

Toddler Handbook



Montessori Academy of
Lancaster
2016-2017

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Birthday Walks

Montessori Academy of Lancaster celebrates your child's birthday with a special Birthday Walk. We light a yellow candle to symbolize the sun, and your child carries the 'earth' (a stuffed globe) around the 'sun' as many times as years alive. All members of the family are encouraged/invited to attend (siblings from preschool rooms can come down to our room) and your child is welcome to bring in a treat to share with their friends (please plan to bring cookies, mini cupcakes or muffins as a full-size cupcake is usually too much!) You will need to bring in pictures of your child as a newborn, at one, and at two. We show the newborn picture and talk about your child as a newborn and then they walk around the 'sun' while we sing a song. We then do the same for their first and second years. They blow out the candle, we sing 'Happy Birthday', and then we enjoy the treat.

Our Birthday Walks are typically the last activity of the morning, so after the walk and the treat you may take your child home from there. At this age, some of the children are thrown off by the walks— it disturbs their routine and sometimes it is difficult for them to have Mom and Dad in the classroom. If the walk itself is upsetting, we can just show pictures and sing! We will be as flexible as we need to be so the experience is a positive one.

Diapers/Clothing

Your child will have a bin at school which will contain five days worth of diapers (if necessary), and a change of seasonal clothes, including socks. When your child begins to run low on either, we will let you know. Please make sure the change of clothes changes with the seasons.

Toddlers do not need slippers.

Since your children tend to be pretty active during the day and engage in art and water activities that could prove messy, we ask that you dress your child in simple, comfortable "play" clothing. Girls' dresses can tend to get caught underfoot on climbing equipment, etc. which could prove hazardous, and it is more difficult to change a diaper when dealing with tights. We recommend pants and leggings for the girls; they are safer and allow for ease of movement when participating in all play activities. We also encourage dressing your children in sneakers or shoes that do not have slippery soles. (NO CROCS OR FLIP FLOPS, PLEASE!)

When your child is toilet training, remember to dress him/her in simple elastic waist garments, rather than those that buckle, snap, involve belts or suspenders (including coveralls). This helps minimize accidents as children rush to make it to the bathroom in time and affords your child the success necessary toward building confidence and independence. Thank you!

Emergency Contact Forms

Health Assessment and Emergency Contact Forms

Your child's health assessment and emergency contact form must be in before your child's first day of school. If your child's emergency information changes during the year, please make sure we receive the updated information.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up

Morning Drop-Off (8:50-9:00am)- A teacher will greet your child at your car and will escort your child into the building and their classroom. Per DHS standards, food and drink that is not part of your child's lunch must stay in the car.

Afternoon Pick-Up (AM:11:45am PM:2:45)- A teacher will escort your child from the building to your car and help them get into their car seat. For insurance purposes, we are not allowed to buckle them in their car seat. Once in their seat, please drive to the tree line and then buckle your child in their seat. Parents, for your safety, please **DO NOT** get out of your car during the drop-off or pick-up process.

****Please make every effort each day to arrive at the school by 11:45am. It is extremely difficult for your toddler to wait after a busy day! Thank you for your cooperation in advance.****

Contact Times

If you ever have any questions, joys, or concerns, please always feel welcome to contact us by phone or email. We will frequently use e-mail to communicate extra information or for periodic updates pertaining only to the toddlers. Please make sure we have your current e-mail address. We are also available daily at school from 8:30-8:45am and again from 12:15to 12:30pm. Karen Rubenstein is also available during school hours.

Contact information:

Ms. Alecia: ms.alecia@montlanc.com

Ms. Melissa: ms.melissad@montlanc.com

Montessori Academy: (717) 560-0815

Newsletter

Periodically a classroom newsletter will be sent via email. Please take the time to read it, as it is intended to keep you informed of classroom happenings. The Head of School will send regular e-mails as well to help keep you informed of school events.

Illness and Absences

*** Whenever your child is ill, or you suspect she/he may be, please be prudent and keep them home. If your child has a fever, please do not give them a fever reducer (acetaminophen or ibuprofen) and then send them to school. If they are sick enough to be given that type of medication, they should not be at school. The comfort of your child is of utmost importance to us. If/when we suspect your child is not well, you will be telephoned to come pick up your child to bring them home.***

Please notify us if your child will be absent from school (via e-mail to the teacher or call the school), as well as the nature of the illness. We would like to know of illnesses that might be 'going around' so we can take any necessary precautions to prevent further spread of the illness.

Please refer to the Montessori Academy family handbook for the guidelines of when it is okay to send your child back to school after an illness.

We cannot administer any medication at school.

Thank you for your understanding!

