

Ronald
KnoX

montessori

Guide to the School

Table of Contents

introduction

- Welcome from Head of School
- Non-discrimination Policy
- Mission Statement
- Philosophy
- History
- Accreditations & Affiliations
- Governance and Board
- Administration
- Programs Offered

admissions & finance

- Admissions Overview
- Enrollment/Family Entrance Fee
- Tuition
- Withdrawal

procedures

- Arrival & Dismissal
- Attendance
- Guidance & Discipline
- Building Access
- Abuse Reporting
- Unsafe Product Recall

daily operations

- Clothing
- Objects from Home
- Snack & Lunch
- Birthdays

communication

- Contacting the Directress
- Blogs
- Parent-Teacher Conferences
- Knox Notes
- Emergency Closings

health

- Health at RKMS
- Illness at School
- Contagious Diseases
- When to Stay Home
- Allergies
- Records & Forms
- Exemptions

parent involvement

- Involvement
- Education
- Volunteering
- Contributing

introduction

Welcome from the Head of School

At Ronald Knox, we value our students and their families, and work to create a nurturing, beneficial community for all. In this Handbook, you will find information about Ronald Knox Montessori, our school policies and procedures, health and safety procedures, and other details that pertain to the school. Please reference this document when you have any questions; as always, the administration is also available to address any concerns. We look forward to the positive academic and social experience your child or children will experience at RKMS!

Sincerely,

Blythe Silva
Head of School

Non-discrimination Policy

Ronald Knox Montessori School is committed to respecting all individuals. We believe that a diverse community benefits everyone, and we firmly support the principles of human dignity and equal opportunity.

RKMS does not discriminate against children or families on the basis of color, race, ancestry, or national origin; nor gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, or family structure; nor creed or religion; nor physical or learning differences or disabilities.

Mission Statement

“Inspiring our children to be leaders, innovators and stewards of our world.”

Ronald Knox Montessori School is committed to following the Montessori philosophy to create a nurturing, stimulating environment that promotes concentration, coordination, a sense of order, independence, grace and courtesy, and the life skills needed for each child to reach his or her full potential. Parents, faculty, and administrators form a community to foster a lifelong love of learning in our children and to promote respect for self, others, and the world around them.

Philosophy

In the Montessori classroom, there is a distinct atmosphere of cheerful order, bustling energy, and purposeful work. Children explore the environment of the classroom all while learning social graces, gaining confidence, mastering their fine and gross motor abilities, and building their intelligence.

Maria Montessori, M.D. (1870-1952) developed this method of education after she completed her medical training, becoming the first woman in Italy to receive a medical degree. Using the scientific method, she observed children and constructed a pedagogy to develop the whole child, physically, emotionally, socially, and intellectually.

In a Montessori classroom, you will observe:

mixed age groupings – In the Primary classroom, children ages 3-6 learn alongside each other. Older children help teach the younger children, gaining confidence in their knowledge and leadership skills. Younger children look up to the older children as role models, learning social skills through observation and setting academic goals. The varying levels of ability blend easily in the multiage classroom, creating an environment built on cooperation, not competition.

unobtrusive teacher – The teacher in a Montessori classroom directs the learning of the children. A teacher is not in the center of the classroom, controlling the outcome of the learning; rather, she is on the fringes, giving personalized individual or small group lessons according to each child's interest and ability.

student-directed learning – When not in lessons with the teacher, students choose their own work from the classroom shelves. They may choose a work in the Math, Language, Science, Sensorial, or Practical Life area. The works are devised so that children may use them independently, and repetition of the materials leads to mastery in the given subject.

problem solving skills – In the Montessori classroom, children work with their hands throughout the morning, and there are many opportunities for messes. Children in the classroom solve their own problems by sweeping up a mess or drying spilled water. They also practice social problem-solving skills when a conflict arises with a friend or classmate.

process over product – The Montessori classroom is product-driven rather than product-oriented. Children learn the skills needed to succeed in life, as opposed to filling out worksheets each day.

authentic for every child – Since each child is at a different place in their development, children in the Montessori classroom learn at their own pace and in their own style. The teacher observes each child and provides materials and lessons specific to their skill-level and interests. Montessori students build confidence and independence, learn self-discipline, and above all, develop a life-long love of learning.

Therefore, the goals at Ronald Knox Montessori School are to:

- Stimulate the child's innate love of learning
- Provide a nurturing, cooperative, and social learning environment
- Provide development opportunities for the holistic education of the child
- Cultivate respect for self, others, the environment, and all life

The Eight Principles of Montessori Education

"If schooling were evidence based, I think all schools would look a lot more like Montessori schools."
Angeline Stoll Lillard

1. Movement & Thinking

In young children, thinking and moving is the same process. Children need to move freely through their environment and feel comfortable taking risks by exploring materials and ideas.

2. Choice

Even the youngest children have choice and control in Montessori classrooms.

3. Interest

The best learning occurs in areas of interest provided by both the child and the appeal of the materials.

4. Motivation

In both education and business, research shows that extrinsic rewards decrease motivation and learning. Guiding children to develop the resources for self-motivation and intrinsic reward is a focus of the Montessori teacher.

5. Peer Teaching

The ability to acquire and share knowledge with peers empowers students. Demonstrating knowledge of material and concepts with younger peers reinforces mastery.

6. Whole Learning

Learning is always in a context that children can understand. Subjects are connected to the students as well as the world outside our community or country.

7. Earned Responsibility

Teachers set clear limits but allow freedom within boundaries. Teachers also respond sensitively to children's needs while maintaining high expectations.

8. Prepared Environment

Both the physical layout of the classroom and the use of the materials provide the children with the order in their environment necessary for learning and development.

Adapted from Montessori: The Science Behind the Genius by Angeline Stoll Lillard, Oxford University Press, 2005.

History

In 1963, a group of parents identified the need for a Montessori program on the North Shore. They founded Ronald Knox Montessori School, which was at the time the third Montessori school in Illinois. The school was named after Ronald Knox, an English author and biblical scholar (1888-1957). Considered ahead of his time, he was regarded as a man of brilliant intellect and religious tolerance. He also possessed a wonderful sense of humor and a sincere interest in the development and education of young children.

When RKMS first opened its doors at Mallinckrodt College in 1963, only ten children were enrolled. By 1967 the enrollment had increased to 80 and the Board of Directors decided to build permanent quarters for the school. The Sisters of Christian Charity generously leased a half-acre of property for the new school; the Children's House was built in the spring of 1967. The school's relationship with the Sisters of Christian Charity is a long and important one, and RKMS owes a great deal to the generosity and kindness shown by the Sisters. (Ronald Knox Montessori School has no religious affiliation).

