

Countryside Montessori Academy
Land O' Lakes Campus
Parent Handbook

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Hours of Operation:
Monday thru Friday: 7:30 a.m. - 6 p.m.

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Full Member School:
American Montessori Society

This handbook has been devised as a resource for you to use throughout the academic year as your guide to information about school policies and classroom information. We encourage you to review the handbook at the beginning of the year and keep it in a handy place for future reference.

COUNTRYSIDE MONTESSORI HISTORY

In 1985, Countryside Montessori Academy was founded by Mary Rivers and Karen Mantei. Karen received her Association Montessori Internationale certification in Dublin, Ireland and has over 40 years experience in providing children with a Montessori education. Mary has a degree in Math and Economics with a minor in education, and handles the finances for CMA. With a passion for expanding the Montessori philosophy, Karen and Mary opened a second location in 1996 and with much encouragement from the parents opened the elementary charter school in 2002.

Countryside Montessori currently has 2 locations which serve children in preschool through kindergarten – one in North Tampa and one in Land O’ Lakes. CMA has a very dedicated staff and wonderful teachers who provide an outstanding Montessori education. Most of our children continue their Montessori education at Countryside Montessori Charter School in Land O’ Lakes.

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to provide high quality education following the teaching principles of Dr. Maria Montessori and to develop the relationship between the child's physical, social, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual development.

GOALS

Dr. Montessori believed that education is a preparation for life, and not simply a mastery of intellectual skills. The activities and environment provided in a Montessori school stimulate and develop a thirst for learning, a curiosity about one's surroundings and a desire to discover and to do things for oneself. We hope that during a child's development he will learn to solve problems using an organized approach, to use freedom wisely, to respect others, and to develop a love for learning.

The following are some of Countryside Montessori Academy's goals:

- To develop both socially and emotionally.
- To build a positive self-image.
- To develop self-confidence as an independent learner.
- To build concentration, persistence, and initiative.
- To develop sensory-motor skills.
- To nourish an abiding curiosity, an inner security, and a sense of order.
- To develop academic skills through the use of Montessori materials.

MONTESSORI EDUCATION

Countryside Montessori Academy embraces all of the principles of Dr. Maria Montessori in its approach to learning. Dr. Maria Montessori, born in 1870, was the first woman granted a medical degree by an Italian University. Using her scientific background, she began observing children in Rome. Based on her unbiased observations, she developed unique materials and a child centered environment. Dr. Montessori was one of the first people to revolutionize educational thought by stressing respect for the child, freedom of expression, self-education, and training through use of movement and senses.

Early childhood specialists today accept what Dr. Maria Montessori discovered long ago: the child under six has a genius capacity for mental absorption. The brain research of today provides scientific proof that supports all of the theories that Dr. Montessori discovered 100 years ago.

The "absorbent mind" will never repeat its miraculous ability to absorb the native tongue, to perfect movement or to internalize order. Never will these sensitivities be more alive than in the preschool child.

The Montessori prepared environment allows children to act freely on their own initiative, meeting needs through individual spontaneous activity. The children learn to work quietly and intently on their own "work". They are building concentration and self-discipline. The Montessori classroom is a community. In the Montessori environment, children work individually, in very small groups, or sit quietly observing. The children work freely and when they complete their work, they return it to its place on the shelf.

The older child in the environment learns through teaching the younger child. The younger child is inspired to do more advanced work by having older children working in the same environment.

Most of the day is spent doing "work cycle," where the child is in a small group or individually doing work in the classroom. However, at some point during each day, the entire group comes together for a circle time. They enjoy activities, such as: storytelling, music, movement activities, Art, etc. The Kindergarteners are taught Spanish once a week by the Spanish Teacher from the Charter School.

In the Montessori classroom, academic readiness is not the only focus. The teacher is interested in the whole child, the child's ability to communicate and co-operate, and most importantly the child's willingness to accept and master new experiences.

The common bond between all of the staff at Countryside Montessori Academy is "love of the child." The role of a Montessori teacher is one of a guide and observer. The teacher builds an atmosphere of calm and order and encourages the children in all of their efforts, thus promoting self-confidence and discipline.

PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

BEGINNING MONTESSORI PROGRAM:

The Beginning Montessori program is designed for children 18 months to 3 years of age. The classroom is equipped with toddler-size furnishings and materials that invite the child to touch, manipulate, and learn. It provides an atmosphere where basic motor coordination, independence, and language development are fostered and individual personality is respected. In a Montessori classroom, the goal is to promote social, emotional and cognitive growth in the child. It is a nurturing social community where young children learn to participate in a cooperative group.

The Beginning Montessori curriculum includes the following areas:

- **PRACTICAL LIFE** - The activities of practical life are everyday living skills - caring for yourself, caring for where you live (environment), preparing and serving food, and lessons of grace and courtesy. These activities teach the children how to live. We assist them in being as independent as possible in caring for themselves and their surroundings.
Practical life activities aid in the development of concentration, coordination of movement, order, and independence. The activities are important in the integration of the child's personality. Practical life skills aid in the development of trust in oneself and a feeling of self worth. These activities appeal to children in the sensitive periods of order, imitation, and self-awareness.
- **GRACE AND COURTESY** - The lessons of grace and courtesy are the activities that set Montessori programs apart from others. Through the adult example and model, the children learn how to treat and act around other people. It starts with greeting anyone who enters the community with grace and warmth, introducing yourself and shaking hands. We treat the children with the grace and courtesy that we want them to use, by saying "excuse me, please, thank you," etc. Courtesy to each other is stressed in the environment. Any negative behavior is dealt with by talking and the proper apology given or at least modeled.
- **LANGUAGE** - Language development is encouraged in the Beginning Montessori environment through the total freedom of conversation. Through this freedom, language becomes an integral part of the life of the classroom, and there is continuous encouragement of self-expression and communication, child to child and child to adult. Vocabulary is enriched in the classroom in a number of ways. Precise names are used for all the objects in the environment. There are also many picture-card matching games that enrich vocabulary: cards of musicians, artists, tools, furnishings; cards showing housing, transportation, animals, reptiles, plant life, etc. The child absorbs the vocabulary that goes into these cards because he is still in his sensitive period for language. If he does not encounter these names until later, he will have to "learn" them, a process that will have far less appeal for him.

- **SENSORIAL** - The sensorial activities help the child to develop an awareness of the different qualities of objects in the environment. The activities must appeal to their interest and their need for observing, touching, tasting, smelling, and listening.
 - Visual*** - The visual activities catch the eye of the child.
 - Auditory*** - The auditory exercises develop auditory perception. Children enjoy hearing different sounds of things. They turn their head very early to the sounds they hear. Auditory development leads to phonetic reading readiness in the 3-6 class. Silence helps children to develop concentration, inner organization, and contemplation. It responds to the need of the child to integrate him to nature and total unity.
 - Tactile*** - The tactile stimulation or the development of the sense of touch takes place almost from birth when the infant stretches out his hand and accidentally feels something.
 - Taste*** - In the development of taste the children try different types of food by varying the snacks children have. A child's taste preference is developed in the first five years of life. They also participate in food preparation.
 - Smell*** - The olfactory sense or the sense of smell must be nurtured everyday. This is done by asking the children what they smell; flowers, foods, etc.
- **ART** - Art activities help the child to develop self-expression and communication through the use of certain techniques or media. These activities help the child respond to their need to express and create.

Art activities include: chalk drawing, tearing paper, gluing, cutting, painting, crayon and pencil coloring, and clay modeling.
- **MUSIC** - The music environment in the Beginning Montessori classroom is rich in: songs and singing, soothing music, active music, exploration, interaction, repetition and observation.

These activities offer children listening and sensory stimulation, and also encourage participation and motor response.

Musical activities include: finger plays, stationary movement, traveling movement, singing games, dances, playing instruments, name songs, stories, poetry, etc.

PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

PRIMARY MONTESSORI PROGRAM:

Children in the Primary Montessori program, children 3 years to 6 years of age, possess what Dr. Maria Montessori called “the absorbent mind.” This simply means that the child’s mind is like a sponge and absorbs everything in his environment.

