

Toddler Handbook



Montessori Academy of
Lancaster
2020-2021

Contents

- ADDENDUM: Covid-19 Health & Safety Guidelines 2020-2021.....5
- Introduction6
- Welcome to Montessori Academy of Lancaster6
- Mission Statement6
- Philosophy of Montessori Academy of Lancaster6
- History of the Montessori Academy of Lancaster7
- Dr. Maria Montessori and Her Philosophy7
 - Suggested Reading List8
- Qualities of a Montessori School.....9
 - Quality #1: The Montessori Learning Environment9
 - Quality #2: Montessori’s Learning Activity9
 - Quality #3: The Montessori Learning Relationships9
 - Quality #4: The Montessori Spirituality;10
 - Quality #5: What the Montessori Teacher Is10
 - Quality #6: What the Montessori Teacher Does10
- Affiliations, Associations and Licensing10
- American Montessori Benefits10
- Admission.....11
 - Admission Statement11
 - Admission Process.....11
 - Admission Requirements.....11
 - Non-Discrimination in Services.....12
- Program Information12
 - General Educational Objectives.....12
 - Student Evaluations and Conferences.....13
- Discipline: The Montessori Concept13
- Special Programs14
 - Art.....14
 - Computer14
 - Foreign Language.....14
 - Library14
 - Music15
 - Physical Education15
- Toddler Program.....15
 - Diaper Policy15
- Birthday Walks.....16

Diapers/Clothing.....	16
Emergency Contact Forms	17
Health Assessment and Emergency Contact Forms	17
Drop-Off and Pick-Up	17
Contact Times.....	17
Newsletter.....	17
Illness and Absences.....	18
Snack	18
Lunch.....	18
Volunteering	19
Toys	19
Communication Folders	19
Tote Bags.....	19
Notice of Emergency Plan of Action.....	20
Signature Page	21

Please note that the current handbook contains policies and procedures as observed during a “typical” school year. However, the following Covid-19 Guidelines replace any subsequent information contained in the handbook until further notice. We look forward to resuming “typical” operations as soon as possible.

ADDENDUM: Covid-19 Health & Safety Guidelines 2020-2021

The Montessori Academy will conduct a daily health screening of any person entering the building, including children, staff, and other visitors to identify symptoms or exposure to Covid-19.

- All staff members and students must have their temperature checked before entering the building.
- Any staff member or student with a temperature of 100.4 or greater will not be permitted to enter the building and may not return to school unless they are fever-free (without medication) for a minimum of 24 hours OR with a doctor’s consent.

Any staff member or student exhibiting the following symptoms will be sent home immediately:

- Coughing, shortness of breath, sneezing, running nose, vomiting, diarrhea, fever or chills, spitting, new loss of taste or smell, and other symptoms as determined a health risk to staff or students.

We realize that there could be MANY causes for these symptoms and apologize that such extreme measures need to be taken to ensure we minimize the spread of Covid-19 and other airborne illnesses.

- Students may return to school with a doctor’s consent or if symptom free without medication (over-the-counter or prescription) for minimum of 24 hours.

If a staff member or student tests positive for Covid-19 they will not be permitted to return to school without a doctor’s consent and after the following CDC recommendation:

- 3 days with no fever and 10 days since symptoms first appeared (approximately 14 days of isolation or quarantine period)

Parents will not be permitted to enter the building. If there is an emergency, or a parent needs to drop something off, they must be wearing a mask, sanitize their hands upon entering, stay in the lobby area only, and remain behind the shield guard at the front desk.

In an effort to reduce exposure to Covid-19 and spreading it, all extracurricular activities at the school will be indefinitely postponed. There will be no clubs (except GOTR), enrichments or special visit days. This is EXTREMELY difficult for us to do, but will hopefully prevent a long-term closure as experienced in early 2020.

All students will remain in their classrooms between drop-off and pick-up times. Staff or students are required to clean any and all materials after each individual use. All surfaces and high volume touch areas must be cleaned throughout the day and at the end of the day.

