





International Montessori Preschool

Parents' Handbook

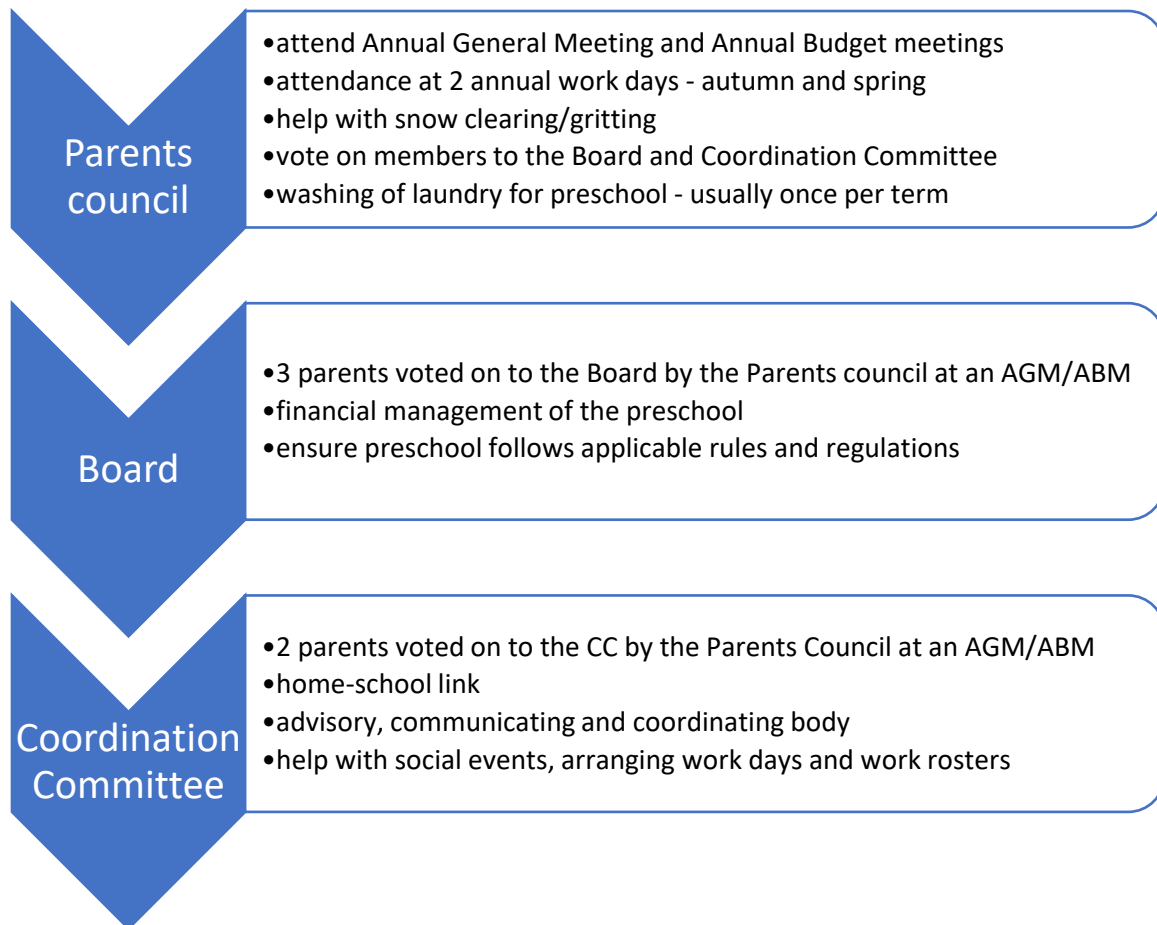
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IMS Structure

IMS is a non profit making, parent owned cooperative. When a family accept a place in preschool, they automatically join the cooperative and the parents council.

Responsibilities:



For more information on the role of the Coordination Committee see the link below:

<file:///C:/Users/Eier/Downloads/engelsk-fub-foreldreraad-su-i-bhg.pdf>

Communication parents preschool

Information relevant for your child's day at school should be given to the teacher either:

- Verbally to the teacher greeting your child at the door
- By mobile to:
 - Stars – 973 39 684
 - 3-6 group – 973 39 849
 - Main preschool number – 908 21 915

By email to:

- Stars – stars@internationalmontessori.no
- 3-6 – headteacher@internationalmontessori.no
- Admin - admin@internationalmontessori.no

Should you wish to arrange a time to meet with a member of staff, please let us know.

Please keep the pre-school informed of any relevant changes in family circumstances, major events or changes in your child's behaviour or health.