The Primary Montessori classroom is divided into the following areas:

- **PRACTICAL LIFE** - The exercises of practical life are those daily activities that help the child acquire independence, coordination of movement, concentration, and lessons of grace and courtesy. The exercises of practical life lay the basic foundation for all other areas and provide indirect preparation for sensory integration, logic, and language. Lessons include:
 - Development of grace and courtesy*- manners and social relations
 - Practical skills* - grasping and controlling, scooping and spooning, pouring, stringing and lacing
 - Care of person* - grooming and dressing frames
 - Care of the Environment* – cleaning, sweeping, washing, polishing, caring for plants/animals, using tools, and caring for an outdoor environment
- **SENSORIAL** - Sensorial education is central to the Montessori method. It allows the children to build cognitive skills by touching, seeing, smelling, tasting, listening, and exploring the properties of their environment. Lessons include:
 - Putting equipment in order based on size, thickness, length
 - Working with geometric shapes
 - Using sound cylinders and bells
 - Tasting sweet, sour, etc.
 - Matching fabrics and textures
 - Matching fragrances
- **LANGUAGE**- Language development allows children to experience conversations, stories, and poetry. In the Montessori environment, the sandpaper letters help children link sound with symbol. From there, the movable alphabet, phonogram booklets and metal insets promote reading and writing skills. Lessons include:
 - Matching
 - Sorting, Classifying, and Sequencing
 - Pictures and Stories
 - Auditory Preparation
 - Sound Games
 - Pre-Reading
 - Sandpaper Letters
 - Movable Alphabet
 - Reading
 - Labeling Objects and Pictures
 - Learning the Function of Words (Noun, Adjective, etc.)

- **MATHEMATICAL-** Mathematical activities include concrete materials that allow the child to experience the four basic math operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. This work provides the foundation for abstract reasoning and helps the child develop problem-solving capabilities. Lessons include:
 - Counting
 - Number recognition
 - Quantity awareness
 - One-to-one correspondence
 - Association of numeral and quantity
- **GEOGRAPHY, BIOLOGY, BOTANY, ZOOLOGY, ART & MUSIC-** These are presented as extensions of the sensorial and language activities. Lessons and experiences with nature inspire a reverence for all life. The art and music programs allow the children to develop their creative skills. The study of people and cultures of the world help them to feel connected with all people.

ADMISSION & ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

FOR NEW & RETURNING STUDENTS

Enrollment of students is made on a first-come, first-served basis given the following priorities:

- Returning students are given first priority to re-register for fall. The registration fee will hold the space for your child and is non-refundable. Annual Incidental fees are due on June 1st.
- Siblings and children from other Montessori schools are given priority over new students.
- New students must register for the school year and pay their non-refundable registration fee along with their yearly Incidental fee to be placed in a classroom.
- **In keeping with our philosophy of serving the best interest of children, all admissions are based on a thirty day trial period.**
- When space is unavailable at the time of enrollment, children may be placed on a waiting list at the parents' request. The registration fee will hold the space for your child and is non-refundable.

CLASSROOM REQUIREMENTS

Beginning Montessori (18 months - 3 years old)

- Children should be able to separate from their parents within a reasonable amount of time, as determined by the teacher, depending on the needs of each individual child.

Primary Montessori (3 years - 6 years old)

- Children must be toilet trained and be able to go to the bathroom without the teacher reminding them to go or assisting them.
- If a child has had previous school experience, copies of transcripts/records will be required.
- All children enrolled in the full day program will be required to take a 30-minute rest in the afternoon.

WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

If the situation occurs where you must withdraw your child from school before the end of your tuition agreement, Countryside Montessori Academy must receive a 30-day written notification. At this time, you will be responsible to pay any previous balances and tuition due through the 30-day notification period. Once all fees have been paid, Countryside Montessori Academy will release you from your tuition agreement. No student records will be released until all fees are paid in full.

TUITION PAYMENTS

Our school year runs from orientations in mid-August through May. Tuition payments are due in advance of service. Please note your child's name in the memo section of the check to insure that your payment is credited to the correct account. Make all checks out to Countryside Montessori Academy or CMA.

FULL PAYMENT PLAN:

If you choose the Full Payment Plan, your entire tuition is due by July 1st and you will receive a discount.

10-MONTH PAYMENT PLAN:

If you choose the 10-Month Payment Plan, your tuition payments are due on the first day of each month from August 1st through May 1st.

9-MONTH PAYMENT PLAN:

If you choose the 9-Month Payment Plan, your tuition payments are due on the first day of each month from September 1st through May 1st.

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM:

If your child is enrolled in the Before and After School Program, your payments for this program are due on the first day of the month from August 1st through May 1st.

