

Montessori School of

Tracy

Family Handbook

Family Handbook
Montessori School of Tracy, Inc.
Telephone: (209) 833-3458
Federal Tax ID Number: 94-3257101
[www.Montessori CA.com/Tracy](http://www.MontessoriCA.com/Tracy)
Teresa Moreno, Director

Introduction

The Director and the teachers of the Montessori School welcome you and your child to the School. The Family Handbook presents the philosophy, goals, policies and procedures of the School. The Family Handbook aids you in the understanding of the School, and it aids in your child's adjustment to the School. If there are any questions the Director and teachers are happy to help you.

We look forward to having your child with us!

Maria Montessori

Maria Montessori was born in 1870 in Italy and became the first woman to receive a medical degree from the University of Rome. In the first decade of the twentieth century Dr. Montessori observed children carefully and experimented with different materials and teaching methods. Dr. Montessori visited various schools throughout Europe seeking effective teaching approaches. Unimpressed with the teaching styles and methods of the day she returned to her observation of the child to determine the most effective teaching approaches. From careful observation and experimentation Montessori developed the world famous Montessori Method and Montessori Curriculum Materials.

Montessori Method

The Montessori method focuses –

- on the nature of the Child,
- on the role of the Teacher, and
- on the role of the School

as we prepared a unique, developmentally appropriate setting for your child.

The nature of the child under six years old is that of a child that effortlessly absorbs information from the surrounding environment. Montessori referred to this ability of the child's as the *Absorbent Mind*. Further, the child is in a *Sensitive Period* for order, for language, and for movement to better interact and understand the world.

The role of the teacher is to *observe* the child to determine the child's knowledge and interests, and to *prepare the environment* in order to meet the needs and interests of the child. Knowing the rationale underlying each Montessori material and familiar with

theories of child development, the teacher is sensitive to the child's physical, social and emotional, and intellectual development, and matches materials to the child that support that development. The developmental appropriateness of the materials is important to us.

The *prepared environment* is developmentally appropriate and responsive to the needs and to the interests of the child. The Montessori materials are in the areas of practical life (self-help materials), sensorial in the development and refinement of the senses, mathematics, and language arts. Further augmenting the curriculum is the study of plants and animals.

Early Childhood Specialist

Dr. Pamela Zell Rigg is the Early Childhood Specialist of the School. She is responsible for staff development of the teachers, and the curriculum development of the program. She has been involved in Montessori education for over forty years as a teacher, educational director, and teacher trainer. Dr. Rigg has her American Montessori Society Teacher Credentials at the Early Childhood, Elementary and Infant and Toddler levels. She has an MA in Early Childhood Education from New York University, an MA in Educational Psychology from the University of Arizona, and a Ph.D. (doctorate) from the University of California, Berkeley in Education in Math, Science and Technology. Dr. Rigg is a past Director on the Board of the American Montessori Society (1989 – 1997) in New York City. Dr. Rigg is the Program Director of the Montessori Teacher Education Center San Francisco Bay Area with two teacher preparation location in the Bay Area.

Affiliation

The Montessori School is affiliated with the American Montessori Society. The Society provides standards for the School, and consultants and seminars for professional development. The School is equipped with the required Montessori materials and the Head Teachers hold Montessori Teacher Credentials as required by the American Montessori Society.

School Philosophy Statement

The School believes that the child is naturally interested and curious about the world. The child effortlessly absorbs knowledge about the world. Additionally, the child has sensitive periods for movement, language and order that support further involvement in the world. Within the context of an accepting and nurturing environment the child's natural tendencies to know the world are supported. The School interfaces the family with community resources in order to support the child's development.

School's Purpose Statement

The purpose of the Montessori School is to provide high quality Montessori early childhood education to the community that we serve.

School's Goals for Your Child

The School's goal is for your child to experience nurturance, encouragement and direction in order to optimize the potentiality of your child in social and emotional development, in language and cognitive development, and in fine and gross motor development.

School's Goals for your Kindergarten Child – Standards

The State of California Department of Education has established *Standards* for the kindergarten year. In recognition of these academic expectations the School has defined academic goals in the area of language arts and mathematics. The academic goals that the School has for your child are delineated in the final section of the Family Handbook.

Research has proven that the child's learning and overall productivity increases with the implementation of a standards-based educational system. Standards define the curriculum for the kindergarten child and identify the level of instruction appropriate to the kindergarten year. As teachers and the family understand the curriculum expectations at the kindergarten level, they better provide the learning experiences that allows the child to successfully achieve in all standards. See *the Montessori Kindergarten Year* for details.

Montessori Learning Environment

The Montessori learning environment and learning activities for your child reflect the School's Montessori philosophy and goals. The environment supports your child's curiosity about the world and supports your child's development in language, in movement and in order. The teachers act with nurturance, encouragement and offer direction in order to optimize your child's social and emotional development, language and cognitive development, and fine and gross motor development.

Hours of Operation

The School is open from 6:30 AM to 6:00 PM.

Programs

All of the Programs listed below meet five days per week, Monday through Friday.

Half Day Program (9:00 AM – 12:00 Noon or 12:00 PM – 3:00 PM) - three hours

The Half Day Program is designed along the classic Montessori methodology, consisting of Montessori materials, the Montessori credentialed teacher, and the children.

Extended Day Program (9:00 AM – 3:00 PM or 12:00 Noon – 6:00 PM) - six hours

In addition to the core Montessori materials the program is enriched to include Animal Studies, Artists, Geography Studies, Music and Composers, Notion of Time and Plant Studies. Opportunities for napping are provided.

All Day Program (6:30 AM – 6:00 PM) – eleven hours

The All Day Program is designed for children that need care all day. In addition to the core Montessori materials the program is enriched to include Animal Studies, Artists, Geography Studies, Music and Composers, and Movement, Notion of Time, Plant Studies include Animal Studies, Artists, Geography Studies, Music and Composers, Movement and Music, Notion of Time, Plant Studies, Cooking, and Aesop's Fables.

Schedule of the Day

The Schedule of the Day is found in the Appendix A. The *sequence* of activities listed in the Schedule of the Day are present each day unless there is a special event such as a field trip or holiday party. The actual time of each activity may vary slightly from the schedule depending on the needs of the children.

