution facility available, as yet.

Financial Policies

I/We the consumer/debtor consent to and authorises Teddy Bears Montessori , the supplier, service and/or credit provider, as the case may be, to:

- a) contact, request and obtain information at any time from any supplier, service or credit provider (or potential credit provider) or registered credit bureau in order to assess the behaviour, profile, payment patterns, indebtedness, whereabouts, and creditworthiness of the consumer / debtor; and
- b) provide information about the behaviour, profile, payment patterns, indebtedness, whereabouts, and creditworthiness of the consumer / debtor to any registered credit bureau or to any supplier, service or credit provider (or potential credit provider) seeking a trade reference regarding the consumer's/debtor's dealings with the supplier, service and/or credit provider.

- Teddy Bears Montessori is a private establishment and does not receive any form of government or other subsidy and is completely dependent on tuition fees as its principal source of income.
 - Accounts must be kept up-to-date. The school will be forced to withhold any and all services in respect of children whose parents'/guardians' accounts have fallen behind unless written arrangements have been made for deferred payment.
 - Your cooperation is essential and very much appreciated.
 - School fees are payable in advance no later than the first day of every month unless otherwise arranged.
 - A R150 late penalty will be charged to accounts not paid by the 1st of every month. A 10% penalty of the balance due will be charged to accounts paid more than 7 days late and a 10 % penalty will be charged for every 30 days thereafter.
 - I/We agree to pay term; late payment penalty; late collection fees as stipulated in the enrolment contract and parent handbook.
 - Parents are responsible for prompt payment of all outstanding fees and any interest or penalties accrued on accounts in arrears. I/We are furthermore aware that if school fees are in arrears TBM has the right to retain the student's report and/or refuse admission of my child to the school.
 - I/We agree to pay each month's school fees in advance. **School fees to be paid by the 1st of each month for 12 months, including December.**
 - January's fees to be paid by the 20th of December, unless otherwise agreed and accepted in writing by the Head of School.
1. I/We understand that the school fees will be reviewed from time to time by management and may increase if the school feels that it is necessary. This includes term, toiletry and penalty fees.
 2. The fact that a pupil cannot attend school for whatever reason including but not limited to illness does not relieve me/us of my/our liability for the payment of fees or three month notice period.
 3. I/We shall be personally liable for any monies outstanding if my/our child is asked to leave, or is expelled from the school during an academic year, to the end of the applicable notice period, and agree that school fees remain payable for the duration of any period for which my/our child is suspended from attending school.
 4. Any written notice sent to my/our stated address by prepaid post, email or handed to the pupil shall be deemed to have been received by me/us on the third business day after posting or on the day of handing to the pupil or the e-mail being sent, as the case may be.
 5. I/We accept joint and several liability (both parents/guardians) to the school for the due and punctual payment of all fees, subscriptions, levies or other amounts which may become payable to the school in respect of my/our child's attendance at the school or in respect of his/her participation or attendance in extra-mural activity.

6. By my/our signature/s hereto I/we formally consent to the jurisdiction of the Randburg Magistrates Court in the event of any dispute arising or any claim against me/us under this agreement.
7. No amendment or consensual cancellation of the contract shall be of any effect or validity unless recorded in writing and accepted by the Head of School.
8. For all purposes under this agreement, including giving notice, the service of any process and for all other purposes arising from this agreement, the parents and person responsible for payment of the account, hereby choose as domicilium citandi et executandi, the address as reflected on the “parent / legal guardian details” forms completed for enrolment of the pupil at the School.
9. I/We undertake to provide TBM with one full term/ three calendar month’s prior written notice before removing my/our child from the school for any reason prior to 30 September each year. Should we wish to give notice after 30 September, then it is agreed that one term’s (three months) written notice shall be given to cancel the agreement. I/We understand that failure to do so will render us liable for payment of a term’s fees.

OUTSTANDING SCHOOL FEES

A collection agency/Attorney has been given control over the Schools outstanding accounts, School fees are due to reflect by the 1st of every month, should payment not be received we will issue a letter of demand which will be followed by Handover/ listing as a default payer if payments are not adhered to.