The original Children's House housed only the Primary program. The Parent-Child and Toddler classrooms were conducted in the Sacred Heart Convent, two blocks west of the school building. For many years, RKMS dreamed of housing all programs under one roof, and in 2007 broke ground for a new school building on the same property. In September 2008, the new school opened its doors to welcome students to the Primary, Toddler, and Parent-Child programs. The beautiful building is a testament to the legacy and longevity of RKMS on the North Shore, and will continue to greet children for many more decades.

Accreditations & Affiliations

- RKMS has been accredited by the American Montessori Society (AMS) since 1999.
- RKMS is affiliated with the Association of Illinois Montessori Schools (AIMS).
- The Toddler Program is licensed by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS).
- RKMS is a standing member of Independent School Management (ISM).
- RKMS is a member of the Illinois Coalition of Nonpublic Schools (ICNS).

Additionally, teachers maintain personal memberships in a number of organizations; most notably, AMS. Teachers are also required to complete a minimum of 30 hours per year of professional development, and assistants are required to complete a minimum of 15 hours per year of professional development. All faculty and staff attend CPR/First Aid and Allergy Response Training annually

Governance & Board

RKMS is an Illinois not-for-profit corporation governed by a volunteer Board of Directors. The Board is made up of current RKMS parents and/or alumni parents; its role is to assure that the mission of the school is fulfilled. The Head of School attends all Board meetings as a non-voting member.

Per RKMS Bylaws, Article V, Section 1.

The Board of Directors shall oversee the functions of the following Standing Committees:

- Executive Committee: Comprised of the Officers of the Corporation (President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary)
- Finance Committee: Executes the oversight of the school’s fiduciary functions, including budget development
- Development Committee: Executes and oversees all major fund raising activities, including; the annual fund, capital campaigns, grants and endowments.
- Community Engagement Committee: Plans and executes the major social events during the year for the parent community, which are designed to build a strong parent community and increase public awareness of the school
- Trustee Committee: Executes the recruitment, orientation, and training of Director-Members and the succession planning of the Officers of the Corporation
- Marketing Committee: Assists with the management of the Ronald Knox Montessori brand, developing and implementing marketing communications vehicles whether they are broadcast, online or print, and assisting faculty and staff in the promotion of new and ongoing school events.
- Alumni Committee: Creates programs and events to engage families and children after graduating from Ronald Knox to solidify a “culture of community” as it is one of the cornerstones of the school.
- COVID-19 Committee: Monitors and provides recommendations to the Head of School to facilitate the school’s response to COVID-19 concerns by referring and adhering to guidance provided by the appropriate governmental and public health authorities.

Administration

Administration Contact Information

Blythe Silva	Head of School	blythe_silva@ronaldknox.org	(847) 256-2922, ext 21
Anita McGing	Admissions Director	anita_mcging@ronaldknox.org	(847) 256-2922, ext 19
Cathy Litrofsky	Office Manager	office_manager@ronaldknox.org	(847) 256-2922, ext 10
Eleanor Lipinski	Business Manager	eleanor_lipinski@ronaldknox.org	(847) 256-2922, ext 20

For questions about your child or classroom concerns, please contact your child’s teacher via phone or email.

Programs

parent-child program

The Parent-Child Program strives to cultivate effective parenting skills in parents while providing the children with opportunities to explore activities designed to promote independence, coordination, problem-solving, and language development. The Montessori prepared environment enables the children to see themselves as doers, thus building their self-esteem and enhancing their self-confidence.

toddler program

The Toddler Program is designed to meet the needs of the young child. Children in the Toddler program gain independence and confidence as they learn how to take care of themselves and their environment. The classroom encourages large and small motor development, supports language skills, and engages children in social and emotional growth. Children learn pre-math and language skills such as sounds, counting, and sequencing. Along with preliminary academics, toddler children also practice daily life skills such as preparing their own snack, using the toilet, and navigating peer relationships outside of family members.

half day primary program

The Half Day Primary Program is the foundation of our 3-6 year old programming. Students in the program stay in the same classroom for all three years, developing a stable and secure relationship with their Directress (teacher). Language, Math, Science, and Geography are the academic areas of the classroom that children work in each day. Additionally, children form and shape their social-emotional skills as they practice working in small groups, learn how to problem-solve with their peers, and lend a hand when others need help.

Our classrooms contain an abundance of concrete, manipulative materials maintained in an orderly, clean, and attractive manner. These materials, which reflect reality and nature, enable the child to organize his perceptions of the world. All materials are structured, organized, and presented to enable independent activity. They allow freedom of choice and movement based on each child's interest, limited only by the collective well-being and freedom of others.

full day primary program

Available for 1st and 2nd year students in the Primary program.

These children spend the morning portion of their day in their assigned classroom, as usual. At 11:30am (dismissal time for some Half Day children), the Full Day Primary children meet for lunch. The Lunch Program (bag lunch from home) is included for Full Day children. A catered boxed lunch is available for an additional fee.

At 12:30pm, the 1st year children head to the nap room, while the 2nd year children spend some quiet time in the classroom while they listen to a story. Afterwards, the children may explore and work in the classroom environment as they do in the morning. The afternoon may also include cooperative small group activities. Once a week, the children will receive a Spanish enrichment lesson.

full day kindergarten program

Available for 3rd year students in the Primary program.

The Full Day Kindergarten program takes place in the afternoon. The children enjoy lunch time together and spend some time outdoors before beginning their afternoon work time.

The Kindergarten program offers many unique opportunities for these older children. For example, they may expand on their work from their morning session, or choose a topic of interest to them, research it, and reinforce what they learned through various activities and crafts. In-depth areas of study may include the human body, the solar system, the timeline of natural history, or a continent of interest.

Toward the end of the school year, the children participate in an International Day presentation for their parents. They choose a country from around the world, do research, make a poster, bring in items relating to their country they have chosen and talk about what they have learned. Each child is responsible for providing a snack from their assigned country. It is a one of the ways for these children to shine as kindergartners.

Full Day Kindergarten is a valuable experience for these children. They connect as a peer group, utilize their Grace & Courtesy skills and continue their growth in independence, self-confidence and self-esteem. The expectations and responsibilities are greater, but most 3rd year children are well-prepared for the challenges of this program. These class leaders are given a chance to shine on their own as the oldest and most experienced children in the school. This program is a wonderful introduction to the next chapter in their educational journeys.

early bird program

Available to children enrolled in the Toddler program and to children enrolled in the Primary program.

Monday through Friday Enrollment for specific day(s) of the week-- attending the same day(s) every week-- is required for the entire school year, or all 5 days

Times	<u>Toddlers</u>	7:45am until 8:15am
	<u>Primary</u>	7:45am until 8:30am

This program is designed to accommodate working parents by allowing them to drop off their children before school hours. Early Bird offers a nice opportunity for children from various classes and age ranges to connect, interact and socialize.

The children begin their morning on the playground, weather permitting, and are free to run, use the playground equipment or even grab a shovel and a bucket and dig. In inclement weather, the children meet in the Gross Motor Room where stations are set up with various activities, and children can work alone or together.