The schedule focuses on the Morning Montessori Activity Period and the Afternoon Montessori Activity Period. This *activity period* in the morning and in the afternoon lengths during the school year as your child's span of concentration lengthens.

Naps are provided and available for all children. The younger child naps longer than the older child, typically. But all children are provided the opportunity to rest.

Orientation to the Montessori School

After your initial telephone call to the School you receive an application link to our website or email, and an appointment is made for a pre-enrollment visit. During the School visit you had the opportunity to observe the classroom, meet the Director, and possibly the teacher that your child will have.

The School is available to answer any questions that may arise before the school year begins. Additional questions or concerns may be addressed on the last Thursday in August, between 10:00 AM and 11:30 AM when you are invited to visit the School and meet with your child's teacher. During the first week in September additional information is provided at the evening family orientation meeting.

Admission Policy and Procedure

Admission Policy - The School is an educational service for children ages two to entry into first grade. Enrollment is available to children within this age range regardless of race, gender, ethnic background, national origin, religion, or disability. Returning students, siblings, legacies and Montessori school transfers are accorded first admission. Enrollment is then open on a first come, first serve basis. The School reserves the right to refuse admission based upon likelihood to benefit from the School program.

Admission Procedure - Observation of the School is required before submitting an application.

- ◆ Upon receipt of the application with the application fee the admission procedure formally begins.
- ◆ An acknowledgement of receipt of the application is mailed or emailed.
- ◆ A letter of acceptance or non-acceptance is mailed by April 1st.

- ◆ A child's file packet of forms is on-line for the family to complete. The forms are required by Community Care Licensing to be completed before attendance.
- ◆ Tuition payment is charged, beginning with the first payment on August 1st, through *Curracubby*.
- ◆ Invitation to the Open House the Thursday prior to the first day of School is e-mailed along with the School Calendar and the Schedule of the Day.

Child's File Requirement

Prior to attendance the following forms must be completed and submitted to the School:

- 5) Application and Application Fee
- 6) **Enrollment Agreement***
- 7) **Identification and Emergency Information (LIC 601)***
- 8) Physician's Report (LIC 701))
- 9) Child's Pre-admission Health History (LIC 702)
- 10) **Consent for Medical Treatment (LIC 627)***
- 11) **Red emergency card***
- 12) Facebook & Photo Release Form
- 13) Parents' Rights (LIC 995)
- 14) Personal Rights (LIC 613A)
- 15) Parent Participation Commitment
- 16) Family Handbook Acknowledgement
- 17) California School Immunization Record:

Vaccine

Polio	<input type="checkbox"/> #1	<input type="checkbox"/> #2	<input type="checkbox"/> #3	<input type="checkbox"/> #4	<input type="checkbox"/>
DTaP	<input type="checkbox"/> #1	<input type="checkbox"/> #2	<input type="checkbox"/> #3	<input type="checkbox"/> #4	<input type="checkbox"/> #5
MMR	<input type="checkbox"/> #1	<input type="checkbox"/> #2			
Hib	<input type="checkbox"/> #1	<input type="checkbox"/> #2	<input type="checkbox"/> #3	<input type="checkbox"/> #4	
Hepatitis B	<input type="checkbox"/> #1	<input type="checkbox"/> #2	<input type="checkbox"/> #3		
Varicella	<input type="checkbox"/> #1	<input type="checkbox"/> #2			

Polio – at least three dosed (if the third or last dose was given before two years of age one additional dose is required)

DTaP/TD – at least four doses (if the fourth or last dose was given before two years of age one additional dose is required)

MMR (Measles, Mumps and Rubella) – one dose of each on or after the first birthday

Hib & HepB – third dose at least four months after the first dose

Varicella – on or after first birthday

Booster Polio, DTaP and MMR between four to five years old

Nebulizer form from family and physician for child that requires nebulizer or inhaler.

***These forms must be reviewed and updated each year of enrollment.**

Immunization School Policy

Enrollment at the School **requires** the immunizations doses listed above, and the frequency and dates as indicated.

Tuition

Tuition is for the academic school year. Tuition may be paid in full or tuition may be paid in ten equal monthly installments. To secure your child's enrollment for the upcoming school year a *nonrefundable enrollment deposit* of \$200.00 is required. The \$200.00 deposit is applied towards your child's first tuition installment in August. The tuition deposit is due by the last day of February. The remainder of the first tuition installment is due by August 1st. The subsequent nine tuition installments are due on the first of each month September through May.

Day care hours are hours in addition the regular program hours for which you have enrolled your child. Day care hours are billed at the end of the month.

Change of program charge is \$25.00. Program changes are permitted once within a 30-day period.

Tuition is payable through *Curracubby* – direct transfer. Check payments incur a \$25.00 payment-processing fee.

Tuition installments are due the first of the month and are delinquent after the fifth of the month. A late fee of \$50.00 is billed after the fifth of the month

Enrollment is not extended past the month for which payment is not received. Tuition installment balances are sent to an outside collection agency. Enrollment may be re-established through a re-enrollment application and the full \$100.00 application fee.

Payments not honored by the bank incur a \$25.00 return fee. Replacement payment must be secured (money order or cashier's check). Re-occurrence of un-honored tuition payment requires secured payment (money order or cashier's check) in future payments.

Tuition installment payments are not adjusted due to illness, vacation, or other absences from School.

No adjustment or refund is made if your child is withdrawn from the School after April 30th. Before March 30th adjustments are made only with a thirty-day written notice submitted to the Director.

Refund of Tuition - Withdrawal

Refund of tuition is made on a pro-rata basis when thirty days written notice of withdrawal is given by March 30th. The formula for calculating the tuition refund is the academic tuition divided by the total number of school days, times the number of days of your child's attendance. This dollar figure represents the pro-rata use of educational services. This amount is subtracted from payments already made. Refunds are issued within two weeks of your child's last day of school.

Book and Material Fee is prorated along the following schedule:

75% refund with withdrawal prior to November 1st.

50% refund with withdrawal prior to January 1st.
25% refund with withdrawal prior to March 1st.

The Application Fee is not refunded or prorated.