All staff members and students must sanitize and/or wash their hands upon entering the school and/or classroom, before and after snack or lunch, and before leaving for the day.

Students MAY NOT share personal materials and the only items that should be brought with them every day are food items for consumption that day (snack, lunch). Any change of clothing items should remain at the school. As the weather changes, students will be permitted to bring a coat or jacket, gloves, scarves and hats.

Per the most recent PA state mandate in June 2020, all staff and students must wear protective face shield or masks while at school. Exceptions can be made if the staff or student are unable to wear a mask for health or safety reasons.

Staff members or students who wear cloth masks must wash those masks daily.

As often as possible, staff members and students should maintain social distancing (3-6 feet).

Daily Drop Off/Pick Up Schedule

To reduce the traffic and high-volume use of the lobby during drop-off and pick-up times we have staggered the drop-off and pick-up times:

Program	Drop-Off/Start Time	Pick-Up/End Time
Elementary	8:15 am	3:15 pm
Toddler	8:45 am	11:45 am
Primary Classes 4, 5, & 6	9:00 am	12:00 pm
Primary Classes 1, 2, & 3	9:15 am	12:15 pm

Introduction

This handbook has been devised as a resource for you – the Montessori parent – to use throughout the academic year as your guide to information about school policies. We ask that you refer to this handbook for answers to your policy questions before calling the school. Most everything, from general school policies and procedures to financial guidelines and curriculum issues, are addressed inside. We encourage you to keep it in a handy place for future reference. Should you have questions that are not covered in the manual, please feel free to call the school at (717) 560-0815.

Welcome to Montessori Academy of Lancaster

The dedicated professional staff of Montessori Academy of Lancaster provide a thoroughly comprehensive Montessori program within an environment of freedom. This freedom is made possible by a foundation of structured ground rules. We encourage responsible behavior in response to this structure. This allows the staff to nurture each child while providing challenges, excitement, fun, and guidance. All of our employees, administration, faculty, and support staff follow the highest standards of professionalism.

In return for our commitment, we expect a respectful attitude. Following the parents' example of respecting us for our expertise in early childhood education, the children should respect their peers, the teachers, and all school property. We expect both parents and children to respect school policies and structure.

We believe all children want to develop to their fullest potential and want to respond to our highest expectations for them. Our faith is rewarded by their positive behavior, attitudes, and achievements.

Mission Statement

Our Academy is dedicated to excellence in education and to instilling in our children self-motivation, a love of learning, respect for others and the environment and a sense of community.

Philosophy of Montessori Academy of Lancaster

Montessori Academy of Lancaster strives to provide an educational environment in which the child is respected for the individual that he or she is, with special consideration for differences among children. The child is a whole being whose physical, emotional, and cognitive parts are interrelated. This unity of the entire child is maintained in the school setting.

In the prepared environment of the Academy the teachers act as facilitators and enablers to encourage each child to fulfill his or her potential. The child manipulates materials in the practical life, sensorial, language, and math areas of the classroom to gain skills, which will enable him or her to develop physically, emotionally, and cognitively.

The mission of Montessori Academy is to prepare the child for life, by instilling in each child a love for learning, a respect for the world in which we live and a consideration for all people of the world.

History of the Montessori Academy of Lancaster

Montessori Academy of Lancaster was founded in 1982 by three women dedicated to the philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori and to meeting the needs of today's children.

A volunteer Board of Directors has maintained the Academy, which is a non-profit, no ownership, corporate structure.

The Academy admits students, ages 18 months - 12 yrs., of any race, religion, national or ethnic origin, to all the privileges and programs of the school. The Academy is also an equal opportunity employer.

The Pennsylvania State Board of Private Academic Schools through the Pennsylvania Department of Education in Harrisburg licenses the Montessori Academy. The Department of Public Welfare licenses the before and after school programs as well as those programs for children under the age of 3 years old. The American Montessori Society (AMS) is the "quality control" organization certified to supervise the implementation of the Montessori philosophy.