The lessons of Grace & Courtesy are taught and reinforced. One of the most important rules in this program is “hands are for helping.” Other rules are “be kind” and “treat others as you want to be treated.”

A systematic routine is followed whether the children are outside or indoors, and they are aligned with routines followed in the classroom.

lunch program

Available for all children enrolled in the Half-Day Primary program. This program is included for all children in Full-Day Primary, Full-Day Kindergarten, and for Half-Day Primary children enrolled in an Enrichment Program. A catered box lunch is available for an additional fee.

Monday through Friday 11:30am-12:30pm
(5 days/week, or on days of Enrichment for children enrolled in those programs).

The purpose of this program is to provide children with an opportunity to extend the Montessori experience to mealtime. Every child works on their own Grace & Courtesy skills as a member of the community. Additionally, this program helps raise the children’s awareness of good nutrition and a healthy lifestyle.

Setup

The children are responsible for setting their own place at a table and unpacking their lunch. Teachers encourage the children to make healthy and balanced food choices.

Community Lunch

Once all the children have prepared their spots and their meals, we sing the “Community Song” as a way to foster social etiquette and unity:

*Look around and you will see
Community, a family,
We are brothers and sisters too.
Thank you for our lunch and enjoy!*

Clean Up

When children have finished eating, they raise their hand and ask, “May I please be excused?” Once excused by the teacher, they are responsible for cleaning up their space at the table.

When children are done eating, they children are responsible for sweeping their individual space. They check their spot on the table as well as the floor under their chairs. As the school year goes on, children begin to develop an awareness of their immediate and community surroundings.

Once the classroom is clean, the children have some playtime outside before going home.

enrichment program

Food, Fitness & Fun

Available for 1st & 2nd year students enrolled in the Half-Day Primary program, and includes Lunch brought from home or a catered box lunch.

Tuesdays 11:30am-3:00pm

Children will exercise their minds and their bodies in this program.

- Food: The children will make and eat fun, healthy food, following recipes and/or directions.
- Fitness: Takes place both indoors and outdoors and includes locomotor activities, ball handling, small group games and more.
- Fun: All of the above, plus exploring nature by taking walks in the park, and more!

There will be a short rest period before beginning the activities.

summer programs

Toddler Summer Camp

The program is for children who will be enrolled in the RKMS Toddler Program in the fall.

5 days a week 8:45am – 11:45am

The Ronald Knox Toddler Summer Camp is an introduction to the Montessori classroom for students entering the Toddler Program in the fall. The camp invites toddler students into the classroom setting, enabling them to ease into a drop-off routine and begin to explore for themselves. Young children will join the classroom to gain independence in a safe, welcoming environment, both inside the beautiful Montessori classroom as well as in the fun outdoor areas.

Transitional Summer Camp

This camp is for children who will be entering their first year of the RKMS Primary program.

5 days a week 8:45am - 11:45am
OR
8:45am - 1:00pm

The camp is designed to introduce children to the Primary classroom environment. This program will begin the process of bringing out a child's sense of order, concentration, coordination, and independence through emphasis on the Practical Life and Sensorial areas of the classroom. The children will be introduced to ground rules, guidelines and social expectations that will be an integral part of their experience in the Primary program. In addition, the children are allowed ample time to play outside. Outdoor time will feature different activities throughout the week such as nature walks in beautiful Mallinckrodt Park next door, riding a bicycle or scooter, or cooling off under the sprinkler.

Primary Summer Camp

Primary Summer Camp is offered to children who will be entering their second or third year of the Primary Program this fall and to Ronald Knox graduates.

5 days a week 8:45am - 1:00pm

Each week of Summer Camp will feature an engaging theme, which continues for a second week.

Space in each program is limited; all programs are contingent on enrollment.

admissions & finance

Admissions

Process Overview

Tour

Prospective parents may contact Anita McGing, Admissions Director (847 256-2922, ext. 19 or anita.mcging@ronaldknox.org) to schedule a tour (parents only please, for the initial visit).

Application

Complete the [online application](#) and submit the non-refundable \$75 application fee.

Pre-enrollment Meeting For Your Child

A pre-enrollment meeting will be scheduled for your child. This one-on-one, 15-minute visit will give your child an opportunity to explore a classroom environment and meet with one of our teachers.

Acceptance

An Acceptance letter will be emailed upon availability.

Admission and Placement Policies

Since Ronald Knox Montessori School has a rolling admission process, applications for new students are always accepted. Ronald Knox accepts students of any race, sex, color, and national, ethnic, and religious origin. Ronald Knox guarantees the confidentiality of and access to student records in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

The age of entry begins at six months for the Parent-Child Program, two years for the Toddler Program, and three years for the Primary Program. Continuing first and second year students in a Primary classroom will remain in their current class. Due to constraints of licensing agencies, insurance and the public school system, a child's chronological age is the main gauge used in placement.

Ronald Knox is committed to educating each child in accordance with the Montessori Philosophy. It is the philosophy and the history of Maria Montessori that supports close observation and careful guidance for each child in our program. New students are admitted on a 6-week probationary basis that begins on their first day of school, after which the child will either be successfully integrated or it will be determined that Ronald Knox is not the best placement. Under certain circumstances, tuition will be refunded on a prorated basis. Students with diagnosed special needs follow the same 6-week probationary period.

The Montessori classroom is appropriate and beneficial for almost every child. However, Ronald Knox may not be able to provide the educational and supportive services or additional staff that some children may require.

It is important for parents to have a thorough understanding of the program in order to determine whether Ronald Knox will be the best environment for their child. A pre-enrollment meeting does not guarantee acceptance into Ronald Knox. For all of our programs, we use information gained from the pre-enrollment meeting, observations, input from teachers, and Summer Program experiences to gather information about each child. Occasionally, additional work and reports from specialists will be required to place the child properly.

Decisions include factors which take into account the best interests of your child and of the other children in the classroom environment. Our aim is to create classrooms that are balanced in various aspects: age, gender, learning style, etc. The professionally trained Montessori faculty and the administration make the final determination and placement within our programs.

Special Status Applicants

All qualifying special status applications will be processed in the order they are received.

Special status will be granted in the following order:

- *Currently enrolled students* who are filtering into another Ronald Knox program (i.e., Toddler to Primary).
- *Prospective students with a sibling* currently enrolled at Ronald Knox.
- *Prospective students with a sibling* who has graduated from Ronald Knox.
- *Students enrolled in a full-day program*
- *A Montessori Transfer* is given priority to prospective students who attended another Montessori school.
- *Children of Faculty/Staff* (current)
- *Legacy Status* is granted to a child whose parent attended the entire three years of the Primary Program at Ronald Knox.

The administration of Ronald Knox reserves the right to make the final determination for session program placement. Additionally, many factors are considered in making admissions decisions, including:

- Children who meet social and emotional expectations as determined by the Ronald Knox Faculty and Staff.
- Parents who have a willingness to be informed, involved, and invested in Ronald Knox and the Montessori philosophy.
- Families committed to partnering with teachers and administration and whose values are aligned with Ronald Knox's mission.
- A long-term commitment to Ronald Knox.