Late Enrollment Tuition

The formula for calculating the late enrollment tuition is the academic tuition divided by the total number of school days times the number of days of your child's projected attendance. This dollar figure represents the pro-rata use of educational services. This amount is paid over the remaining installment months with the remaining tuition due at the beginning of the enrollment.

The *Application Fee* is not prorated.

The *Book and Materials Fee* is one half if enrolled after January 1st.

Enrollment

Tuition is for the academic school year. Tuition may be paid in full or tuition may be paid in ten equal monthly installments. To secure your child's enrollment for the upcoming school year a *nonrefundable enrollment deposit* of \$200.00, which is applied towards your child's first tuition installment. The tuition deposit is due by the last day of February. The remainder of the first tuition installment is due by August 1st. The subsequent nine tuition installments are due on the first of each month September through May.

Curracubby – Tuition Collection Agency

Curracubby bills and collects tuition and other school fees in behalf of the Montessori School. The Director advises *Curracubby* of enrollments and of the program that a child is enrolled. The Director advises *Curracubby* of program changes, withdrawals and late enrollments. No special financial arrangement can be negotiated through the Director or through *Curracubby* that is different than the written arrangements found in the Family Handbook and the Tuition Agreement form including the waiver of late payment, returned checks, and change of program fees.

Automatic (ACH) debit payments are required by *Curracubby*.

Family Participation Commitment

Each family is required to donate ten hours per year per child enrolled. Participation may take the form of service on one of the family committees, or service in the school office or in the classroom. If this participation is not possible for your family a \$200.00 Family Participation Fee is assessed per child enrolled.

Program Curriculum Plan – Half Day (Three Hour Program)

Montessori curriculum components are matched to your child:

Practical Life, Sensorial, Mathematics, Language Arts

Program Curriculum Plan – Extended Day (Six Hour Program)

In addition to the core Montessori curriculum components (see *Half Day*) the program is enriched to include Animal Studies, Artists, Geography Studies, Music and Composers, Notion of Time, Plant Studies, and Cooking. Opportunities for napping are provided.

Program Curriculum Plan – All Day (Eleven Hours)

In addition to the core Montessori curriculum components (see *Half Day*) the program is enriched to include Animal Studies, Arts and Crafts, Artists, Geography Studies, Music and Composers, Music and Movement, Notion of Time, Plant Studies and Tea Time. The curriculum sequence is located in *The Montessori Enrichment Program* brochure.

Arrival and Dismissal Procedure

Prompt arrival is important for your child to fully benefit from our program. The general continuity and calm of the classroom is disrupted by tardy arrivals. The following are the arrival and departure times for the three programs.

For the Half Day Program:

Arrival is between 8:45 AM and 9:00 AM
Dismissal is between 11:45 AM and 12 Noon
or
Arrival is between 11:45 PM and 12:00 PM
Dismissal is between 2:45 PM and 3:00 PM

For the Extended Day Program:

Arrival is between 8:45 AM and 9:00 AM
Dismissal is between 2:45 PM and 3:00 PM
or
Arrival is between 11:45 AM and 12:00 Noon
Dismissal is between 5:45 PM and 6:00 PM

For the All Day Program:

Arrival is between 6:30 AM and 9:00 AM
Dismissal is between 2:45 PM and 6:00 PM

Sign-in and Sign-Out Procedure

Upon arrival and upon departure Community Care Licensing (CCL) requires families to sign-in and date on your child's attendance each day. This requirement is achieved through our automated system in which the parent/guardian daily checks the child in and out.

Release of Child to Authorized Persons Only

Your child is only released to those persons appearing on the Emergency and Identification form that each family completes prior to attendance. If the person is not recognized by the dismissing teacher photo identification is requested.

If someone is picking up your child that is not listed on the Emergency and Identification form a signed note must be given to the teacher in the morning, or emailed to the school during the day.

Lunch Policy

The family provides lunch for their child. Any portion of the lunch not eaten by your child is returned home so that the family can monitor food preferences and food intake. Children are not permitted to share food with other children.

Lunch is required to be nutritious. A nutritious lunch is low in sugars and low in fats. A nutritious lunch is high in nutrients that include vitamins, minerals and protein. Read the ingredients information on packaged foods. If one of the first three ingredients listed is sugar-based (sucrose, glucose, corn syrup, honey, etc) then do not send that food item in the lunch. The following items are to be omitted from lunches for the same reasons: soda, fruit *drink* (fruit *juice* is fine), cake, cookies, sugared cereals, chocolate items, candy and gum. If a child brings a high sugar or high fat food items you will be reminded of the policy with a note.

The following information is intended to assist you in putting together a healthy lunch for your child. The USDA’s Food Guide Pyramid recommends that young children (ages two to six years) eat the following per day:

- Milk/Dairy 2 servings Meat/Protein 2 servings
- Vegetables 3 servings Fruits 2 servings
- Bread/Cereal 6 servings

For older children (and adults), add one serving of milk, one serving of meat, two servings of vegetables, two servings of fruit and up to five servings of bread. **Serving sizes are smaller for children.** One tablespoon per year of age is a good general guide. You may want to try including servings from each of the five food groups in your child’s lunch each day. Some suggestions your child may find appealing are included in the following table.

MEAT/PROTEIN BREAD/CEREAL	MILK/DAIRY	VEGETABLE	FRUIT	
2-3 servings daily servings daily	2-3 servings daily	3-5 servings daily	2-4 servings daily	6-11
Half sandwich (tuna, egg, lunch meat, cheese, etc.	Low or non-fat milk	Raw veggies with low-fat dip (carrot, celery, bell pepper, broccoli, cauliflower)	Unsweetened juices (calcium fortified is good)	Wheat bread

Left-over chicken	Cheese sticks	Mashed potatoes	Banana	Tortilla
Quesadilla (tortilla with bean and/or cheese)	Cottage cheese with fruit	Baked potato with cheese	Apple or unsweetened applesauce	Pasta

On special occasions such as a birthday or holidays, the School stretches the nutritious food rule in order to allow for treats. But please keep the sugar to a minimum – no icing cupcakes. If you have a question about a food item that you are bringing ask a teacher for advice.

Please advise the School if your child has a food allergy, or a dietary restriction.