1. **I/We understand that the School has the discretion to handover the details of the Parents/Guardians to its attorneys immediately for collection should School Fees be outstanding.**
2. **Upon default and in preparation of hand over of the account to an attorney or debt collector the School will be entitled to charge the parent/s and the responsible person an administration fee equal to 20% of the School fees outstanding at the time of handover.**
3. **In the event of legal action being instituted against the signatory resultant from this agreement, the signatory shall be held liable for all legal expenses on the attorney-own client scale, including stamp duties incurred by the School in an attempt to collect outstanding money on this account. In the event of the School instructing any debt collector to collect any outstanding amount, all fees so incurred will be borne by the signatory, including collection commission and other fees levied in terms of the Debt Collectors Act (114 of 1998).**

Termination Policies

We reserve the right to terminate services for the following reasons (but not limited to):

- Failure to pay
- Routinely late picking up your child
- Failure to complete the required forms
- Lack of parental cooperation
- Failure of child to adjust to the school after a reasonable amount of time
- Physical or verbal abuse of any person or property
- Our inability to meet the child's needs
- Lack of compliance with handbook regulations
- Serious illness of child
- Failure to comply with our illness policy and keeping sick children at home

Re-enrolment

Invitations to continue at Teddy Bears Montessori Preschool are normally automatic but are not guaranteed. Decisions are made by the Principal and Academic Staff, based on an annual review of each child's academic progress, social and emotional development, any special needs (if applicable), along with the attitudes and values expressed by the child and parents.

As always, our goal is to help each child and family find the perfect match between the child, home, and school.

Full compliance with the School's Tuition and Enrolment Agreement is required.

No child may re-enroll if there is an outstanding balance remaining on his/her account.

A re-enrolment registration fee is required and will be added to your December invoice.

Termly equipment/stationery fee: (applicable from 2026)

All parents are expected to pay a term fee per child every term for equipment and stationery by the first week of each term.

Please see Enrolment Contract.

Termly communal toiletries:

All parents are expected to pay a term fee per child every term for toiletries by the first week of each term.

This list is available on the Enrolment Contract and is subject to change.

Above Stationary and Toiletry fee's are subject to change.

Language Policy

1. Preamble

The Teddy Bears Montessori Language Policy was developed in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996, the South African Schools Act, Act 84 of 1996, the National Education Policy Act, Act 27 of 1996, applicable provincial legislation on school education, judgements of the South African courts, the International Convention on the Rights of the Child, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of Children, the Norms and Standards for Language Policy in Public Schools; GN 1701 and as corrected by GN 665, and the guidelines of the Pan South African Language Board.

2. Factors considered

In the drafting of this Policy, the following factors have been considered:

- The interests of the learners
- The interests of the school community
- The interest of the community in which the school is located

- 2.1) There are 12 languages granted official status in the Constitution.
- 2.2) The constitution provides for the right of all students to receive education at the public education facilities in the official language of their choice.
- 2.3) Teddy Bears Montessori is an Independent School, which has the responsibility to “meet all learning outcomes and assessment standards prescribed” by the Department of Basic Education’s national curriculum standards (Rights and Responsibilities of Independent Schools, Department of Basic Education, 2008).
- 2.4) Teddy Bears Montessori has the right to “choose their own curriculum and assessments” and “pursue a particular philosophy or methodology” (Rights and Responsibilities of Independent Schools, Department of Basic Education, 2008).
- 2.5) The Department of Basic Education has determined that “being multilingual should be a defining characteristic of being South African” and that “Societal and individual multilingualism are the global norm today” (Language in Education Policy, Department of Basic Education, 2007).
- 2.6) Finally, “a wide spectrum of opinions exists as to the locally viable approaches towards multilingual education” with a school’s responsibility to “maintain home language(s) while providing access to and the effective acquisition of additional languages” (Language in Education Policy, Department of Basic Education, 2007).

3. Languages as Subject

- 3.1) The Teddy Bears Montessori is an English school, meaning that the medium of language of instruction and behaviour management for all subjects, with the exception of additional languages taught, shall be English.

4. Languages as a Social and Cultural Media

- 4.1 The Teddy Bears Montessori students are free to speak to their peers in the language in which they are most comfortable with while on the playground, in common spaces or in most social interactions.
- 4.2 The Teddy Bears Montessori students are to speak English with their peers while working collaboratively in groups in the classroom.
- 4.3 Acknowledging that language plays a significant role in cultural identity, Teddy Bears Montessori parents/guardians are encouraged to continue speaking with their child in their home language, to instill cultural values and practices related to home language, and to support their child in expressing these cultural values and practices so that they can be shared with peers at school. We value diversity and the expression of diverse cultures at our School events, when we celebrate public holidays at school, and through our themed units of study, as well.

5. Languages as Media of communication

- 5.1 Where necessary due to the composition of the school community, all weekly newsletters, instructions and announcements, and other policies sent home will be in English.
- 5.2 Vendors and partners will provide communication about their products and service in English, unless otherwise requested directly to the vendor, partner, or provider directly.

6. Rules

- 6.1 Discriminatory behaviour on the basis of language, intentional or otherwise, will not be tolerated at the School.
- 6.2 This applies when on the School grounds at any time, but also at other School related events, and also in instances where the Student can reasonably be recognized as a Student of the School.
- 6.3 Breaches of this Policy will be dealt with under the Code of Conduct.

POPIA Policy

(Protection of Personal Information Act)

At TBM we strive to ensure safety of all information entrusted to us by parents/guardians and have taken the steps to be fully POPI compliant.