New & Returning Students

New Students

A welcome letter, the tuition/family entrance fee invoice, and enrollment contract are mailed to new students upon acceptance into a program. The first tuition installment and enrollment contract must be returned by the date determined by Ronald Knox to hold the child's place in the program(s) requested. All children entering the school are required to submit the following prior to the first day of school:

- Current Health form (within 2 years)
- Lead Assessment Questionnaire
- Eye Exam form (for kindergarten age children)
- Dental Exam form (for kindergarten age children)
- Original birth certificate to be copied at the school
- Records from previous school, if applicable

Returning Students

During the re-registration phase that takes place in November/December, parents will need to go back into their child's online registration to update the information. If re-registration is completed after the said due date, the student will lose their special status priority and the registration will be processed as a new family in the order received. Ronald Knox will not be able to hold spaces for students whose registration is completed after the said due date.

The deadline for special status enrollment priority (prospective students with a sibling who is currently enrolled or a graduate) is mid-December. Any applications for siblings received after the said date will be processed in the order they are received.

The tuition invoice, family entrance fee invoice (if applicable) and enrollment contract are mailed to returning students in January. The first tuition installment, family entrance fee, and enrollment contract must be returned to Ronald Knox by the date determined by Ronald Knox to hold the child's place in the program(s) requested for the following school year. Ronald Knox will not be able to hold spaces for students whose first tuition installment and enrollment contract has not been received by said date. Ronald Knox strongly believes that the third year, or the kindergarten year, of the Primary Program is of the utmost importance. This is the year that completes the cycle of learning and development that began in the first two years. Being one of the oldest in the room, the child experiences a year of tremendous growth in self-confidence and self-esteem. When your child is accepted into the Primary Program, it is with the expectation that he/she will stay for the completion of the program.

Tuition Payments and Family Entrance Fee

Tuition payment(s) and the \$1,000 Family Entrance Fee* are due in January and in September of the calendar year of enrollment.

- If a child enters mid-year, tuition payment(s) and Family Entrance Fee are due within two weeks of acceptance.
- Classroom placement information is sent in August along with opening of school information.

* Each family entering Ronald Knox at the Toddler or Primary level is required to pay a \$1,000 Family Entrance Fee. This is a one-time payment used to fund building maintenance and emergency fund use.

Tuition alone does not cover the cost of educating a student at Ronald Knox. Like all independent schools, Ronald Knox conducts an annual fund program that contributes to the direct funding of our education initiatives. The Ronald Knox Montessori Annual Fund called *The Drive to Thrive* is an opportunity to raise funds to support and enhance the educational resources of the School. All parents are expected to participate in this important initiative each year.

Early Withdrawal Policy

Tuition payments are non-refundable because salaries and expenses related to maintaining the school for the entire year continue even when a child withdraws from the program.

Withdrawal before completion of the third year or the kindergarten year of the Primary program will result in the forfeiture of all priority status applications for siblings of the withdrawn child, even when a sibling is currently enrolled in the Parent Child and/or Toddler programs

Exceptions to this policy are limited to the following situations:

1. Relocation out of state or another city not within a reasonable driving distance to Ronald Knox.
2. Children with special needs with written documentation from a specialist.
3. A replacement is enrolled in the program affected.

Enrollment and Discharge Procedures

Ronald Knox strives to help each child to adapt to the Montessori classroom. Every attempt is made to work not only with the child, but also with the parents, to achieve a positive adjustment and overall experience throughout the entire school year. Ronald Knox believes that a child benefits from a collaborative approach that includes the school and the parents. Additionally, a specialist may be deemed necessary in order to support the child and the teacher and to foster the child's growth and development.

Ronald Knox may ask the parent to consult qualified outside professionals if the situation warrants such action.

- Cases of serious and repeated patterns of challenging behavior, or perception of behavior, that interfere with a child's ability to engage in developmentally appropriate self-regulation and cognitive and prosocial engagement with peers or adults.
- Severe separation anxiety.
- Noted speech, language and/or physical limitations or challenges.
- Noted patterns of sensory challenges that significantly interfere with the child's learning and/or social behavior and/or other children in the classroom.
- The classroom does not meet the developmental needs of the child.

In the event a situation warrants qualified outside support and a parent is unwilling to engage in a dialogue or consult an outside professional in order to best help the child, a Support Plan will be implemented and a transition to a different program or school may become necessary.

Transfers Between Classrooms

Based on the Montessori Philosophy, a child remains in the same classroom for the entirety of his three-year RKMS Primary experience.

With minimal exceptions, RKMS does not permit transfers between classrooms. As an accredited Montessori school, all of our rooms are staffed by certified Montessori teachers. There may be some stylistic differences among teachers, but all our faculty adhere to stringent Montessori principles. A transfer often can upset the balance and relationship that has been

created in both environments. Such changes hinder educational development for all the children.

Disenrollment

Families who are asked to leave RKMS under extreme circumstances such as being disrespectful in any way to the faculty, administration or board members, and/or encouraging other families to act in the same unconstructive manner, and who refuse to engage in a dialogue to resolve the issue at hand, will forfeit their priority status. Should the family choose to re-apply, the school administration will make the final decision for re-admission and the family will be placed in the Wait Pool.

Procedures

Arrival & Dismissal – All Programs

Arrival

- **IMPORTANT! Please arrive to school on time! Late arrivals impact *all* faculty and staff as well as the classroom routine.**
- Approach the school from the west (i.e., do not make a left turn off of Elmwood Avenue into the school drive). Enter the driveway at 2031 Elmwood Avenue and proceed driving around the school building to the main entrance on the east side of the school. The speed limit on the grounds is 10 mph.
- All children must wait in the car with their seat belts fastened until the car comes to a complete stop.
- **The parent/caregiver must remain in their vehicle until a faculty/staff member greets them.**
- The parent/caregiver are then required to remove the child from the vehicle.
- For a safe and efficient arrival for all, please refrain from any unnecessary conversation with the faculty/staff or other families in the carpool line. If you need to discuss an issue with your child's teacher, we ask that you contact them either by phone or email.
- You may turn right or left when exiting the driveway.
- For security reasons, school doors are locked at the close of each carpool session. If you are late, please walk your child to the main entrance (east side of the building); ring the bell and wait with your child until one of the staff members comes to receive your child. Please say your good-byes at the door. A staff member will walk your child to the classroom.
- When the weather is inclement and a parent/caregiver needs to enter the building when dropping off, they shall remain inside the vestibule.
 - Only one parent/caregiver will be allowed in this area.
 - The parent/caregiver must have their temperature taken and recorded.