Fundraising and tax-deductible gifts are used to supplement the tuition income of the school. Maintaining a reasonable tuition for a quality program relies heavily on such gifts and contributions.

Dr. Maria Montessori and Her Philosophy

Dr. Maria Montessori (1870-1952) is regarded as one of the world's most outstanding educators and psychologists. The first woman to receive a medical degree in Italy, she became interested in education as a pediatrician, dealing with children called mentally retarded and unmercifully also labeled insane. Montessori found that these children could learn many things that seemed impossible. After further study and clinical observations, she began to apply her teaching methods to children, who were considered normal at that time, in the slums of Rome. There she opened her first Casa dei Bambini, or "Children's House" in 1907. What followed

revolutionized educational thinking and today Montessori's innovative approach to education is used successfully in schools throughout the world.

Montessori's keen observations of young children led to her conviction that the child possesses an innate desire to learn and a unique sensitivity and aptitude for absorbing knowledge from his environment, especially during early childhood. She respected the individuality of each child, and recognized that without liberty this individuality could not develop. Thus, Dr. Montessori felt that the classroom must be an enriched learning environment, prepared especially to meet the needs of the whole child, in which he is free to act within a disciplined structure, and to develop himself along the lines of his own inner direction.

Scientific observation has established that education is not what the teacher gives; education is a natural process spontaneously carried out by the human individual, and is acquired not by listening to words but by experiences upon the environment. The task of the teacher becomes that of preparing a series of motives of cultural activity, spread over a specially prepared environment, and then refraining from obtrusive interference. Human teachers can only help the great work that is being done, as servants help the master. Doing so, they will be witnesses to the unfolding of the human soul and to the rising of a New Man who will not be a victim of events, but will have the clarity of vision to direct and shape the future of human society.

- Dr. Maria Montessori, Education for a New World

Suggested Reading List

The books listed below are a few of those published on the Montessori Method and are recommended to gain a deeper understanding of Dr. Maria Montessori's approach to education. Most are available at the public library or can be purchased in paperback at local bookstores.

Maria Montessori, Her Life and World, by E.M. Standing
The Secret of Childhood, by Maria Montessori
The Discovery of the Child, by Maria Montessori
The Absorbent Mind, by Maria Montessori
Maria Montessori, by Rita Kramer

Qualities of a Montessori School

From The Authentic American Montessori School, By Nancy Rambusch and John Stoops

Quality #1: The Montessori Learning Environment

- **A Child Centered Environment:** The focus of activity in the Montessori setting is on children's learning, not on teachers' teaching. There should be a very limited number of whole group lessons, and these appropriate to the particular children's level of development.
- **A Responsive, Preparing, Adaptive Environment:** An environment responsive to children's emergent needs is one proportioned to their interests, abilities and potential. The school is prepared in advance of the children's entry into it. And the school adapts to the child's needs and the evolving interests of the child.
- **Individually Construed Competence:** Within a Montessori setting, each child strives to realize his or her fullest potential in a socialized context.

Quality #2: Montessori's Learning Activity

- **First Hand Experience with Materials:** Children learn by acting on their environments. They need materials with which to interact. At whatever developmental level the particular child, there should be available materials to interact with as well as models and relationships, which Montessori characterized as "materialized abstractions".
- **Spontaneous Activity:** Children spontaneously seek growth and development because it is in their nature to do so. The Montessori environment seeks to provide a setting in which the children can "epitomize" their true emergent selves.
- **Active Learning Methods:** The Montessori environment is one in which children pursue their learning intentions themselves. They initiate their work and persist in it until they have completed it to their respective criteria of completion.
- **Self-Directed Activity (Auto-Education):** The child constructs his or her own intelligence, choosing his or her activity, fueled by the need to be competent. The child constructs his or her own morality, through social interaction with others.
- **Liberty Within Limits:** The activity engaged in by a particular child in an environment, characterized by "liberty within limits", rests on the child's right to do what is normally and appropriately dictated by the particular culture and by the developmental level of the child.
- **Intrinsic Motivation:** The motivation for learning in a Montessori environment comes from within the individual child. This drive toward competence is fueled by the child's curiosity and interest. This is the child's self-initiated activity considered its own reward.