Day Care Hours

In addition to regular programs there are day care hours that may be utilized on an *as-needed* basis. These hours are supervised and provide care during extra hours a family may require before or after hours. Notification of extra hours is required in advance.

Day care hours may be used in an *as-needed* basis. Day care hours are billed at the end of the month.

Late Pick Up

Late Pick Up is when the adult picks up of a child after 6:00 PM. An automatic, non-negotiable late fee of \$5.00 for each five-minute interval is charged. Three late pick-ups result in the School’s termination of day care services to the family.

Personal Belongings

Personal belongings that clearly relate to the intent of the classroom are welcome. The personal belonging is placed in the classroom and is available to all the children on the same basis as any other material in the classroom. Toys remain at home or in the car.

The School supplies napping mat, sheet and blanket. There is not storage space for personal blankets.

If your child brings home an object that does not look familiar, please check with the teacher. Even seemingly insignificant objects may be critical to a Montessori material. Please return all materials.

Clearly label or mark all of your child’s clothing and belongings.

Routines

Routines are an integral part of the life of your child and the School program. Routines allow your child to apply practical life skills and develop self-help and social skills. Arrival and departure routines, eating (snack and lunch) routines, and nap preparation

routines are predictable for your child. Routines follow a sequence so that your child experiences a relaxed and peaceful atmosphere as your child moves through routines.

Routines that affect the family, such as toileting and feeding, are discussed and implemented with family consultation.

Snack and Lunch

Snack is provided in the morning and in the afternoon. Snack is low in sugars and low in fats. Snack consists of two of the food groups for each snack. The following is an example of the snacks provided: (CCL 101227(4) quantity not specified)

	Morning	Afternoon
Monday	Saltines/Cheese	Ritz Crackers/ Cheese
Tuesday	Pretzels/Oranges	Cream Cheese/Raisins
Wednesday	Graham Crackers/Orange	Fruit Cup/Graham Bears
Thursday	Goldfish Crackers/Raisins	Trail Mix/Raisins
Friday	Cheerios/Apples	Tortilla/Cheese

See the menu schedule by the month posted at the school entrance.

The family provides lunch. Lunches are not refrigerated so the family must place cold and hot items in insulated containers to retain the proper temperature. Any portion of the lunch not eaten by your child is returned so that you can monitor preferences and intake. Lunch is expected to be nutritional which means the lunch is low in sugar and in fat, and high in protein, vitamins and minerals. Such a lunch precludes sugar drinks, chips, cakes and cookies.

Advise the School if you child has a food allergy or a dietary restriction.

Birthdays – Celebration of Life

Your child is invited to have a birthday celebration at School. Birthdays are celebrated at 11:00 AM (or 2:30 for the afternoon class) at the group time. The birthday child holds the globe and identifies his/her country of origin on the globe and shares something special of ethnic interest regarding the country. The child then circles the model of the sun while holding the globe, once for each year of his/her age. After each orbit the child imagines what he/she was like at age one, two, etc.

The class sings *Happy Birthday* and simple treats of plain muffins (no nuts), fruit cup, jello cups, breads, raisins, pretzels, etc., are shared by the birthday child. Contact the teacher if you wish to bring a special snack. The family is welcome to come during this time, but no goodie bags, please. Your generosity is appreciated, but not all families can afford a gift to all the children. Further, our children have so very much stuff already!

Field Study Trips – Not Provided at This Time

Field study trips may be arranged during the school year with appropriate notice to families and a permission form to be signed and returned to the School. Families are requested to assist with transportation and with supervision on the field study trips if this

is possible for you. Proof of insurance, a valid driver's license, working seat and car seats are required.

Special Needs and Disabilities

Modifications are made in the environment and staffing patterns for the child with special needs and disabilities. Teachers are informed of the identified/diagnosed special needs of the child and trained to follow through on a specific intervention plan. With the assistance of qualified specialists, therapy is developed appropriately and incorporated within school activities as much as possible. Teachers are responsive to the priorities and concerns of the family of the child with special needs. Families are advised if the behavior of the child is outside the norm and referred to the public schools for an assessment. The public school helps in determining the best environment to meet the needs of the child.

Child Abuse Reporting

While everyone should report suspected child abuse and neglect, the California Penal Code requires that certain professionals and laypersons must report suspected abuse. The mandated reporters include Child Care Custodians. Failure to report suspected abuse by a mandated reporter within 36 hours is a misdemeanor punishable by 6 months in jail and/or a \$1,000.00 fine. Marks on your child that are not satisfactorily explained to the School are reported to authorities.

Family and School Partnership

Families are in partnerships with the School, establishing and maintaining regular, ongoing, respectful two-way communication to build trust and mutual understanding, and to ensure that your child's learning and developmental needs are met. Teachers greet you at arrival and at dismissal. Changes in a child's physical or emotional state are reported to you regularly. Notes and/or telephone calls are used to communicate if you do not bring your child personally to the School. Informally, family members are welcome into the classroom – during non-Covid-19 times.

The School wishes to assure you that no adult, outside your immediate family and the teachers on staff here at the school, has access to your child. Further, should there be an occasion for any agency to request access to your child you will be informed. All children are protected. No parent is permitted to approach or to interrogate another child.

You are informed about the program and about the curriculum through the School newsletters, flyers, emails, and the bulletin board by the entrance area. Policy changes and other critical issues are communicated to you by email and paper flyers.

Communication between teachers and families ensures your child a smooth transition from home to the School, or from one program to another during the day. Major changes that affect your child, such as changes in room or in teacher, and use of special services, are discussed with you before decisions are made.

A written system is established for sharing between teachers and family the day-to-day happenings that affect your child.

Involvement in the School is encouraged. Prior to Covid-19: Your involvement can take whatever form your interest and your schedule allows. Families contribute to the class by sharing their talents. Your child enjoys having you come to School to talk about or demonstrate a special interest. This talent can be cooking, reading a story, a demonstration of your profession (doctor, dog groomer, carpenter, etc), dancing, sewing, playing an instrument, etc.

The final pages of the Family Handbook contain ideas for the family in order to support the School's efforts.

Unusual Incident/Injury Report to Family

Unusual Incident and Injury Report (LIC 624) is made to the family in writing. If the incident or the injury is of significant magnitude the family is immediately contacted.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is maintained when discussions are held between you and your child's teacher.