Health Monitoring and Screening during Arrival

- **Masks are required** to be worn by the child and parent/caregiver before exiting their vehicle or if walking to school.
 - Be sure to practice having your child put on their mask and check that it is the right fit for proper safety coverage.
 - If a parent/caregiver does not have a facemask, they will be given one and reminded to bring their own in the future.
- Each family will receive a pad of ***Daily Symptom Certification*** forms
 - The parent/caregiver will need to submit a form on a daily basis.
 - The form certifies that your child does not have or has recently had:
 - Fever over 100.4 degrees
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath/difficulty breathing
 - Fatigue
 - Muscle or body aches
 - Headache
 - New loss of taste or smell
 - Sore throat

- Congestion or runny nose
 - Nausea/vomiting
 - Diarrhea
- Parents/caregivers are also required to take their child's temperature upon arrival to school, while the child is still in the car and in the presence of a staff member. Parents/caregivers **shall use their own thermometer from home** (since the child is most familiar with the home device).
- If a child's temperature is 100.4 or above or the child shows other signs of illness, the child **will not be permitted to enter the school.**
 - The parent/caregiver will be asked to promptly contact a health care provider within 24 hours and provide information to RKMS regarding the child's status.
- If it has been determined the child is safe to be at school, the parent/caregiver will unbuckle the child from their car seat and a staff member will walk the child to the door.
- A staff member will give the child hand sanitizer prior to entering the school.
- Students in the Lower West and Upper West will enter the building at the North entrance on Elmwood Avenue and students in the Lower East and Upper East will enter the building at the East entrance to support social distancing.

Walking your child to school

- Please wait in the designated area in front of the school.
- Please form a line from there and stand three feet apart from others.
- **Masks are required** to be worn by the child and the parent/caregiver when walking to school.
- A faculty member will receive your child and assist him/her to the door.
- All other procedures are the same as when driving your child to school.

Dismissal

- **Masks are required** to be worn by the parent/caregiver during dismissal.
- Each family is assigned a carpool number. These numbers are distributed at the beginning of the school year. The numbers correspond to a carpool list the staff uses for the dismissal process.
- Please display the number in the center of the windshield of your car so that the staff can see it. (dismissal only)
- For pick-up, please remain in your vehicle until a staff member brings your child to you.
- Please assist in securing your child's seat belt (RKMS staff may not assist in the securing of your child's seat belt).
- Walking to pick your child up from school
 - Please bring your carpool number to show the staff (you may request an additional carpool number if needed).
 - Wait in the designated area in front of the school.
 - Please form a line from there and stand three feet apart from others.
 - **Masks** are required to be worn by the parent/caregiver.

- If there is a change in your child's pick-up on any given day, we ask for the following:
 - Send a note with your child and have them *hand the note to the faculty/staff member during arrival.*
 - Please do NOT place notes in your child's backpack. Teachers do not check the children's backpacks on a daily basis for notes that may be inside.
 - OR
 - Call the classroom to leave a message.
 - Teachers will check voicemail messages prior to carpool time for any last-minute changes.
 - Even if the other family is on your carpool list, a note or phone call alleviates confusion at carpool time and speeds up the dismissal process.
 - OR
 - Email your child's teacher.

If you choose to send an email regarding any carpool changes, it is critical that you copy Cathy Litrofsky, Office Manager (office_manager@ronaldknox.org)

AND

Anita McGing, Admissions Director (anita_mcging@ronaldknox.org) to ensure the information in your email is received and read. Teachers are in the classroom with the children and not checking emails on a regular basis throughout the day.

Healthy Hygiene Practices

- Children and staff are required to wear masks indoors and outdoors at all times.
- Each Primary classroom will be considered a stable 'pod". Stable means that the pod includes the same children and the same teachers all day, every day. Pods will not mix with each other.
- Children will work at individual tables with one chair per table.
- Tables will be spaced three feet apart.
- During rest or naptime (Full Day Primary students), each child will have either a rug or cot. The rugs or cots will be spaced three feet apart with alternating head-to-toe arrangements.
- Visuals will be used throughout the day to assist students with understanding spatial awareness and social distancing requirements.
- The teachers will prepare an individualized snack for each child consisting of either fresh fruits or vegetables.
- Each child will have their own box of tissue as well as their own work rug labeled with their name and stored in their individual cubby.
- All work rugs will be washed on a weekly basis by RKMS staff.

- Full Day Primary Program
 - All blankets for napping purposes will be stored separately for each child.
 - RKMS staff will launder blankets supplied by RKMS weekly.
 - Blankets brought from home will be sent home to be laundered on a weekly basis.
 - All rugs and cots used for napping will be cleaned and disinfected daily.
- Frequent hand washing by children and staff will occur throughout the day
 - Upon arrival to the classroom
 - Before and after eating or handling food
 - After using the toilet or assisting a child in the bathroom
 - After coming in contact with bodily fluid

- After playing outdoors
 - After handling garbage
 - Hand sanitizer will be used if soap and water are not readily available
- Only one classroom will be on the playground at any given time.
- The field in Mallinckrodt Park is available to the children throughout the morning.
- Frequently touched surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected throughout the day.
- The school will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected at the end of each day.
- To help reduce potential airborne transmission of the virus:
 - Classroom windows will be opened to increase ventilation and pull in fresh air from outside.
- Each classroom has an independent air conditioning/heating unit with a UVC air purifier.

RKMS Safety Contract and Parking/Traffic Guidelines

- As part of Ordinance #4 from the Village of Wilmette, which allowed RKMS to build our facility, all parents are required to abide by the RKMS Safety Contract setting forth traffic rules and regulations. These rules and regulations are requests made by the Transportation Commission regarding ingress and egress to and from school and the proper flow of traffic on Elmwood Avenue.
- Please review and share all guidelines and procedures with caregivers or others who may be picking up your children.
- **Cell phone usage (including texting) or other handheld electronic devices are prohibited in a school zone and on school grounds during drop-off and pick-up while in your car.**
- All children must be secured in an age and weight-appropriate child safety or booster seat. Faculty will use reasonable judgment when an obviously unsafe condition is present, and may refuse to release a child.
- Please make sure you have a spare child safety seat or booster if you are picking up another child.
- Limit the number of children to the number of seatbelt stations.
- Turn OFF your car engine while waiting on the school grounds to drop off/pick up your child.
- Please be aware that many families walk or ride bikes to school. Use caution when entering and exiting the driveway.
- Please do not block any crosswalk, walkway, or neighbor's driveway when waiting in the carpool line.
- When it is necessary to park on Elmwood Avenue, parents will park on the SOUTH side of the street, east of the fire hydrant. There is a NO PARKING zone between the school and the fire hydrant EAST of the building.
- Always regard parking and traffic signs. Our overall concerns are safety and being a good neighbor to the surrounding residents who live along Elmwood Avenue.
- Approach RKMS from the west. Left-hand turns from Elmwood into our driveway are strictly prohibited.
- Approaching Elmwood Avenue from Hunter Avenue is **strongly** recommended. Please note that this requires driving an extra block if you are approaching from the east.
- A three-point turn in a neighbor's driveway is not permitted.
- Queuing along 21st Street to turn into Elmwood Avenue is strictly prohibited as this can cause congestion at our entrance during peak periods. If you approach from 21st Street and encounter a queue, you must turn west on Elmwood and circle the block.