Communication preschool parents

- Daily communication on how your child's day has been
- Monthly calendar with special events/information on themes
- Monthly newsletter from Stars and 3-6 group on themes in the classrooms
- Admin newsletter sent once a term
- Start up meetings with new families
- Classroom visits/observations offered in 3-6 classrooms
- Conferences offered for all children
- Further conferences/meetings can be held at the request of preschool or parents.

If preschool needs to inform you of a specific incident that has happened that day, we will:

- Send a text informing you. The text will also state who you should ask to speak to
- Ensure that a pedagogic leader is available for you

When can a child go to preschool and when must they stay home?

We follow the advice set by the Norwegian Institute for Public Health with regards to illnesses in preschool, please check the link below which is in English:

<https://www.fhi.no/en/id/childcare-and-school/when-should-children-stay-home-from/>



Your child's needs must always be the deciding factor in whether your child should go to preschool or stay home. A sick and lethargic child needs a lap to sit on and needs peace and love.

In preschool there is always activity and many children wanting the adult's attention. Children can be in preschool when they have the energy to manage the daily activities and to be outside.

The risk of infecting others is not the deciding factor but should also be kept in mind.

When there is ongoing infection in preschool, we ask that your child be 24 hours fever free before returning to preschool.

Driving to preschool

Preschool is located on the top of a quiet road behind a residential area. When driving up to preschool please **drive slowly** and be aware of the following potential hazards:



- many people in the local area walk on the hill as a pathway to Sandvika and the train/bus station
- many children walk on the hill as there is a school located further up the hillside
- there is only pavement for pedestrians at the bottom of the hill
- at the bottom of the hill, just after the roundabout, there is a garage entrance/exit for the apartment blocks
- opposite the garage entrance/exit, there is an open car park entrance
- in winter, snow makes the road narrower and conditions can force people to walk in the middle of the road
- in the summer, trees in bloom can block vision to the garage entrance/exit



Parking

There is a large car park outside of preschool with turning space for delivery vans and refuse collection.

Parking, as opposed to dropping off/picking up your child, is not allowed in the turning area.



Some parents have approached preschool regarding parking at IMS during the day. This has been discussed in Coordination Committee and we can currently offer the following:

- parents interested in this offer must approach preschool to get permission
- there is a limited number of spaces that could be used by parents during the day
- there could be times of the year – specifically ski school in January – when parking may not be possible during to the turning radius required by the bus that collects the children
- parents who have permission to park during the day, would not be charged, but would be asked to buy something from the preschool's wish list.

Drop off

To ensure your child's safety, we keep the door into the classrooms closed.

Children starting for the first time can find it difficult to leave you, please be reassured that we are there for your child. Try to smile to your child and pass him/her to the teacher.

If you are unsure, your child will feel unsure.



- Preschool is unlocked at 07:45
- Children can be dropped off from 08:00 to 09:30. Between these times a teacher is always close by to greet each child
- In the beginning of the school year, drop off is outside between 08:00-08:30. We are flexible regarding when we go into the classrooms. Please ensure your child is dressed for being outside during this time.
- From around autumn break, drop off between 08:00-08:15 is outside for all the children.
- Help your child to learn to wait for their turn. We like to be able to see and talk to each individual child
- If you're going to be late, you can send a text to the school mobile and inform when you expect to arrive:
 - Stars – 973 39 684
 - 3-6 group – 973 39 849

Sharing Information

Your child's emotional state can be affected by many external factors. For us to meet your child where they are and understand their feelings and behaviours, please share any information that may be relevant for your child.

This could be something specific to the day – an argument with a sibling, a bad night's sleep – an ongoing situation such as a parent away travelling, family or friends visiting and staying with you or some major events or changes in family structure.

We don't need details of the situation; we just need information to be able to offer your child the emotional support they need.



Pick up

You are now coming to the most important meeting of your day.

Your child has not seen you since you dropped them off in preschool.

Put mobile phones away and focus on your child, they desperately want your attention just now!



- Children must be picked up by **16:15 at the latest. This means your child is with you by this time. This is the end of our working day and teachers also have children to pick up 😊**
-
- You can always pick your child up earlier in the day.
- If you get caught in traffic or your train is cancelled, send a text to
 - Stars 973 39 684
 - 3-6 group 973 39 849
- We will not hand your child to someone we do not know. If someone else is to collect, introduce them to us first and let us know their name/relationship.

If we have not met them beforehand, please send us a text and ask them to bring photo ID.