All forms of digital information are stored on a locally based server and our School Management System (ClassDojo/ KidsCloud, which are fully POPI compliant) with access only being granted to the relevant staff members. All physical enrollment forms and documents are stored on the premises in a locked cabinet, only relevant staff members have been granted access. We are required by legislation to share selected information with the relevant Government Departments. TBM reserves the right to share relevant information with our Attorneys in the case of Handovers. All information gathered by the Teddy Bears Montessori will remain strictly confidential at all times and will only be shared as mentioned in this policy.

All parents/guardians added to our WhatsApp group/ClassDojo are required to adhere to the POPIA at all times. No parents/guardians are allowed to use, share or save any contact numbers etc, without permission from the relevant individuals. Please contact the office.

As a legal requirement, documents, consents and acknowledgements will only be kept on file for as long as they are deemed needed as such once a child graduates or leaves the school, TBM will destroy all personal information within 2 weeks. A register generalizing the information being destroyed will be kept in line with the POPIA requirements.

Should you require a more information on our POPIA Policy, please contact the administrator on admin@teddybearsmontessori.co.za.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS POLICY

Parents are requested to adhere to our to health and wellness policy, failure to do so could result in termination of services.

Teddy Bears Montessori is a “well child care facility”. At no time do we provide sick child care.

The following illness policies will be strictly enforced, for the health, wellbeing and safety of all concerned.

Whenever your child is ill and won't be coming to school, please call or email the office to let us know that he/she will be absent, so we don't worry. All parents are expected to contact the office immediately to inform us of any contagious illness that their child has been diagnosed with.

Under no circumstances may a parent bring a sick child to school, if the child shows any signs of illness or is unable to participate in the normal routine and regular program then he/she will be sent home as the child is too sick to be at school.

Sick children will expose all children and staff members who they come in contact with. Sick children need care from their parents or nannies in the comfort of their own homes. If other children become ill due to exposure to your sick child, either because he/she was returned to school before full recovery or because he/she was not picked up promptly upon notice of becoming ill, other parents will become unnecessarily inconvenienced. Because this is disruptive to other children and their families, your cooperation on this issue is extremely important. The School reserves the right to terminate enrolment of children whose parents do not comply with our health and wellness policy and continuously bring sick children to school.

Every effort is taken to reduce the spread of illness by encouraging frequent hand washing and sanitizing.

All adults and children entering our premises are required to sanitize their hands.

Children will be visually screened when they arrive in the morning. The school reserves the right to refuse admission to any child which we feel is too sick to be at school. In the event a child becomes ill and needs to be picked up, the parent(s) will be called and are expected to come pick the child up within one hour (60 minutes). If the parent(s) cannot be reached, or have not arrived within an hour, the emergency contact person will be called and asked to come pick the child up.

For the benefit of other children in our care, a sick child will not be permitted to return to care for 24 hours after condition has returned to normal. The child may return 24- 48 hours (depending upon the illness) however only after 72 hours after they have received the first dose of an antibiotic. If you aren't sure about whether or not to bring your child to school, please call our office to discuss it. Allergy related symptoms, and non-communicable illnesses do not require exclusion if you have a note from your doctor.

Symptoms requiring removal of child from School:

- Fever: Fever is defined as having a temperature of 37,5° or higher (a child needs to be fever free for a minimum of 24 hours before returning to School, that means the child is fever free without the aid of Panado, or any other fever reducing substance.)
- Fever AND sore throat, rash, vomiting, diarrhea, earache, irritability, or confusion.
- Diarrhea: runny, watery, bloody stools, or 2 or more loose stools within last 4 hours.
- Vomiting: 2 or more times in a 24 hour period. Note: please do not bring your child if they have vomited in the night.
- Breathing trouble, sore throat, swollen glands, loss of voice, hacking or continuous coughing.
- Runny nose (other than clear), draining eyes or ears.
- Frequent scratching of body or scalp, lice, rash, or any other spots that resemble childhood diseases, including ringworm.
- Child is irritable, continuously crying, or requires more attention than we can provide without neglecting the health, safety or well-being of the other children in our care.

Children with infectious diseases, such as chicken pox, strep throat etc, must stay out of school until the contagious stage has passed. We will strictly adhere to the National Health Act 61 of 2003 (See Annexure 1 table under the National Health Act 61 of 2003 Regulations Relating to Communicable Diseases and the Notification of Notifiable Medical Conditions for details).

Medical Clearance Certificates are required for all illnesses listed in this Act.

For the sake of the other children's health, it is vital that you let the office know your child's doctor's diagnosis as soon as possible.

In the case of a common cold, the child should remain at home as long as fever is present, or if there is a sore throat, eye infection, or severe nasal excretions.

Children with symptoms of vomiting, diarrhoea, or undiagnosed skin rash should remain at home.