Late Payment and Fees

If monthly payments are not received by the **10th day of the month**, a late fee of **\$20.00** will be assessed to your account. Your child cannot attend school if your account is 30 days past due.

Returned Checks

There will be a **\$20.00** fee for any returned checks written to CMA.

Absentee Payment

No tuition credits are given due to illness or vacation. In the event that your child is absent from school, fees are payable in full.

PROGRAMS

Countryside Montessori Academy has many wonderful programs to fit the needs of the child and the family. Please read the following program descriptions:

- **HALF DAY PROGRAM:** Morning Montessori Session - This program takes place from 8:45-11:45 a.m.
- **FULL DAY PROGRAM:** Morning and Afternoon Montessori Sessions - This program takes place from 8:45 a.m. – 2:45 p.m.
- **BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM:** The Before and After School Program is for children enrolled in the Full Day Program who also need care before school (7:30 a.m. - 8:45 a.m.) and after school (3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.)

ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL PROCEDURES FOR HALF AND FULL DAY STUDENTS

We have very strict guidelines that we must follow. Due to the number of vehicles during drop off and pick up we must implement a system that allows traffic to flow freely on Carson Drive. Therefore, our procedure is as follows:

We will only allow 5 vehicles at a time in the car “loop.” All other vehicles will need to line up on the road behind the shopping center. This includes cars driving west from Raden Drive.

We ask that all drivers are respectful of this procedure and DO NOT PASS in car line.

Our goal is to get you in and out of the car line as quickly as possible. To insure this, you must remember our car loop rules. Drivers are not to get out of the car. Staff members will open the car door for students and escort them into the school.

If you wish to walk your child into the school please do so between 8:30 & 8:40am. For the safety of all the children we ask that parents not be on the playground or in the classrooms during arrivals. Drivers are not permitted to park in the school parking lot during arrival and dismissal times.

Arrival Time: All Classes - 8:40 to 8:55am
Dismissal Times: Half Days - 11:45 to 12:00pm
Full Day - 2:45 to 3:00pm

Your child will need to be signed in if you arrive after 8:55am. A staff member will escort your child to the classroom. If your child is picked up after 3:00pm you will need to sign your child out when you leave.

Arrival

BEFORE SCHOOL STUDENTS:

Children who arrive before 8:40a.m should enter the building through the main front door.

Dismissal

Please be prompt when picking up your child. Late charges will be assessed for children who are picked up after their dismissal time.

Front Door Lock

We have the security door lock system installed on the front door. Please remember we have the lock for you and your child's protection. Do not open the door for anyone you don't know. Every parent has a door code and can enter the building. Please remember to push the * button after entering your code on the keypad. To exit the building, you will need to push the green button located on the right side of the door. Please DO NOT allow your child to activate the green Exit button. Allowing a child to activate the button, may send the child a message that it is acceptable to do so and the child may assume that it is all right to exit the building alone. Under no circumstances are children allowed to leave the premises without adult supervision.

LATE PICK-UP FEE

A late charge of \$1.00 per minute will be charged beginning at 6:00 p.m. for children who have not been picked up. The late payment should be paid at this time or it can be billed to your account.

STUDENT PICK-UP

At dismissal time, a CMA staff member will release the child into the care of the child's parent, guardian, or adult listed in the Emergency Contact portion of the Enrollment Form. Only those adults with written authorization by the parent or guardian will be

permitted to pick up your child.

If someone other than a parent is to pick up your child from school, Countryside Montessori Academy must be notified in writing and the name must appear on the Enrollment Form. If written notification is not given, the parent must call (and be recognizable to staff) giving the name and description of the person and the time they will come for the child. Countryside Montessori Academy reserves the right to ask for identification. Please make sure that the person picking up your child has a picture I.D. This policy will be strictly enforced for your child's safety.

In case of divorce or separation, we cannot prevent a parent from picking up their child unless we have a certified legal court order on file.

The teacher's good-bye will signify that the child is being placed in your care. From that point on, responsibility for the child lies with the person picking up the child. Always make sure that one of the staff members is aware that you are leaving with your child.