Employees – confidentiality and duty to disclose

Before their first day of employment, all teachers and substitutes must have a police check, no more than 3 months old, and must sign a declaration of confidentiality and understand their duty to disclose.

Confidentiality: is there to protect the child and their parents and includes information on relationships, family and home situations, physical and psychological health, character and emotional life, housing, financial and employment situation.

Duty to disclose: preschool employees have a duty to disclose information to social services if requested and if the preschool employee has reason to suspect that a child is experiencing serious parental neglect or physical or mental abuse.

Substitutes

Substitutes cover when a teacher is off sick.

IMS currently chooses not to use a substitute agency, but to work to have regular substitutes who become known to the children and build a relationship to both the children and the other teachers.

This means that IMS substitutes often have other employment and may not always be able to cover full days during sick leave.

Once the children and substitute are secure with each other, the substitute will help the child in bathroom situations and oversee small groups of children.

All substitutes provide a police check prior to their first day.



Bathrooms/toilets

We encourage independence when using the bathroom/going to the toilet. Teachers are always available to help a child as needed.

There is access to toilets/potties from the classrooms for both the Stars group and 3-6.

Some of the toilets are small rooms with a toilet and sink, other toilets are in a larger room with a double sink used also for washing hands before snack/lunch.

In Stars there are 2 potties in one room with a double sink.

Children in different developmental stages and with different family cultures have different needs for privacy.

In preschool:

- Toilet doors cannot be locked for the child's safety
- Some children need help in the bathroom and with dressing
- Some children will leave the bathroom without dressing themselves
- Men employed in preschool will also help children as needed
- Everyone (teachers and substitutes) working in preschool has delivered a police check prior to their first day



If your child uses nappies/diapers, please provide:

- Correct sized nappies/diapers for your child
- Wet wipes

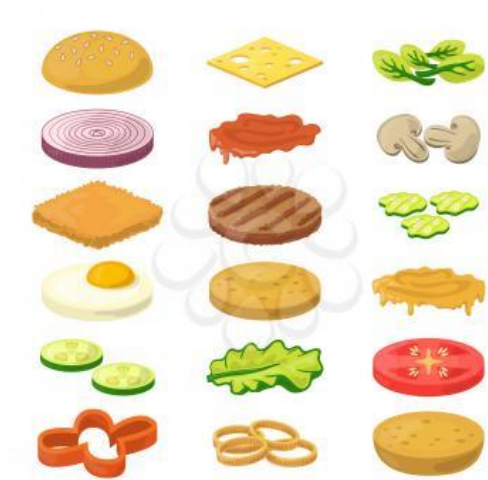
Breakfast

Your child needs enough energy to cope with a busy morning in preschool and to keep them going until lunch at 11:30.

Mid morning fruit is provided by preschool but cannot replace a proper breakfast.

Please ensure that your child has eaten a breakfast before coming into preschool. This is particularly important when your child is going on a walk, swimming or to ski school.

If there is the odd day when your child has not eaten before coming to preschool, and you drop your child off before 08:30, they are welcome to sit down and eat their breakfast from home in the classroom.



Lunch and snack boxes



We have food allergies in preschool – please check the school address list for relevant information.

As peanut allergies can be dangerous, we are a peanut free preschool. Please do not send any food that contains peanuts/peanut butter.

We encourage independence when eating. When we have warm lunch provided by the outside caterer, your child will serve themselves and use a fork/spoon to feed themselves.

When parents provide lunch from home, we encourage healthy lunches and snack boxes. Your child is busy all day both inside and outside and needs food to stay active and warm.

We have children from many different cultures and have all varieties of food brought from home.

Small food thermoses are easy to find, and children can bring in a thermos with pasta, rice, stews etc.

Children like colour and variety in their boxes.

The following are some suggestions as to what you could put in for your child:

- Sandwiches
- pasta/rice/couscous
- Lompe or tortilla rolls with lettuce, cucumber, cream cheese/cheese/meat
- Crispbread – be aware that they do not remain crisp once they have been spread with something
- Cubes of meat/cheese
- Fruit/berries
- Vegetables
- Smoothie pouch
- Yoghurt pouch/ yoghurt



No sweet cakes or biscuits please. It is difficult for young children to understand why someone has them in their lunch box when they do not.

Nap time

Stars group: nap time is between 11:30 and 14:00. The time varies during the year as the children grow older and their needs change.

Nap time:

- inside preschool in a darkened room with calming music.
- Each child has their own bed that preschool provides
- parents provide pillow/blankets for their own child. These are sent home regularly for parents to wash
- parents bring any teddy/pacifier that their child needs for nap time
- An adult is in the room with the children.