- The school exit will accommodate two lanes (one for right turns and one for left turns) out of the property.
- RKMS vehicle stickers shall be issued to every family attending the school. The sticker must be displayed on the **top right windshield** of the vehicle that is mostly used to drop off and pick up your child from school.
- If you are using more than one car to drop off and pick up your child, extra stickers/carpool numbers can be obtained from the Office Manager.
- The speed limit on Elmwood Avenue is 25 mph.

Non-compliance with **Ronald Knox Montessori School Safety Contract** will result in the following actions:

- First offense - e-mail from the Admissions Director
- Second offense - phone call from the Admissions Director
- Third offense - phone call from the Head of School, disciplinary action, and possible expulsion with loss of tuition and all sibling and legacy status

Thank you very much for your cooperation as we work together to create a safer community!

Attendance

Please notify your child's teacher if your child is absent for any reason. If the absence is planned in advance (for example, a vacation or doctor's visit), you may email or call your child's teacher or send a note in with your child. If the absence is unplanned, please inform the teacher before class begins if at all possible. In the case of illness, it is imperative that you report the diagnosis to us so that we may inform other parents of the illness, if appropriate (no names are used); see more in the section for Health.

Guidance & Discipline

The Ronald Knox Philosophy

Discipline for children is a point of arrival, not departure. The positive model of discipline within a Montessori setting is self-discipline, where concentration, focus and independent learning happen without contention and interruption. The development of inner discipline in children is our goal. Factors that are essential in attaining this goal are the teachers, the prepared environment, and the child.

How Guidance and Discipline Are Implemented by Staff

The teacher sets an example by her controlled and purposeful movement in the classroom. She uses a modulated tone of voice, respects the child and the environment, and uses consistency in reinforcing the rules. In addition to setting limits with age-appropriate ground rules, the teacher follows the child and directs their activity.

The teacher prepares the environment, which offers an atmosphere of freedom to choose materials. The materials are stimulating and self-correcting; that is, a control of error is built

into all materials, which are attractive and well maintained. The configuration of the room remains consistent so that the child learns the behavioral expectations.

If behavior is not in keeping with the expectations, the teacher may take one or more of the following steps, always keeping in mind the best interests of the child involved, as well as the other children in the classroom:

- Redirect a child who deviates from the ground rules
- Separate a child from the situation until they are ready to work independently
- Consult with the Admissions Director and Head of School, when necessary, regarding a child's misbehavior

Corporal punishment is not practiced at any time.

The teacher shall contact the parents of the child to determine the possible causes of misbehavior and to discuss possible strategies for modification.

The teacher may ask a child to move around the room with her until the child thinks he is ready to work independently. In a situation involving two or more children, the children will be encouraged by the teacher to actively listen to each other and work towards resolution.

Building Access

Anyone entering the building beyond the front lobby must check in with the front desk, with the exception of RKMS employees. Visitors will be asked to sign in with first and last name, reason for visit, and time of arrival.

All visitors and parents must first speak with an administrative member before entering beyond the school lobby. Visitors must sign out upon leaving the building.

Abuse Reporting

All staff and faculty at Ronald Knox Montessori School are Mandated Reporters per the state of Illinois. Any suspected abuse or neglect of a child will be reported to the Child Abuse Hotline (1-800-25-ABUSE).

Unsafe Product Recall

Per DCFS regulation, the Toddler Teacher signs off each month that the classroom contains no children's products that have been recalled due to safety issues. The list of products can be found at <http://srs.dph.illinois.gov/webapp/SRSApp/pages/> and is also accessible from the Toddler class blog. Please check your home periodically for items on this list as well.

daily operations

Clothing

Clothes should fit children comfortably so that they can move freely without worrying about straps, belts, or buttons. Clothing should be chosen so that the child can be completely independent of the adult.

To ensure order and independence and prevent losses, **please label every article of clothing with the child's last name or initials.**

Zippers can be difficult for young children to negotiate and to gain a feeling of independence and self-confidence. Try to find large zippers and ask your child to try them at the store before buying the item. Double zippers are very difficult for preschoolers and should be avoided.

Winter Gear

RKMS Students go outside whenever possible during the winter, even if only for a short time (unless the temperature is less than 5 degrees with or without the wind chill).

During the cold weather, please send your child in a warm jacket. Snow pants, boots, mittens, hats and scarves should be carried in your child's backpack each day as classes go outside as often as possible throughout the winter. To keep children dry and healthy, a teacher may keep a child from playing in the snow if the child does not have the proper winter gear. Have your child accompany you while shopping for jackets, snow pants, and boots and have him or her put them on and off in the store to be sure they are manageable.

Rain Gear

Children may also go outdoors on days when it is raining if there is no lightening or chance of a thunderstorm. Therefore, please send your child in the appropriate rain gear on these days, including a rain jacket and rain boots.

Objects from Home

RKMS asks that you keep all non-necessary objects at home, such as toys, loveys, and jewelry. In the classroom, these items can easily become lost or broken, and they function as a source of distraction from the work available. Teachers may choose at their discretion to keep objects from home in a secure location away from the children until dismissal time, and parents will be reminded to keep these items at home in the future.

Additionally, please remind your child to leave his or her umbrella in the car when arriving at school. The students do not need umbrellas while school is in session.

Slippers/Shoes

One of the first routines of the child's day is switching from 'outdoor' shoes to 'indoor' slippers/shoes. This keeps our environment clean and allows children the opportunity to care for themselves and develop shoe-tying skills (Primary program).

Parent Child/Toddler Program

Children in the Toddler program are asked to bring a pair of slippers to be left at the school.

Please look for a slipper that meets the following criteria:

1. Easy for a toddler to slip on independently
2. Rubber soled bottom (non-slip)
3. Machine washable

If you are looking for a place to purchase slippers, you may consider the following:

Primary Program

Children at RKMS are to bring a pair of tie gym shoes to be left at the school.

Please look for shoes that meet the following criteria:

1. Easy for a child to put on independently
2. Rubber-soled bottom (non-slip)
3. Laces should be cotton only.

Backpacks

We are excited to inform you that all new students will receive their very own RKMS backpack.

Please note the following:

- Please have complete set of clothing (shirt, pants, socks, and underwear) inside your child's backpack at all times in case of accidents or water spills.
- If your child comes home in their extra set of clothes, please replenish the backpack with a new set.
- Please do not attach any hanging key chains or decorations to the RKMS backpack. These items can be dangerous and distracting. Children get upset when they are broken or lost, so please leave these special items at home.