Snack

During the morning work cycle, your child will have an opportunity to prepare him or herself a snack. This activity is a work choice. The teacher will give a lesson on how to prepare the snack of the day and food preparation will be supervised by the teacher. Each family will be asked to provide the class with snack for a week. Your child's teacher will provide a snack schedule and shopping list.

Lunch

Afternoon friends will have lunch every day at around noon. Please provide a lidded plastic container with two or three separated sections. This will allow your child to experience lunch more like they would at home. Your child will be able to be more independent without difficult bags and containers to open. Please also send a drink in a leak-proof sippy cup or water bottle.

We also ask that you please limit treats in lunches. We try to promote healthy eating in the classroom as best we can, and your support in that regard will be greatly appreciated!

We will also send home any unfinished food so you know what they have or have not eaten.

Please label the lunch container & cup with your child's name.

Lunches will be stored in the refrigerator until lunchtime.

PALS Hours

As you have read in the Montessori Academy Parent/Student Handbook, the PALS program is designed to establish a cooperative effort between the school and families to ensure the best possible learning environment for the enrichment and personal growth of all involved.

Because of the nature of our Toddler classroom, and the specific developmental needs of our toddlers, it is rare we have opportunities for parental involvement within our classroom during the school day. But there are many opportunities to meet PALS hours outside of our classroom.

** There are committees listed in the Student/Parent Handbook that always need willing and able members.

** Toddler toys need washing often. This can be done over a weekend.

** The outside playground & equipment need power washed periodically. It's a big job, but many PALS hours could be satisfied!

** Wednesday folders- about an hour every Wednesday stuffing our classroom folders with school news and classroom work.

** Room Parent- this job guarantees that your PALS hours will be met.

** If volunteering during the school day works best into your schedule, there are opportunities to help in other classrooms.

Toys

Toys from home are not permitted in the school building, as they tend to create conflict and be in danger of getting lost or forgotten. If your child must have a toy in the car on the way to school, please keep it there when your child is dropped off.

Toys/items representative of violence or violent action (toy guns, actions figures, etc.) are not allowed at any time.

'Lovie' items, such as stuffed animals, baby dolls, or blankets may be brought in for comfort during nap or times of particular discomfort or upset. Pacifiers are discouraged at school, except during naps.

Communication Folders

Each week your child will be sent home with a colored folder. In it, you will find the work they have done throughout the week and any important communication from the school. Please take time to look through everything and then return the folder the next day your child attends school.

Tote Bags

Tote bags will be provided by the school for your child to carry his/ her belongings.



Thursday, September 08, 2016

Notice of Emergency Plan of Action

Dear Parents and Guardians,

This letter is to assure you of our concern for the welfare and safety and welfare of children attending Montessori Academy of Lancaster. Our Emergency Plan provides for response to all types of emergencies. Depending on the circumstance of the emergency, we will use one of the following protective actions:

- **Immediate evacuation** – students are evacuated to a safe area on the grounds of the facility in the event of a fire, etc.
- **In-place sheltering** – sudden occurrences, weather or hazardous materials related, may dictate the taking cover inside the building is the best immediate response.
- **Evacuation** – total evacuation of the facility may become necessary if there is a danger in the area. In this case, children will be taken to relocation facility at *Kreider Farm, 2701 Weaver Road, Lancaster, PA 17601*.
- **Modified operation** – may include cancellation, postponement or rescheduling of normal activities. These actions are normally taken in case of winter storm or building problems (such as utility disruptions) that make it unsafe for children but may be necessary in a variety of situations.

Please watch **WGAL (channel 8)**, **WITF (PBS)**, or listen to radio stations **WLAN FM 97 (96.9)**, **WARM 103 (103.3)**, or **NPR** for announcements relating to any of the emergency actions listed above.

In order to keep the telephone lines free during an emergency, we ask that you not call during the emergency.

The form designating persons to pick up your child is included with this letter for you to complete and have returned to Montessori Academy with all other registration forms upon your child's admittance to the school. Please ensure that only those persons you list on the form attempt to pick up your child.

I specifically urge you NOT to attempt to make different arrangements during an emergency. This will only create additional confusion and divert staff from their assigned emergency duties.

We appreciate your support, understanding and cooperation in ensuring student safety is a top priority. Should you have any additional questions regarding our emergency operating procedures, please contact me at (717) 560-0815

Sincerely,

Karen Rubenstein
Head of School

Complete emergency plan available upon request

Signature Page

I have read the Toddler Handbook and understand and agree to all the guidelines and policies within.

Printed Name _____

Signature _____ Date: _____

Please sign and return to your child's teacher.
Thank you!!