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3-6 group: accommodating nap time in the 3-6 rooms is more challenging as the majority of the children no longer sleep during the day. If you feel your child still needs to nap, we will work together to find a solution.

Toys from home

We ask that toys from home are left at home or in the car. Your child can show their toy to the teacher on the door, but the parent should then take the toy with them.

The reasons for this are:

- The toy could get lost/broken in preschool or outside on the playground
- The child will have to share the toy with other friends, something which is challenging and can lead to conflicts among the children
- If one child bring toys in, the other children also want to



Books: Your child is welcome to bring in books for home that we can read and share with the other children – please ensure it is not a precious or special book as it will be shared with the children in preschool.

Birthday Treats in preschool

Birthday treats were discussed in the Coordination Committee and they have come to the conclusion that the birthday treats should be:

- fruit/berries
- raisins/dried fruit
- fruit bars
- smoothies



This decision was reached following concerns with regards to the following:

- Amount of sugar intake
- Food allergies
- Setting precedence for more elaborate birthday food in preschool
- Creating a situation where other parents feel pressure to provide the equivalent
- children feeling disappointed if they don't bring the same level of treats on their birthday

We can cut and prepare fruit in preschool.

Birthday parties

Birthday parties are always exciting, and the children talk a lot about parties in the classrooms.

Not all families want to rent a location for a party, and not all have the space to invite all the children to their home.

To ensure an inclusive environment for all children in preschool, we ask you to make a clear division, and one that can be easily explained to the children, on who you invite to your child's party.

For example

- Age division: all 2/ 3/ 4 or 5 year olds,
- all boys or girls.



If you need guidance in the division, a staff member can assist you.

Following the guidance above, invitations may be put in the children's cubbies in the cloakroom.

Positive behaviour guidance

Setting limits – both at home and in preschool – is dependent on a close bond between the parent or care giver and the child. Children who feel connected to their parents and care givers naturally want to please them.

In preschool we work to develop a relationship to each child so that we can work together as a team. We model the correct behaviour, guide and inform the children how to behave. We problem solve with the children in conflict situations and use logical consequences instead of punishment.



When guiding the children we use positive language, telling the children what behaviour we expect, for example:

- 'we use walking feet' (as opposed to 'don't run')
- 'I see you want the bike, you're friend is using it just now and we have to wait. Waiting can be difficult'
- 'I see that you are feeling angry. It's ok to feel angry but it's not ok to hit others. We can use our words or you can ask a teacher for help.' We then stay with the child through their emotions.

We ensure that children are only given choices when we are willing and able to accept their choice. For example, instead of 'shall we...' or 'do you want to...?' we say 'let's go...?' or 'It's time to...'

In Norway all forms of physical punishment – including smacking and spanking - are banned by law.

See link below for information on the UN convention of the rights of the child:

https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/ee6e51e5dd154da186dc86511e970f03/crc_poster-un0332751-engelsk.pdf

Outside play area

Parents and children are welcome to use the outside play area after preschool is closed.

Our playground rules are based on ensuring the safety of the children. Please help us reinforce the safety rules on the playground so your child is getting the same message at home as in preschool.



- Shoes are always worn on the playground. There are sharp stones around the play area that can cut feet.
- Climbing is allowed on the climbing frames where there is a special fall zone underneath.

Climbing is not allowed on fence, the petrol sign or on the roofs of the playhouses as there is no fall zone around them.

Climbing is not allowed on the outside of the big slide as you can't see where another child could be.

- Bikes, scooters stay on the asphalt (again to ensure a free fall zone under climbing frames and swings)
- Helmets can be worn when cycling, but not climbing. Helmets have straps that can get caught in play apparatus and be a choking hazard.

If your child wants to bring their own bike/scooter to use after preschool, please bring a lock from home and lock them to the fence around preschool.

Clothing

Your child will be busy both inside and outside during the day in preschool and needs the appropriate clothing and spares.

Inside shoes are to keep your child's feet warm and dry inside. The children work with water and wash hands frequently, so there can be water on the floor. Inside shoes should be comfortable, fit properly and stay on your child's feet. Examples below:



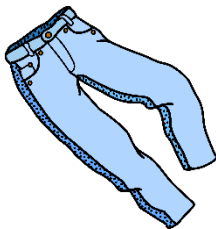
If your child uses crocs, please have the strap behind your child's heel so that they stay on your child's feet.