Water Bottle

All Students are asked to bring a durable water bottle they can easily open and close on their own.

Water bottles will be kept in backpacks and used throughout the day (including lunchtime).

Label Belongings

Please label each item of your child's belongings (i.e. shoes, backpack, coat, boots, mittens, hats). Your child's initials written with a permanent marker will alleviate confusion between identical pairs of boots, etc. Having these items marked ensures that the teachers can remind your child to take their belongings home, and it gives staff the opportunity to return missing items.

Licensed Character Policy

At RKMS, we require clothing that is free of "licensed characters." This allows the child to be themselves, and not take on the persona of the fictional character.

Our observations have shown that children wearing characters from TV or toys on their clothing are more likely to attempt to imitate that character while at school. This results in disruptions during the work cycle, impeding the education of all children in the room. At school, our objective is to help your child develop into his or her own self. This is not to say that superheroes or princesses are bad! However we believe that there is a time for work and a time for play. Just as we as adults have our work clothes and our lounge clothes, so do children have "work" (school) clothes and play clothes.

Snack & Lunch

RKMS strives to be a peanut and tree nut free school. At no time may any snack or food be brought into the school containing peanuts or tree nuts.

All Programs

- Parents shall drop off snacks in the carpool line for their child's class based on a schedule created by the Teacher and/or Room Parent.
- Only food with nutritional value will be served.
- Parents whose children have food allergies have the following choices:
 - Parents may provide their own nutritious snacks for their children
 - or-
 - Parents may sign a waiver stating that they are comfortable with their child eating snacks brought in by other parties.

Toddler

- All snacks brought in by parents, including fruits and vegetables, shall be purchased and pre-packaged by the store only. Snacks must be brought in their original packaging with the ingredients clearly listed. **This is mandated by DCFS standards.** Any snacks that do not meet this requirement cannot be served.

Primary

- RKMS purchases daily snacks for the children consisting of fresh fruits and vegetables. For children with allergies, parents may sign a waiver saying they are comfortable with their child eating these fruits and vegetables, or they may provide their own.
- Parents must list the ingredients of any homemade snacks.
- Any snack purchased from the store must be in the original packaging with the ingredients listed.

Lunch Program

- *Lunches shall not contain peanuts or tree nuts.*
- Children in the Lunch Program may bring their own bag lunch or participate in the catered boxed lunch program for an additional fee.
- Children in the Lunch Program are encouraged to not share their lunch with each other.
- In the event that a child with food allergies is enrolled in the Lunch Program, the child would have the option to eat at a separate table. The parent of the allergic child shall submit the written request to the Admissions Director.

Student Birthdays in the Primary Program

Each Primary student at RKMS celebrates a “passage of time ceremony” during the school year, on a date chosen by the Teacher and/or Room Parent. You will be asked to send one picture for each year of your child’s life, to visually represent the passage of time. (Many families choose to make a poster listing the age portrayed in each picture.)

communication

Contacting the Teacher

You may contact your child’s teacher several different ways, via email, a phone call, or a written note. If you would like a call returned, please be sure to include a phone number where you can be reached. Most communication by teachers is done either before class or immediately following dismissal; every effort is made to return messages within 48 hours.

Blogs

RKMS takes great pride in our parent communication and, specifically, the classroom blogs. Each teacher maintains a password-protected blog for her room, which features updates on activities the class is working on, pictures of the students, and other information pertaining to the classroom.

At the beginning of the school year, parents will be given a link to their child’s class blog as well as the password to access posts. If at any time you forget either the link or the password, please contact your child’s teacher.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Toddler and Primary conferences are held twice yearly. Conferences provide an excellent opportunity for parents and teachers to discuss the child's experience at school. Both parents are encouraged to attend.

As these conferences are conducted by the teacher, last minute cancellations are strongly discouraged. We also appreciate promptness, as conferences are scheduled one after another. In the event that parents cannot attend any of the times available, the teacher will schedule a 15-minute phone conference instead.

Knox Notes

Knox Notes is the main method that RKMS uses to disseminate important information about upcoming events, paperwork needed, special notices, and other issues pertaining to the RKMS community. It is published every other Wednesday throughout the school year and is sent to all email addresses associated with current students' online registration. Please be sure to read through each edition to ensure you are aware of the goings-on at your child's school.

Emergency Closings

We give special thought to safety when considering closing our school due to inclement weather. If we are considering an emergency closing, parents will receive an email the night before stating that there is the potential for RKMS to close. The decision to close will be sent to RKMS families via email by 6:00am on the day of the close. Additionally, an announcement will be given to the Emergency Closing Center for broadcast on major Chicago radio and television stations.

health

Health at RKMS

At RKMS, we take the health of the children and of the faculty seriously. The children and adults wash their hands immediately upon entering the classroom; they are taught to sing "Happy Birthday" in their heads to know how long to wash. Children and faculty both wash their hands periodically throughout the school day as well.

While children do frequently share germs, we take every precaution to ensure that RKMS remains a school of healthy children who are ready to learn. Please see below for information on what to do when your child gets sick and when to keep him or her home.

Illness at School

If a child becomes ill while at school, he or she is offered the opportunity to lie down in the infirmary and the parents are notified. Any areas where the child may have become sick are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected to minimize the spread of germs.

Contagious Diseases

The school must be notified if your child has a contagious disease (strep, chicken pox, pink eye, etc.) so that proper notification can be given to the other parents. Neither the child's nor the family's name will be disclosed. If your child has a contagious disease that requires medication, he/she must stay at home for at least 24 hours after beginning medication. Also, children should be fever free without the aid of medication for 24 hours before returning to school. RKMS has adopted a policy on Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) that reflects current state and federal recommendations.

When to Stay Home

To know whether your child should stay home from school, the American Academy of Pediatrics suggests answering these three quick questions:

1. Does your child have a fever? Fevers of 100.4° F or more are generally a sign of illness, so children should stay home from school.
2. Is your child well enough to engage in class? If ill children seem too run down to get much out of school, keep them home.
3. Do you think your child has a contagious illness, such as the flu or pinkeye? If so, talk to your doctor and keep them at home until they're no longer infectious.

General Health Guidelines

Please follow these reminders about when to keep your child home:

Your child should stay home until 24 hours after the last occurrence without the aid of fever-reducing medicine, anti-diarrhea medicine, etc.

- If a fever is higher than 100.4 degrees.
- If there is discharge of heavy or discolored mucus from the nose.
- If there is frequent coughing or difficulty breathing.
- If there is a skin rash or untreated infected patches of skin (unless it is a confirmed allergic reaction).
- If the child has vomited or had diarrhea.
- If there are flu-like symptoms, including the sudden onset of chills, fever, headache, body/muscle aches, sore throat, and dry hacking cough.
- If there are strep throat symptoms, including the sudden onset of chills, fever, headache, difficulty swallowing, and occasionally earache and abdominal pain.
- If the child is excessively tired and does not feel well enough to participate in all class activities.
- If there is evidence of lice, student may return after treatment.
- If the child has symptoms of pink eye, he or she must wait until 24 hours after receiving antibiotic treatment or drainage has ceased.