SEPARATING FROM YOUR CHILD

In most cases, this is your child's first experience away from home for any long period of time. Separation from parents can be difficult for young children. Dr. Brazelton talks about this issue in his book Touchpoints. He says that children will learn their own ways of coping if left with a nurturing person. Protests when Mom and Dad leave are normal and healthy. At the same time, it is important for the child to develop a caring relationship with their caregiver. It has been found that children in school do not play as vigorously as they do for Mom and Dad. They nap but don't sleep as deeply. They seem to store up powerful reactions for reunions at the end of the day. When parents return, children often turn away from them as they try to control their powerful emotions. After all, Moms and Dads are all-important people. We want your child's first experience with us to be a positive one. Our orientation process will help your child feel more comfortable.

This process will proceed as follows:

- Your child will come to school the first day of orientation for 30 minutes.
- The second day for one hour.
- The third day for one and a half hours.

Most children adjust to new experiences and surroundings positively if parents encourage and support them. CMA staff will help in any way possible to make this transition a smooth one for both the child and the parent.

Some tips to help with separation:

- Get up early enough to provide cuddling time and a little play.
- Let the child express negativism he/she might not feel free to express at school.
- Develop a routine of talking about leaving.
- Work out a separation routine at the school. Always say, "I'll be back."

- Don't prolong parting.
- When picking up child, always say, "I missed you so much and I'm back like I said I would be."

ABSENCES

Please notify the school if your child will be absent due to illness or a planned family activity. You may send a note or you may call the school. However, remember that a tuition credit is not given for absences. All fees are payable in full.

EXTRA HOURS

FULL DAY STUDENTS

Extra hours for Full Day students are before 8:45 a.m. and after 3:00 p.m. A fee of \$8 per hour will be assessed to your account. This fee will be assessed in half-hour increments and ten minutes into the half-hour will constitute a charge.

HALF DAY STUDENTS

If your child is enrolled in the Half-Day Primary Program and would like to stay for the afternoon Montessori session, there will be a \$30 charge for attending the full day. Please notify the school in writing when your child will be staying for the afternoon session.

EMERGENCY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

FIRST AID

All parents are required to sign an emergency release form for their child at the beginning of each school year. In case of an accident at the school, parents will be notified immediately after first aid is given. In the event of an emergency where you cannot be reached, we will call any contact person(s) you have designated. Should the school be unable to reach any of your contact people, we will seek emergency medical assistance.

ACCIDENT REPORTS

The Florida Department of Health (HRS) only allows our staff to treat minor injuries using soap and water, ice, band-aids, and gauze. If your child has a minor accident during school, you will receive an accident report detailing the accident. You will be asked to sign and return the original back to school.

FIRE

Fire drills will be conducted once a month to help familiarize children with the emergency procedures.

EMERGENCY CLOSING

In the event of extreme weather conditions, we will follow the actions of the Pasco

County School District. Please listen to radio or television for announcements of classes being cancelled.

DISCIPLINARY PRACTICES

Countryside Montessori operates on the assumption that everyone in the school will treat each other with care and respect. The children are allowed to move freely and explore the environment using the rules and procedures that are consistent throughout all our environments.

Our purpose is to help our students maintain control of their emotions and actions and not to stop them from expressing feelings and moods. When a child displays unacceptable behavior, it is usually because of a need. It may be a need for assistance, attention, or just a reassuring touch; the teachers, assistants, and after school employees strive to teach the child to express feelings and desires in more acceptable ways. We encourage children of comparable size and ability to work out their solutions. We will encourage the shy child to stand up for himself and the aggressive child to verbalize. In most cases, any unacceptable behavior can be corrected by redirecting the child to new work or by giving the child a lesson in the material.

When a staff member feels a child needs reprimanding, the following steps will be followed:

- The staff member will talk to the child.
- The staff member will remove the child from the group. Usually this is all that is necessary. (Incident Report* may be written.)
- If the problem continues, the child's parent will be contacted. The teacher may ask the parent to take the child home. A parent/teacher conference will be arranged.
- If the course of action agreed upon by CMA and the parent does not resolve the problem, the parent will be requested to seek assistance from an outside source within 30 days.
- Should the problem still continue to disrupt the smooth flow of the classroom and each child's learning ability, the parents will be requested to withdraw the child from the school.

When parents work in close contact with the child's teacher, usually the problem can be resolved. Follow through by the teacher and the parent is very important in order for the child to reach his/her goal.

CMA has a strict policy with regard to children hitting teachers. If your child hits a staff member, you will receive an Incident report explaining what happened. If hitting continues to be a problem, your child will be asked to withdraw from CMA after the third incident.