Quality #3: The Montessori Learning Relationships

- **Mixed Age (Family) Grouping:** In order to respond to the variety and evenness of individual children's developmental needs (and as a reflection of Montessori's developmental schemata), classes typically group children across a three year age span.
- **Social Setting as a Community:** The social setting is somewhat like that of an extended family. The emergent skills of individual children are harnessed for the good of the

whole group. Children routinely demonstrate newly achieved competencies to one another.

- Cooperation, Collaboration, Not Competition: Children are encouraged to support one another in their efforts at mastery. The life of the group is the context in which individual activity is seen. By having children do the same thing at different times, and different things at the same time, comparisons are avoided. Montessori's developmental focus implies that all children will, over time, master the social system and the curriculum.

Quality #4: The Montessori Spirituality;

- The Child as a Spiritual Being: Dr. Maria Montessori saw beyond a purely materialistic view of the organism to the child as a spiritual entity, animated by a Divine life force. She saw the child as a spiritual embryo developing according to a definite plan.

Quality #5: What the Montessori Teacher Is

- Authoritative: The teacher is firm at the edges and empathetic at the center, the kind of adult who responds empathetically to children's feelings, while firmly establishing limits for the group.
- Observer: The teacher is capable of inferring the children's intentions through observations.
- Resource/Consultant: The teacher embodies the behaviors, dispositions, aspirations, and possibilities that the children experience in the Montessori environment.

Quality #6: What the Montessori Teacher Does

- Respectfully Engaged With the Learner: The teacher is mindful of her responsibility in facilitating the cognitive and moral development of those in her charge.
- She sees the responsibility in terms of individual children's needs for optimal development and of the need to create an intentional community.
- Able to Facilitate "Match" Between Learner and Knowledge: The teacher knows the "rightest" response to the individual learner's needs at whatever point the learner is, in his or her acquisition of new knowledge.
- Environmental Designer/Organizer/Preparer: The teacher can organize the appropriate social and cognitive environment for children at different levels of development, refracting through the curriculum, the expectations of the culture.

Affiliations, Associations and Licensing

American Montessori Society

North American Montessori Teachers' Association

The Montessori Academy of Lancaster is licensed by The Pennsylvania State Board of Private Academic Schools

Pennsylvania Department of Welfare

American Montessori Benefits

Each Montessori family pays a \$50.00 membership fee annually. AMS family memberships

benefits include:

AMS group related health insurance, \$5 off any one purchase of \$25 or more from Nienhuis Montessori USA

Admission

Admission Statement

Montessori Academy seeks to attract those children whose families are looking for a Montessori environment that fosters independent study and self-discipline in an ungraded classroom setting. Parents of children going to the Montessori Academy are considered “partners in education,” and are expected to become actively involved in their child’s school.

Montessori Academy enables the child to create an order within him or herself. This self-discipline becomes the basis of freedom, within a framework, for children to learn through their senses according to their own timetable of growth and level of interest. By achieving continuous successes in learning experiences, the child will develop self-confidence and competence, which is carried into maturity. When children acquire self-mastery and self-respect, they then respect others.

Parents considering Montessori Academy of Lancaster are invited to visit the school, by appointment, during school hours. Observations can be made at any time between mid-September and the end of May.

Admission Process

The admission process at Montessori Academy has been established to acquaint prospective students and their families with the school. Applications are accepted at any time, but families are urged to apply by March for the following school year. The admissions process generally involves the following steps:

1. Inquiries by telephone (560-0815), letter (2750 Weaver Road, Lancaster, PA 17601), or email (Director@montlanc.com) are welcomed.
2. After receiving Montessori Academy information packet, parents are requested to call the school for an appointment. The initial parent visit includes a tour of the school and a description of the program at Montessori Academy.
3. After the visit to the school, applicants are then required to send a \$50.00 application process fee and a \$100.00 enrollment fee, both of which are non-refundable. These fees must accompany a signed copy of the Enrollment Agreement before the admission process continues. Payment of these fees with contract submission does not guarantee a reserved space.