In the event a child becomes sick at school (fever, diarrhea, vomits, etc.) or there is evidence of illness (discharge of heavy or discolored mucus from the nose, frequent coughing, etc.), the child will be brought to the infirmary in the administrative area of the school and the parent will be called to pick the child up within 20 minutes. A COVID test may be recommended prior to the child's return to school.

Allergies

We recognize that an increasing number of children have life-threatening food allergies, and ensuring the safety of our students is our highest priority at all times. All children with allergies who attend RKMS will be appropriately supervised with regard to foods and materials in the classroom containing the allergens to which they are allergic.

RKMS promotes a flexible interactive process between parents and guardians and RKMS staff concerning allergies and any modifications or potential modifications to the school's policies and procedures as may be warranted. The interactive process consists of a dialogue between the parent or guardian and the school with the objective of finding a mutually agreeable means by which a particular student with a life-threatening allergy can share in the equal enjoyment of the school's programs and activities through an identification of the precise limitations resulting from the allergy and potential reasonable accommodations that could overcome those limitations.

A child with any food allergy shall not be served any snack or food that has not been provided by his/her parent without the express written consent of their parent/guardian, as described in the procedures below. RKMS strives to be a peanut and/or tree nut free environment; however, it is important to note that these allergens may enter our environment through unintentional means.

All faculty and staff attend CPR/First Aid and Allergy Response Training annually.

Minimizing Allergens

To minimize allergens from entering or spreading in the school environment:

- All parents/guardians/care givers shall be encouraged to refrain from serving children food containing peanuts/tree nuts in the car while driving to school.
- All children, faculty and staff shall wash their hands prior to engaging in daily classroom activities.
- Faculty shall disinfect when cleaning tables and chairs during and/or after class.

Life-Threatening Allergies

All parents of children with life-threatening allergies must:

- Annually complete/update the required medical information on the online registration.

- The Admissions Director will contact the parents to schedule a required meeting for children with life threatening allergies and will send the parents appropriate allergy forms to be completed prior to the meeting.
- Parents of children with non-life threatening allergies may request a meeting with the teacher and/or Admissions Director as well as completing the required documents.
- Provide all medications for emergency response. Please note that all medications need to be up to date (i.e. not expired), in their original containers, and clearly labeled.
- Provide an up to date photo of your child for the Allergy Response Kit.
- Attend a meeting to discuss your child's allergies with the Admissions Director and teacher of your child's core class.
- Review the Guidelines for Snacks/Food and Lunch and complete the Snack Consent form.
- Provide an appropriate substitute snack for your child if necessary and clearly label all snack containers sent to the school.
- Ensure that all emergency contact phone numbers are current at all times.
- Immediately report to the Admissions Director any change in your child's medical condition and make any necessary changes in your child's online registration.

Allergy Response Kits

- Each child's Allergy Response Kit, including the Allergy Action Plan, will be labeled and stored in an individual Ziploc bag in the Safety Backpack in the core classroom. A duplicate Allergy Response Kit will be located in the Gross Motor Room.
- Allergy Response Kits will include:
 - Allergy Action Plan
 - Photo of the child
 - Medication(s)
 - Consent to Administer Medication form
 - Life-Threatening or Non-Life-Threatening Allergy form
 - Snack Consent form
- Faculty shall periodically review the Allergy Response Kit throughout the school year, so they may be fully prepared in the event of an emergency.

Major Allergic Reactions

In case of a major allergic reaction:

- Faculty shall follow the Allergy Action Plan in place for the child.
- Faculty shall administer prescribed medications to the child.
- In the event an Epi-Pen has been administered, 911 will be called first and the parent(s) second.
- Faculty shall promptly notify the administration of the emergency.
- Administration shall assist in attending to the child if and when necessary.
- The child's parents shall immediately be notified of the emergency.

Records & Forms

Illinois State Law requires that all children in preschool programs have a complete medical report on file signed and dated by a pediatrician, within six months prior to the date of entry into school. The examination must include appropriate immunizations as dictated by Illinois State Law. A new physical examination is required for every child 2 years after the original form is submitted.

In addition, a Lead Assessment Questionnaire must be completed by the parent and signed and dated by the physician. The child's original birth certificate must be brought to the school to be copied by an administrative member.

Illinois State Law also requires all kindergarten age children to have a complete eye exam and dental exam form on file. The RKMS office will automatically send out forms when they are required.

Under no circumstances will children be permitted to attend the first day of school or any day thereafter unless the following documents have been submitted:

- Current Health form (within 2 years) including TB testing
- Lead Assessment Questionnaire (or documentation that a lead test has been administered)
- Original birth certificate to be copied at the school
- Eye Exam form (for kindergarten age children)
- Dental Exam form (for kindergarten age children)

This policy is essential for the protection of your child and other members of the RKMS community.

Exemptions

Medical exemptions from immunization are accepted upon receipt of a signed doctor's statement. Religious/personal exemptions will be examined on a case-by-case basis.

In the case of exemptions, the Health form, Lead questionnaire, and TB screening documents must still be submitted to RKMS.

parent involvement

Involvement

RKMS offers multiple opportunities for parents to be involved in the goings-on of the school. In particular, we welcome parents into the classroom twice annually for "Parent's Day," a special day set aside for a parent and child to attend school together. This gives the child a chance to share his or her RKMS experience with someone important, which bolsters pride and self-esteem as well as giving the adult a better understanding of the Montessori philosophy and classroom.

Education

RKMS desires to educate and support the whole family, not just the student. We offer various parent education workshops and lectures to deepen your understanding of the Montessori philosophy, the classroom functions, and the development of children. Parents who attend these sessions have found that they provide an excellent opportunity to gain more knowledge about their child's growth and education.

We also have a parent library at school that contains titles covering Montessori education and child development. If you are interested in reading more, please ask your child's teacher for recommendations. Additionally, the RKMS Facebook page contains many links to current topics regarding both Montessori education and child development.

Volunteering

The best way to be involved at RKMS is through volunteering. We host a wide variety of events throughout the school year, and our parent volunteers are what make them successful. During your child's online registration, you will be asked to select which events you would like to volunteer for, and read about each one. We thank you in advance for your participation in the Ronald Knox community!

Contributing

RKMS is a not-for-profit organization, which receives revenues solely from tuition and donations. Fundraising is critically important to the continued functioning of the school. Donations through the Annual Fund called *The Drive to Thrive* support the students, teachers, and classrooms and allow the school to enhance current programming.

We are aware that each family's situation is different, and we ask for a donation that is meaningful to you during the Annual Fund/*The Drive to Thrive*. Additionally, we welcome any employer matching contributions, foundation grants, and other similar contributions. Gifts and donations made to RKMS are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.