Any child who arrives at school with excessive discharge from eyes and/or nose, or any child who has a fever, has been vomiting or had diarrhoea within the previous 24 hours, should not be at school and will be sent home immediately. Children who develop these symptoms after arriving at school will be isolated and parents contacted to arrange for them to be collected as soon as possible.

If your child has been given medication before school, please inform the teacher so that we can be aware in case side effects develop.

Remember: Because colds, flu, and other childhood illnesses spread from child to child with alarming speed, please do not send your child to school if he has a fever, nausea, or any other symptoms of illness.

Weather permitting, children will go outside to play every day. If you feel that your child may be too sick to go out to play, he is probably too ill to be at school. Equally if your child is too sick to participate in the full school day's activities, he/she is probably also too ill to be at school.

IMMUNIZATION

Copies of immunization records must be supplied upon enrolment. Please ensure to provide us with an updated copy of immunization records even after enrolment. Should you have exercised your parental right not to immunize your child, please provide us with a letter stating this for our files. This only applies to the voluntary immunizations and not those regarded as compulsory by the Department of Health.

Medication

Except under extraordinary situations, we will not administer medication at school.

Please do not send in any medication with your child, including panado, other over-the counter drugs or homeopathic medication.

Antibiotics and other medications should be scheduled so that doses are due during hours when the child is at home. When children are so ill as to require frequent medication, they shouldn't be at school.

Administration of Medication Policy

When, in the opinion of your child's medical practitioner, it is necessary that medication be administered during school hours, a representative of the school will give it to your child in accordance with the following procedures:

- Any medication brought to school must be given to your child's teacher, please do not leave medication in your child's bag or locker.
- Our staff members are prohibited from providing or administering any medication, including panado, to any child except as authorized by you as parent or guardian and the child's medical practitioner, in accordance with the following procedures:

1. Prescription Medications:

- a. Parents are to fill in and sign the medicine book, no medication will be administered without the parents written instruction in the medicine book
- b. If a medication is to be administered on an on-going basis, the Authorization to Administer Medication should indicate the duration of treatment.
- c. In cases involving long-term medication for chronic conditions, a new authorization form must be filed with the school each year in January. Any changes in medication during the school year must be accompanied by a new medication form.
- d. We can only administer oral medications.
- e. This policy applies to prescription and over-the-counter medications. A new authorization form must be completed for each episode of illness and each new medication.
- f. As parent (guardian), you are responsible for administering the first day's dosage of any new medication at home. This is of utmost importance, as allergic and even life threatening reactions to medication may occur.
- g. As parent (guardian), you are responsible for notifying the school in person or by telephone on the first morning a new medication is being brought in with the completed authorization form.
- h. Whenever possible, medication schedules should be arranged to cause minimal interruption in the child's school day.
- i. We will strictly adhere to this policy.

2. Over-the-Counter Medication:

Absolutely no medications, including aspirin, Panado, cough remedies, or other over-the counter medications will be given or allowed to be taken at school unless authorization is submitted in accordance with the above policy.

**National Health Act 61 of 2003 Regulations Relating to Communicable Diseases
and the Notification of Notifiable Medical Conditions**

Communicable disease	Patient may return to teaching institution	Contact may return to teaching institution
Acquired immuno deficiency syndrome (AIDS)	On submission of a medical certificate	Immediately.
Chicken pox	14 days after appearance of rash or on submission of a medical certificate	Immediately.
Cholera	On submission of a medical certificate	According to quarantine measures.
Diphtheria	On submission of a medical certificate and after two nose and two throat swabs, at appropriate intervals, prove negative	<i>Non-immune contacts:</i> Eight days after removal from source of infection. <i>Immune contacts:</i> Immediately.
Epidemic typhus	On submission of a medical certificate	Immediately.
German measles (rubella)	Seven days after appearance of rash	Immediately.
Haemorrhagic fever diseases of Africa	On submission of a medical certificate	According to quarantine measures.
Haemorrhagic virus conjunctivitis	Seven days after beginning of symptoms	Immediately.
Hepatitis A	Seven days after appearance of jaundice or on submission of a medical certificate	Immediately.
Leprosy	On submission of a medical certificate	Immediately.

Louse infestation	After complete cleansing and delousing and removal of nits on head, body and clothing	Immediately. but must be kept under surveillance.
Measles	Seven days after appearance of rash	Immediately.
Meningococemia	On submission of a medical certificate	Immediately, provided the necessary prophylactic medicine is taken.
Mumps	Nine days after appearance of swelling	Immediately.
Plague	On submission of a medical certificate	According to quarantine measures.
Poliomyelitis	On submission of a medical certificate	Immediately.
Scabies	After proper treatment	Immediately.
Tuberculosis of the lungs	On submission of a medical certificate	Immediately.
Typhoid fever	On submission of a medical certificate. After three negative stool and urine tests have been done at appropriate intervals (at least 48 hours) and not less than 72 hours after cessation of antibiotic therapy	Immediately.
Whooping cough	21 days after beginning of paroxysms or on submission of a medical certificate	Immediately.