Late applicants are considered on an individual basis, pending availability of space in the class.

Admission Requirements

All students are required to have current medical records and current emergency contact forms on file at the school. No kindergarten or elementary student will be admitted without the proper

medical and dental forms on file. Prior to admission of elementary students, all previous academic, medical, and dental records are required to be on file.

Non-Discrimination in Services

Admission, the provision of educational services, and referrals of students shall be made without regard to race, color, religious creed, disability, ancestry, national origin, age or sex.

Program services shall be made accessible to persons with disabilities through the most practical and economically feasible methods available. These methods include, but are not limited to, equipment redesign, the provision of aids, and the use of alternative service delivery locations. Structural modifications shall be considered only as a last resort among available methods.

Any parent or guardian who believes they, or their student have been discriminated against may file a complaint of discrimination with:

Montessori Academy of Lancaster
2750 Weaver Road
Lancaster, PA 17601

Bureau of Civil Rights Compliance
Department of Public Welfare
P.O. Box 2675
Harrisburg, PA 17105

Office for Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Region III, P.O. Box 13716
Philadelphia, PA 19101

Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission
101 South Second Street, Suite 300
Harrisburg, PA 17105

Program Information

General Educational Objectives

- To provide opportunities that permit the child to be successful, thus creating a positive self-image.
- To help the child become competent, independent, and self-confident and to learn to respect freedom with responsibility.
- To encourage the child's natural curiosity and love of learning within a structure, that respects the child's inner time clock.
- To provide a more natural, multi-age, vertical grouping of children so that they may learn from each other.

- To encourage independent study as well as group cooperation to foster self-discipline.

Student Evaluations and Conferences

The Toddler classes will have parent/teacher conferences twice a year with a copy of a written report given to the parent. However, we urge parents to call whenever they desire a private conference. The teacher will call the parents if there is a need for a conference. If you do not hear from the teacher, you may assume your child is progressing normally between conferences. A copy of a written report will be given at that time.

There are scheduled parent-teacher conferences for all Primary and Kindergarten children twice during the school year. Written Progress Reports are issued in January and May.

Elementary evaluations are issued two times during the school year. Included in these evaluations are parent-teacher conferences held twice a year, usually in November and April.

Prior to the conference day, parents will be asked to select the time of the conference that best suits their schedule. If it is impossible for the parent to be present on conference day, then a telephone conference may be scheduled. During the conference, teacher-prepared, written evaluations are presented to the parents and discussed confidentially.

Discipline: The Montessori Concept

Child discipline is the responsibility of parents and teachers. Through cooperative parent/teacher collaboration, the Academy's mission of preparing each child individually for life can be attained. Guiding the child with discipline will foster:

- The development of respect for self and others.
- The recognition and acceptance of responsibility for personal actions and outcomes.
- The development of independence while caring for the welfare of others.
- The development of inner discipline for self-control.
- The goal of discipline is education and learning which promotes growth.

Natural consequences and logical consequences are usually effective in encouraging respectful behavior. The Academy is an environment that allows your child to "unfold spontaneously" and become the person that he/she is capable of being through guidance and discipline.

In guiding the shaping of a child's behaviour it is necessary for parents and teachers to ask: What will most likely change his/her behavior? All children are individuals and will respond differently to the techniques of guidance. Therefore, parents and teachers need to know the child so that they can select the appropriate means to guide the individual child's growth. The course of discipline generally begins with simple communication with the child, reinforcement of appropriate behavior, natural consequences for behavior, logical consequences, imitation of appropriate behavior and home/school collaboration.

If a resolution is not reached as to the behavioral concerns, the Head of School may ask the

parents to temporarily remove the child from school, obtain outside professional assistance, or withdraw enrollment. If parents feel that they have been unfairly asked to withdraw their child, they may appeal their case in writing to the Board of Directors. The board will engage in fact-finding by interviewing the teacher(s), the Head of School, the parents and, when appropriate, the student. A review of all pertinent documentation of behavior and interventions will also occur and the Board and Head of School will render a decision of appropriate action to be implemented.