Inside clothes: your child will be painting, playing with coloured water and generally be active all day. Please dress your child in comfortable clothes and in clothes that can get messy/paint on

Spare clothes. Each child has space inside preschool for spare clothes – where these are kept is different in Stars and 3-6 group.

Your child will be working with water, washing hands and playing outside every day. Their clothes often get wet, so please ensure that your child has:



- a full set of change of clothes
- That the spare clothes fit
- Clothes that are seasonably appropriate – changing into shorts and t-shirts in the winter isn't very warm!
- If wet clothes are sent home, please replace them with the equivalent, dry clothes the next day

Outside clothes: The weather in Norway can vary greatly and your child will be outside everyday for around 2 hours. Having the appropriate clothing ensures your child can be happy and active outside irrespective of the weather.

Remember rain clothes/snow suits go over your child's normal clothing, often with a fleece/wool layer underneath so ensure they are big enough.



Clothing for autumn/winter is listed separately.

Summer:

- Sun cream – please apply before your child comes to preschool. We will reapply later in the day
- Sun hat



Back packs- your child must have a back pack which they can carry on their own back when we go for walks. The best type fasten across their chest to keep them from sliding down their shoulder. Some also have a waist strap. The back pack will be used throughout the year, so ensure that it fits over snow suits.

All clothing should be labelled, either with stickers or with a textile pen.

We can't always remember who owns what, and sometimes a few children have the same. If something goes missing, check the cubbies around your child's. If you name all your child's clothes, they will be returned to you.



How to dress your child for a Norwegian winter

Here are some tips that will **keep your child warm.**

It is often difficult to know how much or how little to put on, and children feel the cold differently. However, there is some simple advice about dressing when the temperature drops.

Around 10°C and down:

NEXT TO THE SKIN: No other fibre can beat wool when it comes to cold weather.

Wool insulates just as well whether it is wet or dry, which is why it's the best thing to have on cold and wet days.



OUTER LAYERS: On wet and mild winter days, 2 or 3 layers are sufficient, depending on the child. Wool underneath, maybe with a thicker wool or fleece layer, and a waterproof suit or rain suit on the outside.



COLD DAYS, around 0°C and down:



NEXT TO THE SKIN: The first layer of clothing next to the skin should be a thin woollen layer. It is best to have one long sleeve top and one pair of leggings.

IN-BETWEEN LAYER: The next layer should also be woollen or a layer of fleece. Woollen fleece is better than polyester fleece but you can also buy a wool/polyester mix, which works well. The most important thing is that there is an air pocket between layers which acts as insulation.



Avoid jeans as a middle layer as thick cotton holds onto any moisture, which can quickly turn very cold.

OUTER LAYER: The outer layer (snowsuit) should be padded, water and wind proof. It's also important that the fabric is breathable and the snowsuit fits properly – remember it has to go over layers!





HATS: A good hat is a must. A balaclava style hat works best on cold days and try to find a windproof/waterproof hat lined with wool or a synthetic wool substitute. Be sure the hat covers the ears too!

AROUND THE NECK: The best option is a 'hals', which is a tube-shape scarf. You can buy these at sports shops. Scarves are not recommended as they pose a strangulation risk.



HANDS: Gloves should be water/wind proof. The best way to keep hands warm is to wear thin woollen finger-gloves inside waterproof mittens that have a fleece lining.



FEET: Again, woollen socks are the best option for keeping feet warm and dry.

There is a large choice of winter boots on the market.

The temperature and weather will determine which boots are best for that day.



MILD/SLUSHY SNOW:

Waterproof lined boots, such as ‘Slushers’, Cherrox’ or ‘docks’ are the best option. Normal rubber boots without any lining are too cold.



DRY/COLD:

A lined winter boot with a thick sole and fleecy lining such as ‘Sorrel’ polar boots is a good option.

The boots need to come up quite high on the leg so that snow doesn’t get in.

The boots should be correctly fitting and not too snug – the air pocket between the foot and the boot is the insulation. Boots that are too small will be too cold.



A NOTE ABOUT COTTON:

Cotton is not a good fabric for keeping children warm. Avoid tops and leggings made from cotton. The cotton layer holds humidity that should be pulled away from the body.

Cotton can leave your child cold and wet.

You can buy woollen leggings and tops that are specially manufactured to have a dual layer of cotton and wool if your child has a wool intolerance. Brands that stock this special fabric include ‘Joha’ and ‘Kappahl’.

WIND CHILL:

The wind chill doubles the cold-factor. Check how windy it is before you dress your child. An example, -10°C and 7 metres per second wind gives an effective air temperature of -25°C!