Family Observation of the Classroom – Scheduled – Pre-Covid-19

Informal observation of the classroom is always welcome. Arrangements are made with the teacher prior to observing so as not to conflict with scheduling of other activities such as a field study trip or a holiday rehearsal. Formally, observations of the classroom are scheduled during the months of November and April by ZOOM.

The School Newsletter

The School Newsletter is issued once a month to serve as an update and reminder of events and activities that are up-coming.

Family Observation of the Classroom – Unscheduled – Pre-Covid-19

Parents are allowed to visit the classroom without advance notice at any time during the normal hours of operation. However, when a family member's behavior poses a threat to the health and safety of the children or other adults, entrance is denied. Everyone is expected to be respectful.

Family Conferences

Informally, you are invited to initiate a conference at any time you feel the need. Formally, conferences are scheduled in December and in May. Your child's progress, accomplishments, and difficulties at home and at School are discussed. Both formal and informal conferences provide the opportunity for continuity of input between you and the School.

At both formal and informal meetings, we work together to make decisions about how to best support your child's development, progress, accomplishments and learning, or to handle problems or differences at home or at school as they arise. Teachers seek your specific ideas for working with your child when at the School.

The formal and informal meetings provide the opportunity to solicit and to incorporate your knowledge about your child for ongoing assessment and planning at School.

If the teacher is not of your linguistic and cultural background every effort is made to ensure communication with you by arranging for a translator to be present.

Calendar of Family Events

The *Calendar of Family Events* lists the events that involve the family in social and informational activities at the school:

September -	Back to School Night	1 st Thursday in September
	School/Family Pot Luck	2 nd Thursday in September
October -	Saturday Garden Party	1 st Saturday in October
	The Montessori Classroom	3 rd Thursday in October
November -	Family Observation	1 st through 30 th
	Positive Discipline I	TBA
	Thanksgiving Pot Luck	Monday before Thanksgiving
December -	Family Conferences	1 st week in December
January -	Father's and Significant Male Night	3 rd Thursday in January
February -	Positive Discipline II	TBA
March -	Montessori in the Home	3 rd Thursday in March
April -	Family Observation in the Class	1 st through 3 rd week of April
	International Pot Luck	Thursday in April
	Earth Day/Garden Party	4 th Saturday & Sunday in April
May -	Family Conferences	1 st week in May
	Mother/Special Friend's Tea	2 nd Friday in May
June -	Graduation	1 st Thursday in June

Family Participation Committees

You are encouraged to be involved in the school. In addition to the Family Events there are the following Family Participation Committee (FPC). The Committees are:

Events and Activities Committee
Facilities and Garden Committee
Family Policy and Appeals Committee

Events and Activities Committee – The Events and Activities Committee helps to inform and to organize families to support special events and activities that occur at the School. This includes T-shirt and book fair sales book in the Fall and in the Spring, photograph sessions, etc.

Facilities and Garden Committee – The Facilities and Garden Committee helps to identify needs in the play yard, general grounds, and the classroom. The committee organizes and conducts the work parties on the Saturday in the Fall and in the Spring.

Policy and Appeals Subcommittee – The Policy and Appeals Committee reviews policies that the director or families think need more clarification or research. The committee develops a policy statement for the Director and the Early Childhood Specialist to review.

Grievance Procedure for Families

Difficulties and differences that arise from interactions between teachers and families are resolved through special conferences, or individual meetings involving all participants. The School Director facilitates the meetings.

School Transfer

The School's formal record of your child's development is available for transfer to another school with family permission.

Referrals and Community Resources

The director has the range of experience and the community resources to make appropriate professional referrals when necessary. The director and teachers are familiar with and make appropriate use of community resources including social services; mental and physical health agencies; and educational programs such as museums, libraries, and neighborhood centers.

The family is referred to resources and services based on the needs and interests observed by the director or teachers or expressed by the family.

Sickness Policies and Procedures

Sick children are not admitted to the School. Children are excluded from school when they exhibit the following symptoms:

- ◆ Fever (100°F or higher)
 - ◆ Diarrhea
 - ◆ Vomiting
 - ◆ Rash with fever or the rash associated with a virus called herpes simplex
 - ◆ Sore throat with fever and swollen glands
 - ◆ Coughing that is bad enough to make the child red or blue in the face or a cough that is followed by whooping sounds
- 1) Mucus or pus draining from the eye (conjunctivitis - pink eye)
 - 2) Yellow skin or eyes
 - 3) Continuous crying or extreme irritability.

Advise your child's teacher of special health conditions or considerations so that they are alert to the health of your child.

Should your child become ill or injured at School, we will notify you immediately and take whatever steps you have indicated on your emergency forms. You will also be informed if your child has had any minor bump or bruise during the day.

If your child will be absent for more than two days, notify the School. If your child has a communicable disease (e.g. chickenpox, measles, **lice***), notify the School immediately.

*Lice, which spread so rapidly and easily, require a doctor's note that your child is free of the nits (eggs) of lice, or be examined for nits by the School Director.

See paragraph on *Medication* below if your child requires medication while at School.

Please notify us if there are any changes in emergency numbers (your work or home phone number, new doctor, etc.).

Medication

The School will administer medication to your child on your written request noted in the *Administration of Medication Request* (LIC 9221) form.

Provide all medications directly to the teacher. Prescription medication containers are required to have the original label containing the child's name, the name of the medication, the dosage, the expiration date, and the time and frequency of the administration of the medication.

Nebulizers and inhalers require the completion of the *Nebulizer Care Consent/Verification – Child Care Facility* (CCL 9166) by the child's physician.

A written record is kept of each medication application.

Notify the teacher if your child is taking any medication that may account for behavioral changes.

Medical Emergency

In a medical emergency the School will call 911. The Family will immediately be alerted. Medical emergency information that you have provided (*Consent for Medical Treatment* LIC 627, and *Identification and Emergency Information* LIC 601) will be followed.

Discipline Statement

Children experience security where there is consistent adult guidance and discipline. Adults, in their role of caring for children, model, teach, and reinforce pro-social behavior. Teachers use constructive and consistent methods of discipline in order to maintain a peaceful and nurturing environment that supports learning.