HIV/AIDS POLICY

The Teddy Bears Montessori acknowledges the rapid spread of HIV/AIDS in South Africa and the possible implications it has for our school. Measures to ensure a safe school are of fundamental concern to the school and form a core aspect of this policy.

Non-discrimination:

In terms of the fundamental human rights as contained in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, as well as in the National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996, no learner or staff member with HIV/AIDS may be unfairly discriminated against either directly or indirectly.

Disclosure:

1. No one is compelled to disclose their HIV/AIDS status to the school. However, in order to act in the best interest of all members of Teddy Bears Montessori community, voluntary disclosure by any member of the school, staff or learner, with HIV/AIDS is encouraged. This disclosure will be in the interest of the person with HIV/AIDS as the school may then keep them aware of any infectious/contagious viruses etc going around the school that may pose a health risk.
2. The school will strive towards ensuring confidentiality of this information and a nondiscriminatory environment.
3. Parents/guardians of a learner with HIV/AIDS are advised to obtain a medical opinion to assess whether the learner, owing to his/her condition, poses a medically recognized health risk to others.

Application of Universal Precautions:

The Teddy Bears Montessori will apply Universal Precautions, as detailed in The National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996, to all situations occurring at the school. The basis for the consistent application of Universal Precautions lies in the assumption that in all situations, all persons are treated as potentially infected with HIV/AIDS, and other blood-borne pathogens, and all bodily fluids are treated as such.

Accordingly:

All blood will be handled with extreme caution. Disposable latex gloves are to be used in handling all emergencies where blood is present. New gloves will be used for each case. Skin exposed accidentally to blood will be washed immediately with running water and antiseptics.

All bleeding wounds, sores, grazes and the like will be cleaned immediately with running water and antiseptics. All open wounds, sores, breaks in the skin, grazes and open lesions must at all times be covered completely and securely with a non-porous or waterproof dressing or plaster so that there is no risk of exposure to blood.

Learners will be taught that all open sores, wounds and grazes must be kept covered completely with waterproof dressings. They will be instructed never to touch the blood, open wounds, sores or grazes of others, nor to handle emergencies such as nosebleeds, cuts or scrapes of their friends. They will be taught to call for assistance from a staff member immediately.

Discipline Policy:

Discipline of Children

Our approach to discipline is one that aims to encourage self-discipline through interaction with the prepared environment and one another. If a child is hurting others, preventing others from fulfilling their needs, and/or disrupting the class, the directress implements the following procedures:

1. For minor disruptions, the directress will guide the child to an activity that will help him/her settle or redirect the child to their work. Should this fail, the child will have timeout to consider what they need to change in order to be a part of the classroom community.
2. Hurting others, rudeness or causing damage to anything within the environment is not acceptable behaviour and cannot be allowed. The child will be removed from the problem situation and asked to sit quietly and think about his/her actions. The child may remain within the classroom, if this is deemed appropriate by the directress. After a short period of time, the directress and the child will discuss what happened and (if applicable) the child will apologize to anyone who has been hurt. The child then rejoins normal activities.
3. If a child is persistently disruptive and displays unhappy, uncooperative behaviour, the directress will consult the Principal prior to contacting the parents to discuss possible causes and solutions. Likewise, we ask parents to contact the school should they notice a change in behaviour.
4. If a child is being unruly and posing a threat to the safety, development and well being of the other children, the parents will be contacted and asked to fetch their child from school immediately. This is a rare occurrence and only implemented once all other attempts at resolving the situation have been tried. Follow up meetings with the parents will then be held.
5. Under no circumstances will any member of staff at the School administer corporal punishment.

Our approach to discipline is not intended to be “punishment” but it is aimed at helping the child, in a gentle but firm way, to realize the social limits of his/her community and develop an awareness of consistent and natural consequences.

We feel that in a supportive environment, where the child’s limits are clearly and consistently defined (without being restrictive), self-discipline can be developed, as Maria Montessori advocated. The most important aspect of Montessori’s approach is realizing that a child cannot truly exercise freedom unless he/she knows the limits of that freedom.... Liberty with limits is the key idea.

1. Discipline in the Montessori classroom is always positive.
2. Discipline is not the same as punishment and should not be seen as such by learners or parents.
3. Negative behaviour should, as far as possible, be identified before it becomes a problem so that the activities of the learner can be steered into a more positive direction.
4. Control the environment and not the learner.
5. Honesty should always be rewarded and learners should be given the language for conflict resolution as early as possible and be encouraged to use it to solve interpersonal problems.
6. Staff should endeavor to speak quietly at all times, refrain from any harsh or negative comments and support the environmental disciplines as structured by Teddy Bears Montessori.
7. No abuse of any kind - emotional, physical or sexual will ever be tolerated and will be cause for instant dismissal and possible legal action.