*An Incident Report explains the details at the time of the incident and the action taken

afterwards. It includes the name, time, place, witness, and steps taken. You will be asked to sign and return the original back to school. A staff member may make a copy for you to take home.

WE DO NOT SPANK CHILDREN. ANY FORM OF PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT IS PROHIBITED AT COUNTRYSIDE MONTESSORI ACADEMY.

SICKNESS

Do not send your child to school if he or she is sick. If your child manifests any of the symptoms listed below, your child should remain at home. If he or she has a temperature or is ill, you will be required to come to school to pick up your child. **Children should be symptom and fever free (without fever-reducing medications such as Tylenol or ibuprofen) for a minimum of 24 hours before they are permitted to return to school.**

The following symptoms could indicate infection, illness, or contagious disease:

- Fever/Pain
- Yellow and green mucous
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Skin eruptions or rash
- Swollen glands, sore or red throat
- Reddened, weeping or crusty eyes
- Constant sneezing or coughing
- Frequent urination, difficulty urinating, or tea colored urine
- Gray or white stool
- Headache
- Stiff neck
- Severe itching
- Unusual behavior (cranky, lethargic, crying, loss of appetite, exhibiting signs of discomfort, etc.)

You may be called at work or home to come pick up your child if one of the above symptoms is noticed. A Wellness Form will be sent home with your child letting you know their symptoms. If your child is out of school due to contracting a communicable disease, we will require a written statement from your child's pediatrician before allowing your child to return to class.

MEDICATION

Countryside Montessori Academy does not administer non-prescription medication. We prefer not to administer medication at all; however, we realize that children are often on prescription medication for 10 days to 2 weeks. During this time, they may be non-contagious and able to attend school. In these cases, we will work with you to ensure that your child receives his/her required dosages. The following steps should be followed to

help insure that your child receives his/her prescription medication.

- **Directly hand the medication to a staff member. Medicine will be kept in our locked medicine container.**
Do not put the medication in your child's bag or give it to the child to hand to a staff member.
- **Authorization For Medication Form**
An Authorization for Medication form must be completely filled out with your child's name, the specific time that the medication should be given and the exact amount to be given.
These forms will be available upon request and must be filled out completely for the medication to be given. If your child will be on this medication for longer than 1 week, a new form must be filled out every week.
- **Speak to a staff member regarding the medication.**
Make sure that you speak directly to a staff member regarding the possible side effects of the medication or if food or water should be taken at a specific time in conjunction with the medication. This should also be written on the Authorization for Medication Form.
- **Prescription medication must be in the original container with the child's name, dosage, doctor, etc. noted on the label.**
Also, we need for you to provide an accurate measuring spoon or cup if the medicine is in liquid form.

CLOTHING

Please send all children to school in clothes that are comfortable for sitting on the floor or for outdoor play. We also need to keep at least 1 extra set of clothing at the school for every child, just in case of an accident or spill. Please send all extra clothing in a plastic zip lock bag with your child's name labeled on the outside of the bag and on every clothing article. Be sure to replace these items immediately, the next day, if your child uses them. **Please remember to put your child's name in all coats, sweaters, jackets, etc.** This helps to insure that these items do not get lost or taken home by the wrong person. Be sure to replace these items as needed.

BEGINNING MONTESSORI CLASS:

Children in the Beginning Montessori Class need lots of extra clothing. Please label all items before bringing them to school. Other items needed are diapers, wipes and a blanket for nap. The teacher may send a note home when it is necessary to replenish your supply of diapers and wipes. Also, be sure to take blankets home on Fridays for cleaning. If your child is in the process of potty training, please send them in training pants with plastic pants over them. **Do not send pull-ups.** Please be sure clothing is easy for the child to remove by himself for independent toileting. Please remember that

belts, buckles, and snaps often lead to accidents. Socks and tennis shoes are recommended because of the outdoor activities and playground equipment.

PRIMARY MONTESSORI CLASS:

In the Primary Montessori Class, please be sure clothing is easy for the child to remove by himself for independent toileting. Please remember that belts, buckles, and snaps often lead to accidents. Socks and tennis shoes are recommended because of the outdoor activities and playground equipment. **Please do not send your child in flip-flops. All sandals must have backs.**

FOOD

BREAKFAST:

If your child comes to school prior to 8:00 a.m. (before school hours,) he or she may bring breakfast to eat at school. However, after 8:00 a.m., we cannot begin serving breakfast because there is not enough time to prepare, eat, and clean up before the children go to their individual classes.