The teachers do not use negative physical touching such as spanking, slapping, tapping, pulling, pinching, etc. Additionally, teachers do not use humiliation,

intimidation, ridicule, coercion, threats, mental abuse, or interference with daily living functions.

The teachers are trained in observation to anticipate possible conflicts and to prepare the environment to minimize difficult situations. Techniques such as redirecting, natural and logical consequences, active listening and I-messages are techniques used by the teachers. The family is contacted in situations in which the child is or potentially may inflict harm to self, others, or the environment.

Consistent ground rules and reminders of proper behavior result in clarity for children in a majority of the time. In situations in which this array of techniques do not produce expected results, the School's position is that this environment is not meeting the child's needs and a more suitable environment is required. – **See *Dismissal* on page 20.**

Teacher – Child Interaction

- ◆ **Teachers interact frequently with children showing affection, interest, and respect.** Teachers interact non-verbally by smiling, touching, holding, and by listen to children during activities and routines. Teachers verbally interact by speaking with children at eye level throughout the day. Teachers actively seek meaningful conversations with children
- ◆ **Teachers are available and responsive to children.** Teachers listen to children with attention and respect. Teachers are aware of the activities of the entire group even when dealing with a smaller group. Teachers position themselves strategically and look up often from involvement. Teachers spend time observing each child without interrupting an actively involved child
- ◆ **Teachers speak to children in a friendly, positive, courteous manner.** Teachers call children by name and speak with individual children often asking open-ended questions. Teachers include children in conversations; describe actions, experiences, and events; listen and respond to children's comments and suggestions
- ◆ **Teachers talk with individual children, and encourage children of all ages to use language.** Teachers ask preschoolers open-ended questions and talk positively to children about family members, family events, traditions, and routines.
- ◆ **Teachers treat children of all races, religions, family backgrounds, and cultures with equal respect and consideration.** Teachers initiate activities and discussions to build positive self-identity and teach the value of differences. Teachers make it a firm rule that a person's identity (age, race, ethnicity, family life, physical appearance, and ability) is never used to tease or reject anyone. Teachers speak positively about each child's physical characteristics and cultural heritage. Teachers react to teasing or rejecting among children by intervening to discuss similarities and differences.
- ◆ **Teachers provide children of both sexes with equal opportunities to take part in all activities.** Teachers provide models, props, and visual images that counter traditional sex-role limitations such as female firefighters, male nurses. Teachers value positive levels of noise and activity involving both girls and boy. Teachers acknowledging individual children, avoid gender stereotypes in language references such as *strong, gentle, pretty, helpful* for both girls and boys.

- ◆ **Teachers encourage children’s development of individual functioning, as appropriate.** Teachers foster the development of age-appropriate self-help skills such as picking up toys, wiping spills, personal grooming (toileting, hand washing), obtaining and caring for materials, and other skills.
- ◆ **Teachers facilitate the development of responsibility, self-regulation, and self-control in children.**
Teachers set clear, consistent, fair limits for classroom behavior. Teachers use children’s mistakes as learning opportunities, describing the situation and encouraging the children’s evaluation of the problem rather than imposing the solution. Teachers anticipate and eliminate potential problems, redirecting children to more acceptable behavior or activity. Teachers listen and acknowledge children’s feelings and frustrations, and respond with respect. Teachers guide children to resolve conflicts and model skills that help children to solve their own problems. Teachers encourage appropriate behavior, patiently reminding children of rules and their rationale. Teachers apply logical or natural consequences in problem situations.
- ◆ **Teachers do not use corporal punishment or other negative discipline methods that hurt, humiliate, or frighten children.** Food or beverage is never withheld as a form of discipline and the environment is arranged so that a minimal number of “No’s” are necessary.
- ◆ **Overall sound of group is pleasant.** Busy activity, pleasant conversation rather than harsh, or stressful noise is achieved. Adult voices do not predominate. Classical music is often heard.
- ◆ **Teacher’s support children’s emotional development, assisting them to comfortable, relaxed, happy, and involved in play and in other activities.** Teachers comfort and reassure children who are hurt, fearful, or otherwise upset. Teachers assist children in dealing with anger, frustration, or sadness by comforting, identifying, and reflecting feelings. Help children use various strategies to express emotions and solve social problems. Intervene quickly when children’s responses to each other become physically aggressive, discuss the inappropriateness of such action, and help children to develop more positive strategies to solve conflicts by encouraging children to verbalize feelings and ideas, including both positive and negative emotions. Teachers supply words for very young children to describe feelings and discuss alternative solutions with children.
- ◆ **Teachers recognize and encourage pro-social behaviors among children.** Teachers help children learn to take turns, to solve problems, and to show concern for others. Expectations of children’s social behavior are developmentally appropriate. Teachers support children’s beginning friendships and provide opportunities for children to learn from each other as well as adults. Children are encouraged to cooperate in small groups.
- ◆ **Teachers use a variety of teaching strategies to enhance children’s learning and development throughout the day.** Teachers stimulate children’s thinking and extend their learning using verbal methods such as posing problems, asking questions, and making comments and suggestion. Teachers introduce children to new experiences, ideas, or challenges and guide children in the acquisition of specific skills as needed, being careful to challenge, but not frustrate.

School Holidays

The traditional School holidays are observed: Labor Day, Veterans' Day; two days at Thanksgiving; two weeks at Winter Break; Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday; two days for Presidents' Birthdays; one week at Spring Break; Memorial Day, and Independence Day. Two additional days for Family Conferences are one day in December and one day in May.

Day Care is provided on the following School holidays at no additional charge for children enrolled in the All Day Program:

Winter Break except four days
Family Conferences in December and in May
Spring Break

For an additional fee, children enrolled in the Half Day Program and the Extended Day Program may enroll during the School Holidays.

Dismissal

The Montessori School reserves the right to dismiss a child who is not suited to our individualized program, who is not benefiting from the School environment, or who exhibits inappropriate behavior. Inappropriate behavior includes biting, pinching, punching, etc. of children or teachers, not listening to the teachers and using rude language or gestures to children or to teachers, or other inappropriate behavior as determined by the School.

On the first incident of inappropriate behavior the family is notified and may be required to remove the child.