8. Learners and their parents must always be treated with warmth and respect. Corporal punishment, the threat of corporal punishment, sarcasm, intimidation, humiliation, screaming, shouting, or any form of physical man handling such as pulling, pushing or dragging by any body parts what so ever may NEVER be used at the Teddy Bears Montessori and are dismissible offences. Any such action will under no circumstances be tolerated.
9. Educators should report the existence of any disciplinary problems promptly to the Head of School and arrange a meeting to discuss the matter. Parental involvement is only seen as a last resort.
10. Familiarize yourselves with the peace curriculum.
11. The Peace table rules must be applied and taught to the children, use a peace maker rule every day during group time.
12. Refrain from abusing the thinking chair, rather refer to an observation chair
13. The observation chair is to help the children to observe and think about how they should be behaving, do not just place a child in the observation chair and leave them there, assist the child to observe and in a positive manner learn.
14. Under no circumstances is the use of an observation chair to be abused, do not leave a child there for prolonged periods.
15. Children should not be sent to the observation chair if they are fighting or have hurt another, in these instances the peace table is to be used.
16. Make sure that you understand, teach and implement the peace table rules.
17. **Do not** simply send children to the office as a form of punishment, take the time to sit with the child whether sitting in an observation chair or the peace table and assist the child to observe, think about the situation and learn from it, if the child forgets then remind the child.
18. **We do not** scream, shout or threaten, we do not threaten to take children to the office or another classroom for bad behaviour.
19. NEVER argue with a child, if a child wishes to argue, cut the conversation short with, "I'll be happy to talk about this when we've both calmed down. Please ask me to carry on talking to you when you are ready to talk calmly to me.
20. Always complete the discipline cycle with a smile or hug of forgiveness. Use that time to make sure the child understands why your actions were necessary, and to ask the child what he can do next time to avoid an unpleasant situation.
21. If you feel it is necessary to talk to the child's parents about it, first consult the Principal about it.
22. Second and third reminders about the same misbehavior, allow time for the child to calm down. Direct the child to sit and observe for a minute per year of age. Once the child has calmed down talk to the child. Often the child will have a reasonable consequence in mind. Be ready with a logical consequence in case the child is not ready. Logical consequences include cleaning up after a mess has been made; losing play time if out of control on the playground; taking care of a friend who has been hurt by his or her carelessness (including an apology); losing the privilege of using a piece of equipment because of careless use; being isolated if behaving rudely; and asking to apologize.
23. If after time out and logical consequences have been used, a child continues to misbehave in the same way, a team approach should be discussed with the principal, staff and only if agreed necessary by the principal will the parents be involved.

*“The greatest obstacle faced by the child is not his own handicaps
but our adult attitude towards him”*

Child Abuse Policy:

1. Preamble

This policy is based on the Gauteng DBE Policy available online www.dbe.gov.za.

The procedures outlined in this policy have a strong legal foundation and are therefore in keeping with all relevant legislation regarding children, childcare and education.

2. Definitions

In this policy document, unless the context indicates otherwise, the following definitions apply:

Alleged Offender: the individual against whom a complaint has been laid. This could be but is not limited to a member of staff, a parent or a pupil.

Child Abuse: any action or inaction which is detrimental to the physical, emotional and developmental well-being of the child. It includes (but is not limited to) neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse, sexual harassment and sexual abuse.

Complainant: a pupil or person / guardian / staff member on behalf of a pupil, who has lodged a complaint of child abuse, stalking, intimidation or the breach of an interim or final protection order granted in terms of the Domestic Violence Act, no. 116 of 1998.

Documentation: includes the following:

- Notes or letters from parents
- Medical certificates from medical practitioners
- Notes / letters from the pupil
- Notes / drawings made by the observing employee or educator of the physical injuries or emotional changes and behaviour of the pupil
- Any other form of information or evidence that could be used to verify the complaint.

Emotional Abuse: a pattern of degrading or humiliating conduct towards a pupil which may include:

- Repeated insults, ridicule or name-calling
- Repeated threats to cause emotional pain
- Repeated exhibition of obsessive possessiveness or jealousy which is such as to constitute a serious invasion of a complainant's privacy, liberty, integrity and/or security.

Intimidation: uttering or conveying a verbal or non-verbal threat, or causing a complainant to receive a threat, which induces fear. It includes:

- Threats to cause emotional pain
- exhibition of obsessive possessiveness or jealousy which is such as to constitute a serious invasion of a complainant's privacy, liberty, integrity and/or security

Neglect: any act or omission by a parent or any other person entrusted to care for a pupil, which results in impaired physical functioning, physical development, injury or harm to the pupil.