Special Programs

Art

Art is integrated into the curriculum in such activities as geometric drawings, mapping skills, botany and zoology nomenclature, and historical illustrations for period costumes and architecture. In addition, classroom teachers introduce the children to a variety of techniques and media for artistic expression. Art Appreciation is encouraged as a different artist is introduced each month.

Computer

The computer classes in the Elementary Program are designed to enhance the classes. Students use PC computer systems and iPads to acquire computer literacy, keyboarding skills, and computer applications. Special attention is given to the development of problem solving strategies, critical thinking skills, and memory building.

Foreign Language

Each class receives weekly lessons in a foreign language. In addition, the foreign language may be integrated with the music program. At the primary level, an aural-oral approach is used. The children hear the spoken words and repeat the material presented. They are also given the opportunity to identify objects in the foreign tongue and to follow simple directions. The program is outlined in units, which contain basic conversation patterns, vocabulary categories, pronunciation, and songs.

The aural-oral approach is continued at the elementary level with the gradual introduction of the written word. The children see words they already know and then later begin to write them in controlled situations. The program is outlined in units, which contain expanded conversation patterns, vocabulary categories, pronunciation practice, songs, and cultural insights.

Library

- To support the curriculum: the books in the library have been carefully selected to enhance all areas of study.
- To build excitement about reading: studies show that when children are permitted to choose books for themselves, they read more. The more a child reads, the better reader he or she becomes.

- To expose students to a variety of literary genres: through read alouds and book talks, students broaden their reading selections. By reading books from different genres children build more diverse vocabularies and become more sophisticated readers
- To provide instruction in print and online research skills: in the 21st century, children are bombarded by information. They need to become savvy consumers of information. In the library we teach students how to find accurate information quickly. We teach them which resources are best for which kinds of research. We teach them to evaluate information sources for accuracy, currency and bias.

Toddlers come to the library for songs, nursery rhymes and stories. After each story time, students have five to ten minutes to explore our board book collection.

Primary students come to the library for songs, nursery rhymes and stories. After story time, there is time for browsing and borrowing from the picture book collection.

Elementary students come to the library several times a week. In addition to read alouds, and book exchanges, students have lessons in research methods, information literacy, poetry, literary criticism, readers' theatre and the use of technology. Library lessons emphasize critical thinking skills.

Children are encouraged to contribute to the library resources through the Birthday Book Club. Through this program, students donate a book from the library's "wish list" on his or her birthday.

Music

The music program consists of singing, tone matching, rhythm activities, music appreciation, and singing games. Students use instruments to enhance songs learned in class. In addition, music is integrated into the curriculum through the study of history and different cultures.

Physical Education

The physical education program offers a variety of physical and social experiences. Students play games and learn gymnastics, rhythms, and dance. Children use incline mats, flat mats, foam shapes, and a variety of other equipment to develop large muscle coordination.

Toddler Program

The program offers several options for 18 month – 2yr. old children. This program meets Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, or Wednesday, Thursday, Friday or Monday, Tuesday or Thursday, Friday, or Monday Through Friday 9:00AM – 12:00PM or all day 9:00AM – 3:00PM. Please see the tuition schedule for further information. It is designed to acquaint your child with the Montessori experience using the Sensorial Apparatus and Practical Life activities. The number of days your child attends each week depends on the option you choose and availability.

Diaper Policy

Since we are promoting independence in the child, it is expected that parents will encourage use

of the toilet. However, the child's inner time clock must be respected and we do not suggest parents force toilet training to meet the start of the school deadline. Our Toddler group does work with diapering and training and toilet habits of the children.

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.

Volunteering

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 volunteer:

- 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.
- Wednesday folders- about an hour every Wednesday stuffing our classroom folders with school news and classroom work.
- Room Parent
- 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, August 20, 2020

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!!