On the second incident of inappropriate behavior the family must remove the child for the remainder of the day.

On the third incident of inappropriate behavior the child is dismissed from the school.

The family is legally liable for any damage done to property or to another person.

Further, a child is dismissed if the family member(s) exhibits abusive or disrespectful behavior to children or to adults at the School.

Finally, any tuition not current by the end of the month results in automatic dismissal of the child.

Recommended Readings

The Absorbent Mind, Maria Montessori
The Secret of Childhood, Maria Montessori
The Discovery of the Child, Maria Montessori
Montessori: A Modern Approach, Paula Lillard
Positive Discipline, Jane Nelson

Disaster Procedure

In the event of a disaster such as an earthquake your child remains at the School unless advised by authorities to evacuate. If your child is moved, the evacuation location will be posted. All reasonable precautions for your child's safety and health will be taken. Three days of supplies are on site for each child. The *Emergency and Disaster Handbook* is located in the School Office for your review.

T- shirts/Dress Attire

School logo polo shirts are available for purchase. T-shirts and polo shirts with super-heroes, etc., are not allowed at School because of the negative behavior it encourages in the children. Halloween costumes are not allowed to be super-heroes or scary characters.”

Included in the super-hero category is any fighting characters such as ninjas, power rangers, spider man, pokemons, Yuh-gi-oh, etc. If your child comes to school with an inappropriate shirt the teacher will have your child turn the shirt inside out.

For safety your child is required to wear socks when wearing open-toe shoes.

Standards for Language Arts

Reading

Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development

By the end of kindergarten, your child will:

- 1) Identify front cover, back cover, and title page of a book.
- 2) Follow words from left to right, from top to bottom on a printed page.
- 3) Understand that printed materials provide information.
- 4) Recognize that sentences in print are made up of separate words.
- 5) Distinguish letters from words.
- 6) Recognize and name all upper case and lower case letters in the alphabet.
- 7) Say the sounds of letters and blends.
- 8) Sound out simple syllables or words with two or three sounds when one sound is added, substituted, omitted, shifted, or repeated.
- 9) Blend vowel consonant sounds orally to make words or syllables.
- 10) Identify and produce rhyming words in response to an oral prompt.
- 11) Distinguish orally stated one-syllable words and say the beginning or ending sounds.
- 12) Track auditorily each word in a sentence and each syllable in a word.
- 13) Count the number of sounds in syllables, and syllables in words.
- 14) Match all consonant and short vowel sounds to appropriate letters.
- 15) Read simple one-syllable and high frequency sight words.
- 16) Understand that as letters of words change, so do the sounds.
- 17) Identify and sort common words in basic categories (e.g., colors, shapes, food).
- 18) Describe common objects and events in both general and specific language.

Reading Comprehension

By the ends of kindergarten, your child will:

- 1) Locate the title, table of contents, name of author and name of illustrator in books.
- 2) Use pictures and context to make predictions about the story content.
- 3) Connect the information and events in books to life experiences.
- 4) Retell familiar stories.
- 5) Ask and answer questions about essential elements of a book.

Literary Response and Analysis

By the end of kindergarten, your child will:

- 1) Distinguish fantasy from realism.
- 2) Identify types of everyday print materials (e.g., storybooks, poems, newspapers, signs, labels).
- 3) Identify characters, settings, and important events.

Writing

Writing Strategies

By the end of kindergarten, your child will:

1. Use letters and phonetically spelled words to write about experiences, stories, people, objects, or events.
2. Write consonant-vowel-consonant words (e.g. dog, cat, hat).
3. Write by moving from left to right and from top to bottom on the paper.
4. Write using uppercase and lowercase letters and attend to the form and proper spacing of the letters.

Written and Oral English Language Conventions

By the end of kindergarten, your child will:

1. Recognize and use complete, coherent sentences when speaking.
2. Spell independently using knowledge of letter sounds and letter names.

Listening and Speaking Strategies

By the end of kindergarten, your child will:

- 1) Understand and follow one-and two-step directions.
- 2) Share information and ideas, speaking audibly in complete, coherent sentences.

Standards for Mathematics

Number Sense

Number Relationships

By the end of kindergarten, your child will:

- 1) Compare two or more sets of objects (up to 10 objects per group) and identify which set is equal to, more than, or less than the other.
- 2) Count, recognize, represent, name, and order number of objects up to 30.
Know that the larger numbers describe sets with more objects in them than the smaller numbers have.

Addition and Subtraction

By the end of kindergarten, your child will:

- 1) Use concrete objects to determine the answers to addition and subtraction problems with two numbers, each less than 10.

Estimation

By the end of kindergarten, your child will:

- 1) Recognize when an estimate is reasonable.

Algebra and Functions

Sorting and classifying objects

By the end of kindergarten, your child will:

- 1) Identify, sort, and classify objects by attribute and identify which objects do not belong to a particular group.

Measurement and Geometry

Measurement

By the end of kindergarten, your child will:

1. Compare the length, weight, and capacity of objects (e.g., shorter, longer, taller, lighter, heavier, holds more).
- 2) Understand concepts of time (e.g., morning, afternoon, evening, today, yesterday, tomorrow, week, month, year) and the tools used to measure time (e.g., clock, calendar).
- 3) Name the days of the week.

Identify the time (to the nearest hour) everyday events (e.g., lunch time is 12 o'clock).

Geometry

By the end of kindergarten, your child will:

1. Identify and describe common geometric objects such as the circle, triangle, square, rectangle, cube, sphere, and cone.
2. Compare familiar plane (e.g., square, triangle) and solid objects (e.g., cube, sphere) by common attributes such as position, shape, size, roundness and number of corners.

Statistics, Data Analysis, and Probability

Collecting Information

By the end of kindergarten, your child will:

- 1) Pose informational questions, collecting data, then record the results using objects, pictures, and/or picture graphs.
- 2) Identify, describe, and extend simple patterns (e.g., circle, square, circle) by referring to their shapes, sizes, or colors

Mathematical Reasoning

Making Decisions about a Problem

By the end of kindergarten, your child will:

- 1) Determine the approach, materials, and strategies to be used.
- 2) Use Tools and strategies, such as manipulatives or sketches, to model problems.