LUNCH:

ALL Full Day students have lunch at school.

*Half Day students in the Primary Classes **DO NOT** have lunch at school.*

*Half Day students in the Beginning Montessori Classes **DO** have lunch before their half day dismissal.*

Your child's lunch should be self-contained with everything your child needs to eat (forks, spoons, cups, etc.). **PLEASE DO NOT SEND ITEMS IN YOUR CHILD'S LUNCH THAT NEED TO BE COOKED IN THE MICROWAVE.** We cannot allow a teacher to leave the lunch area to cook food.

SIPPY CUPS:

If your child uses a sippy cup, it should be left in the car or at home. In the Montessori environment, children drink from open faced cups in class. If there are any concerns, please speak to your child's teacher.

LUNCHESES:

Make sure that your child's name appears on the outside end of his/her lunch box and on all plastic containers inside the lunch. **The name should be legible when the lunch box is sitting on the lunch box shelf.** This will assist the children in making sure they do not pick up the wrong lunch or take the wrong lunch box home. All foods that have not been finished at the end of the lunch period will be put back into the lunch box. Lunch food will not be served after the lunch period, except for the Extended Day students.

PLACEMATS:

If your child stays for lunch please provide a material placemat in their lunch box daily. It will be taken home each day to be washed and returned the next day in their lunch box.

WATERBOTTLES:

We are asking that all students bring a labeled BPA free (16oz or less) water bottle to school daily. Please send the water bottle filled with water every morning and we can refill it as needed. We feel that this will encourage the children to drink more water throughout the day.

SNACK BASKET:

The snack basket is an extension of Practical Life and offers the experience of community with the children. The purpose of the snack basket is to offer fresh fruits, vegetables, and healthy choices to the class. You are not obligated to participate. If you choose not to participate please be sure to pack a snack for your child daily.

Due to the regulations and guidelines from the Health Department, all food that is shared must be store bought, unprepared, and in its original packaging.

General

TOYS

Children need to keep their toys at home. Please discuss this with your child. It is very hard for children to keep track of their toys at school. Also, toys and jewelry create a big distraction during class time and take away from your child's learning experience.

FIELD TRIPS

Often field trips are scheduled throughout the school year for children ages 4 and older. If children who are under the age of 4 are invited to attend a field trip, they will need to have a chaperone with them. Any child who exhibits inappropriate behavior on a field trip will be requested to have an individual chaperone for future field trips.

"STORY-TIME" PARENT

We love to have Moms and Dads volunteer to read a story or share an appropriate activity with their child's class. Just send a note or speak with a staff member and we will schedule a time that is convenient.

NAPS

For children in the Primary Montessori class (ages 3 to 6), the children who fall asleep need a small blanket to use with their rest mat. **Do not send bulky blankets. Do not send pillows.**

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

We love for the children to have the opportunity to celebrate their birthdays. However, we have so many children who suffer from allergies that we request that you do not bring in special snacks to share. In the Primary Montessori Class your child's birthday celebration at school will be a scientific and dramatic activity. We would like for you to send photographs of your child taken each year from birth to the present. For the celebration, the birthday child in the Primary Montessori class carries the globe around

the sun for each year of his/her life and a picture is shown after each revolution. If the child wants to he/she can then give a gift to the class – a book or something from the classroom wish list.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

CMA has an open door policy for parents to observe children working in the classroom. Observations windows are available for some classrooms. If you need an in class observation, please schedule it with the front office. The following are guidelines for in class observations . . .

- Please be seated in the location designated by the teacher and remain there during your observation.
- Responding to a child who speaks directly to you is natural. However, if a child tries to engage you in conversation, please quietly suggest that he or she return to their work in progress. We expect you not to call attention to your presence in any way and encourage you to remain as unobtrusive as possible.
- During observations you are asked not to interfere with the children's work. Do not try to help children with their lessons. Students have been given a certain order and way to perform the work.

CONFERENCES

Conferences are held twice a year. If you have a concern with anything, please feel free to schedule a conference any time during the year. All conferences are highly confidential between the teacher and the parent.