Parent: the biological, adoptive, foster, step-parent, the guardian or person legally entitled to custody of a pupil, including the pupils primary caregiver (who may legally be deemed not to be the learner's parent or guardian).

Physical Abuse: any act or threatened act of physical violence which may cause injury or even death to a pupil.

SAPS: South African Police Services

Sexual Abuse: means any unlawful physical act of a sexual nature and includes indecent assault, sexual harassment, attempted rape and rape.

Sexual Harassment: is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature. The unwanted nature of sexual harassment distinguishes it from behaviour that is welcome and mutual. Sexual attention becomes sexual harassment if:

- the behaviour is persisted in, although a single incident of harassment can constitute sexual harassment
- the recipient has made it clear that the behaviour is considered offensive
- the perpetrator should have known that the behaviour is regarded as unacceptable.

Sexual harassment may include unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct, and is not limited to the examples listed below:

- a) **Physical conduct** of a sexual nature includes all unwanted physical contact, ranging from touching to sexual assault and rape.
- b) **Verbal forms of sexual harassment** include:
 - unwelcome innuendoes, suggestions, comments, advances and phone calls of a sexual nature
 - sex-related jokes and insults
 - unwelcome comments about a person's body made in a person's presence and directed towards that person
 - unwelcome and inappropriate enquiries about a person's sex life
 - unwelcome whistling or suggestive sounds directed at a person or group of persons.
- c) **Non-verbal forms of sexual harassment** include:
 - unwelcome gestures and indecent exposure
 - the unwelcome display of sexually explicit objects or publications (pictures and printed text)
 - the sending of letters, faxes or electronic mail containing remarks with sexual connotations.
- d) **Quid pro quo sexual harassment (Sexual Blackmail)**

occurs when a parent, member of staff or another pupil influences or attempts to influence a pupil's academic results, leadership position, standing at the school, sporting, cultural, achievements or involvements in exchange for sexual favors.
- e) **Stalking** means repeatedly following, pursuing, calling or accosting the complainant / pupil.

3. Aims of this policy

The aim of this policy is to put measures and procedures in place to respect and protect the rights of our pupils, particularly their rights to safety, personal security, bodily integrity, equal treatment and freedom from discrimination. Teddy Bears Montessori intends to create an environment where pupils can maximize their opportunity to learn, free from abuse.

The main thrust of this policy document is to manage incidents involving the abuse of Teddy Bears Montessori's pupils. All procedures provided in this document, therefore, have a clear educational focus (prevention, timely intervention, and support).

4. Accountability and responsibility

The Head of School / Principal is ultimately accountable for implementing, managing and sustaining the policy and procedures described in this document. The Principal may be assisted in the process by the Head Directress/ School Principal/School Counsellors where necessary.

All staff members are legally bound to report all matters of suspected child abuse as outlined in this Policy.

5. Identification of suspected child abuse

There are various reasons why children do not discuss child abuse. It is therefore the duty of the teacher to be mindful of the symptoms and characteristics of child abuse and to be able to identify them.

The typical symptoms and characteristics of physical abuse, neglect, abuse, emotional abuse and rape trauma syndrome are provided in appendix B to help you identify these different forms of child abuse.

The following guidelines should be followed by staff members who suspect that a pupil has been/ is being abused:

- Start gathering information as soon as you suspect child abuse. Continue to do so consistently, and document all information gathered. Treat all this information as confidential.
- Discuss your suspicions and the information that you have gathered with the Head of School or/and Head Directress (unless she or he is possibly implicated)
- Ensure confidentiality by opening a separate file for the particular pupil. This file must be kept in the office.
- Remain objective at all times and do not allow personal matters, feelings or pre-conceptions to cloud your judgment.
- Any information to do with child abuse is confidential and must be handled with great discretion.
- The reporting and investigation of child abuse must be done in such a way that the safety of the pupil is ensured.
- Justice must not be jeopardized, but at the same time the support needed by the learner and her or his family must not be neglected.

Section 15 of the Child Care Amendment Act 96 of 1996 states that a physician, nurse, social worker, or educator must report child abuse or the suspicion of child abuse. Educators are legally protected if their actions are well-intentioned. Failure to report child abuse or the suspicion thereof will be prosecuted.

6. Procedure to follow in cases of suspected child

abuse Step 1: Take note of the following:

- Child's name, address and contact details
- Parents/guardians names and contact details
- Reasons for concern, any documents of indicators and any relevant statements made by the child.

Step 2: Report the incident of suspected child abuse to the Head of School. Follow all protocols as laid out by Teddy Bears Montessori's policies. The reporting of abuse and neglect is mandated by law and this law supersedes school policy.

No investigation should be carried out by the school personnel at any stage.