Solve Problems and Justify Reasoning

By the end of kindergarten, your child will:

- 1) Explain their reasoning when using concrete objects and/or pictorial representations to solve a problem.
- 2) Make precise calculations when solving a problem, and check the validity of the results in the context of a problem.

Atmosphere at Home

We encourage parents to consider the following ideas when setting up an environment at home for increasing student learning:

1. Strive to establish an encouraging family atmosphere by:
 - Acknowledging and supporting your child's efforts;
 - Reinforcing positive behavior
 - Providing opportunities for service to others

2. Be involved in your child's education by:
 - ◆ Demonstrating a positive attitude
 - ◆ Providing help, resources, and encouragement;
 - ◆ Showing interest and supporting your child's work
 - ◆ Upholding the school's expectations
 - ◆ Supporting and participating in school service opportunities

3. Set up an atmosphere conducive to learning by:
 - Scheduling a regular, daily time where all family members are studying or having their quiet time
 - Making sure the house is quiet during this study time

4. Strengthen communication with your child by:
 - ◆ Spending quality time with your child
 - ◆ Sharing resources from your community such as parks, libraries,
 - ◆ Establishing and enforcing reasonable consequences for behavior

5. Provide an appropriate work space that:
 - ◆ Is quiet
 - ◆ Has appropriate lighting
 - ◆ Contains supplies: paper, pencils, glue, crayons resources, etc.

Home Activities for Language Arts

Reading

1. Read to your child each night.
2. Share and help your child memorize Nursery Rhymes, prayers and songs.
3. Show enthusiasm for reading

Reading Comprehension

1. Read a portion of a story then have your child predict the ending.
2. Have your child retell stories.
3. Ask your child questions about the story you read.

Writing

1. Help your child learn how to hold pencils and crayons correctly by participating in coloring activities. (Using a triangle pencil grip will be helpful.)
2. Teach your child to write his/her name and letters of the alphabet correctly. (e.g., Charles not CHARLES)
3. Make dots on paper, forming the letters of the child's name, and have your child write his/her name tracing the dots.
4. Have your child use different mediums when writing (e.g., clay, sand, paint).

Written and Oral English Language Conventions

Encourage your child to speak in complete sentences and use correct grammar.

1. When ready, help your child sound out and write 3 letter words that are in the same family (e.g., cat, hat, rat, or sat, hat, cat).
2. Model proper English usage when speaking.

Listening and Speaking

1. When giving directions to your child, have him/her repeat the direction back to you.
2. Play age appropriate games with your child that incorporate listening and speaking (e.g., "Simon Says")
3. Have your child recite a poem or prayer.

Home Activities for Mathematics

Number Sense

- 1) Count objects around the house and compare them (e.g., more, less, the same).
 1. Practice counting from 0- 50 with your child.
 2. Play counting games with your child (e.g., “Candyland,” “Hi Ho Cherry O.”)

Algebra and Functions

1. Help your child sort objects around the house by color, shape, size and texture.

Measurement and Geometry

1. Help your child make a family calendar.
2. Have your child help with cooking and crafts.
3. Making a monthly growth chart with your child, recording both height and weight.

Statistics, Data Analysis, and Probability

1. Discuss, with your child, various patterns found around the house and in nature.
2. Play a game like “I Spy.” (e.g., I spy something that is red, round,..)

Mathematical Reasoning

1. Include your child in discussions about money, numbers, and solving simple family problems.

APPENDIX A

Schedule of the Day Preschool/Kindergarten

6:30 - 8:45	Inside Time with Day Care Materials
8:45- 9:00	Arrival of Children/Greeting at the Classroom Door
9:00 - 9:15	Group Time with Greeting, Calendar, Weather Report, Vocabulary Development with Initial Sound Cards, Artist of the Month
9:15 – 10:50	Montessori Class Time with Choice of Materials
10:50 – 11:00	Clean-up Time
11:00 - 11:15	Group Time with Music and Songs, Composer of the Month/Aesop’s Fables
11:15 - 11:45	Outside Time in Play Yard
11:45 – 12:00	Dismissal for Morning Children
11:45 - 12:30	Preparation for Lunch and Lunch
12:30 – 12:45	Quiet Reading
12:30 – 2:30	Younger Children Nap
12:30 – 1:00	Kindergarten- Math Class/ Group
1:00 - 2:30	Older Children: Cultural Group and Demonstration Study of Plants Study of Animals Study of Land Forms & Continents Study of History Penmanship
2:30 – 2:45	Group Time with Movement/Music
2:45 – 3:00	Dismissal for Extended Day Students
3:00 – 3:15	Hand washing/Snack (for Nappers)
3:00 – 3:45	Outside Time in the Play Yard (Afternoon / Daycare Children)

3:45 – 4:00	Dismissal for Afternoon Children
4:00 - 4:45	1. Arts and Crafts, 2. Creative Movement and Music, 3. Cooking
5:00 - 5:15	Tea & Cookie Time
5:15 – 5:45	Inside Time with Day Care materials
5:45 – 6:00	Story Time

APPENDIX B

Two Year Old Room Schedule of the Day

6:30 - 8:45	Inside Time with Day Care Materials
8:45- 9:00	Arrival of Children/Greeting at the Classroom Door
9:00 - 9:15	Group Time with Greeting, Calendar, Weather Report, Vocabulary Development with Initial Sound Cards, Artist of the Month
9:15 – 10:50	Montessori Class Time with Choice of Materials
10:50 – 11:00	Clean-up Time
11:00 - 11:15	Group Time with Music and Songs & Movement Composer of the Month
11:15 - 11:45	Outside Time in Play Yard
11:45 – 12:00	Dismissal for Morning Children Hand Washing (Extended Day Children)
11:45 - 12:30	Preparation for Lunch and Lunch
12:30 – 2:30	Nap Time
2:45 – 3:00	Dismissal for Extended Day Students
2:45 - 3:00	Hand Washing
3:00 - 3:45	Snack and Outside Time in the Play Yard
4:00 - 4:45	Art and Crafts, Creative Movement and Music
4:45 - 5:15	Tea Time
5:15 – 5:45	Activities with Day Care materials
5:45 – 6:00	Story Time