Step 3: The Head of School will contact a Social worker from SAVF or DSD. The Social Worker will discuss the matter with the Head of school who will be responsible for reporting the alleged incident to the Child Protection Officer of SAPS and to Social Development.

The following should be noted:

- The name of the person making the call
- the name of the intake worker receiving the call
- the date and time of the call
- the action proposed by the person to whom the abuse has been reported

Step 4: The Social worker (and the police in some cases) will interview the child as soon as possible.

Step 5:

- A Social Worker and/or the Police will interview the alleged abuser and sometimes family members as well.
- A decision concerning the child's safety will be made by the Social Worker at this time.
- If response up is slow and particularly if the child remains at risk, the referring person should follow up until the child is safe.

Step 6:

At the end of the investigation the school personnel, the family or the parents and the Social Worker should meet to discuss the steps the school could take to assist the child.

7. Managing an abused pupil

Since educators spend a great deal of time with abused children who are their learners, it is important that they know how to manage them in the classroom.

- Try to give them extra attention but not so obviously that other learners feel that the child is being favoured.
- Adopt a child-centred approach and assure them that you are available should they need to discuss a problem.
- Communicate in a sensitive way.
- Build a trusting relationship and positive self-esteem.
- Make opportunities for the abused child to draw and do creative activities, e.g. draw your family or a person. This will help them to express their inner feelings and act as a release.
- Initiate group activities e.g. play, or peer group counselling. Abused children often isolate themselves.
- Never tell the class what the child may have told you as they will lose their trust in you.
- Set aside some time in the afternoon for the child to come and talk to you if they wish to. It is not advisable to become too involved or to take the child to your home. Rather call the appropriate social worker.
- Follow up calling the relevant authorities or discussing the progress with the mother or primary caregiver.
- The abused child may be a restless sleeper who tosses and maybe has nightmares. As a result they are often tired and lethargic in class.
- Sometimes abused children lack concentration and their marks may deteriorate, especially after disclosure when the consequences of telling may heighten anxiety. The educator may need to gently re-focus the child

if day dreaming is noted and offer extra assistance to the child in order for performance to return to earlier levels.

- Be sensitive to the child's needs. Allow the class to have a quiet time, reading, listening to a story, etc.
- If the child's behaviour warrants checking, do so and do not ignore it because you feel sympathetic. Reprimand immediately and deal with the problem on a one-to-one basis later. Sometimes anxiety and trauma may prompt a child to test boundaries.

SEVEN RULES TO REMEMBER ABOUT SEXUAL ABUSE:

Rule 1: Your body belongs to you. You have the right not to be abused.

Rule 2: Sexual abuse is never your fault. Nothing a child does or doesn't do excuses an older person who uses a child for sexual pleasures.

Rule 3: Sexual abuse is harmful. The deepest hurt is the way the sexual abuse makes certain children feel about themselves.

Rule 4: Good people can do bad things. Abusers may be good people in other ways, but the abuse is very wrong and must be stopped.

Rule 5: Usually sexual abuse does not stop by itself. Tell an adult who will listen and do something about it.

Rule 6: Keep telling people you trust about sexual abuse until someone listens.

Rule 7: What happens to a sexual abuser is never your fault.

***'HAVE THE MIND OF A SCIENTIST,
THE LOVE OF A SAINT and
THE HEART OF A SERVANT'***

"The difference between ordinary and extraordinary is that little extra."

Quotes from a Spiritual Master who was nominated for two Nobel peace prizes: Dr Maria Montessori

"The greatest sign of success for a teacher; is to be able to say, "The children are now working as if I did not exist.""

- Maria Montessori.

"If help and salvation are to come, they can only come from the children, for the children are the makers of men."

- Maria Montessori.

"Establishing lasting peace is the work of education; all politics can do is keep us out of war."

- Maria Montessori.

"We cannot know the consequences of suppressing a child's spontaneity when he is just beginning to be active. We may even suffocate life itself. That humanity which is revealed in all its intellectual splendor during the sweet and tender age of childhood should be respected with a kind of religious veneration. It is like the sun which appears at dawn or a flower just beginning to bloom. Education cannot be effective unless it helps a child to open up himself to life"

- Maria Montessori.



**Teddy Bears Montessori School Constitution (Parent Handbook
2024/2025) Acknowledgement**

By signing below, I/we acknowledge that I/we have read, understood and agree to abide by the provisions set forth on every page contained herein the Teddy Bears Montessori Constitution:

Print Parent/Guardian 1 Full Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

And/or

Print Parent/Guardian 2 Full Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Return the below signed acknowledgement

By signing below, I/we acknowledge that I/we have read, understood and agree to abide by the provisions set forth on every page contained herein the Teddy Bears Montessori Constitution:

Print Parent/Guardian 1 Full Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

And/or

Print Parent/Guardian 2 Full Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____