

Mustard Seed Montessori School

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My Goals

I have a deep concern for the "whole" child and feel each area of his/her development is of equal importance- the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual growth. I strive to help the individual child develop fully through his/her work, according to the teaching of Dr. Maria Montessori, the founder of the "Montessori Method." The following are areas of development you can expect to see in your child:

- 1 A joy of learning
- 2 Learning through discovery
- 3 Attachment to reality
- 4 Ability to choose
- 5 Enjoyment of quiet
- 6 Love of order
- 7 Concentration
- 8 Self confidence
- 9 Self discipline
- 10 independence

Philosophy

The basic idea in the Montessori philosophy of education is that all children carry within themselves the person they will become. In order to develop physical, intellectual, and spiritual potential to the fullest, the child must have freedom: a freedom to be achieved through order and self discipline. The world of the child is full of sights and sounds that at first appear chaotic. From this chaos, children must create order, learn to distinguish among the impressions that assail their senses, and slowly but surely gain mastery of themselves and their environment.

Dr. Montessori developed what she called the "prepared environment," which possesses a certain order and allows children to learn at their own speed, according to their own capacity and in a non-competitive atmosphere.

"Never let children risk failure until they have a reasonable chance of success."

The years between 3 and 6 are the years in which children learn the rules of human behavior most easily. These years can be constructively devoted to "civilizing" children, freeing them through the acquisition of good manners and habits, to take their places in society.

Dr. Montessori has recognized that the only valid impulse to learning is the self motivation of the child. Children move themselves toward learning. The teacher prepares the environment, directs the activity, and offers the child stimulation, but it is the **child** who learns, who is motivated through work itself and to persist in a given task. If Montessori children are free to learn, it is because they have acquired an "inner discipline" from their exposure to both physical and mental order. This is the core of Dr. Montessori's philosophy. Patterns of concentration, "stick-to-itiveness" and thoroughness, established in early childhood, produce a confident, competent learner in later years.

Montessori teaches children to observe, to think, to judge. It introduces the children to the joy of

learning at an early age and provides a framework in which intellectual and social discipline go hand-in-hand.

Learning Objectives

- 1 Develop and foster an abiding curiosity
- 2 Develop habits of initiative and persistence
- 3 Develop sensory-motor skills in order to sharpen the ability to discriminate and judge
- 4 Develop social skills
- 5 Acquire the basic skills necessary for a lifetime of learning
- 6 Help develop each child's innate, ultimate potential through high self expectations

Dr. Montessori believed that no human being is educated by another person. He or she must do it by him or herself or it will never be done. A truly educated individual continues learning long after the hours and years he or she spends in the classroom because that person is motivated from within by a natural curiosity and love for knowledge. Dr. Montessori felt, therefore, that the goal of early childhood education should not be to fill the child with facts from pre-selected course of studies, but rather to cultivate the child's own natural desire to learn.

In the Montessori classroom, this objective is approached in two ways:

- 1 By allowing each child to experience the excitement of learning by his or her own choice rather than being forced; and
- 2 By helping the child perfect his or her natural tools for learning, so that the child's abilities will be maximized for future learning situations. The Montessori materials have a dual, long-range purpose in addition to their immediate purpose of giving specific information to the child.

Ages

3 years through 6 years old

Class Schedule

8:30 - 12:00 a.m. Monday-Friday
1:30 - 5:00 p.m. Monday-Thursday

Snacks:

- 1 I serve a a.m. and p.m. snack at school
- 2 Parents may volunteer to bring a special, nutritious snack for the children

Clothing

- 1 Play clothes are encouraged – simple, sturdy and easy to manage. Please make sure that your child can fasten and unfasten his/her clothes (pants) without help.
- 2 Please bring a pair of house shoes to wear in the classroom. **Cowboy boots, clogs and flip/flops are not allowed.** They are a deterrent/or dangerous for participation in all aspects of school activity.

Illness

Parents will be notified if any of the following conditions exist:

- 1 Fever above 101 degrees
- 2 Diarrhea/vomiting
- 3 Unable to participate in program due to feeling ill.
- 4 Any communicable condition (ex. chicken pox)
- 5 Child needs to be picked up within one hour of parent notification.
- 6 Only prescription medication may be given to children at school or medicine accompanied by a doctor's written permission. I do not administer aspirin, vitamins, antihistamines etc., unless the parent brings a note from the doctor.

Please do not bring a sick child to school.

Absences:

- 1 Parents are advised to notify the school before 8:30 a.m. if the child is absent.
- 2 I do not refund for illnesses or absences.

I base my budget on the monthly tuition from each child and need a guaranteed amount in order to calculate and cover my expenses.

First Days of School

PLEASE do not linger in the classroom at the beginning of the school period. Should your child be hesitant to leave you when bringing him/her to school, be confident that almost always a child will become happy within minutes after a parent has left, especially when he/she becomes involved with the interesting activities in the school. I will meet your child's need with great sensitivity. If your child continues crying more than 20 minutes after you have left, I will call to advise you.

BE SURE to provide your child with a good night's sleep. As a rule of thumb, a child who has to be at school by 8:30 a.m. should be in bed by 8:30 p.m.

Arrival and Departure

It is imperative that arrival and dismissal times be closely adhered to. The time before class is vital for teacher preparation to ensure a smooth and productive day. I ask that you arrive **no earlier than five minutes** before the start of class and **pick your child promptly** at 12:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Promptness in a child's life is very important! Tardiness can be very interruptive. I appreciate your cooperation. If you are unavoidably late for class, please enter the classroom very quietly and again do not linger.

Children are not allowed to walk to the classroom by themselves.

At arrival, **please have your child walk** (not run) to the door so that he/she is calm upon entering the classroom.

Parents must walk with their child to the door of the school where I will greet each child. Please do not talk to the teacher before class.

Every person permitted to pick up your child needs to be listed on the enrollment form. I require a written note when your child first arrives to state the name and description of an unfamiliar person whom you desire to pick up your child. Please make sure that this person has a picture

identification to show to me. I will not allow any child to leave with a person I do not know and whom we have not been notified of previously. No exceptions.

Birthdays

Children's birthdays may be celebrated on the actual birth date or the closest school day to it. Parents may bring a special snack. Simple treats that are easy for 3 to 6 year olds to manage are suggested. PLEASE no candy and cup cakes or cookies with icing!

If you are planning to have a home party for your child please do not hand out invitations in school. Likewise, if your child is attending a party after school, please do not send gifts to the school with your child. In the past, I have found that these situations can be upsetting for those who are not invited. This can create hurt feelings and sad children. You may give me the invitations and I will discreetly pass them on to the parents.

Christmas - Easter

Christmas is a time when stories and experiences are presented that embody the true spirit of giving and sharing. This school is Christian based, therefore we will talk about the birth of Christ. Santa Claus will not be discussed in class.

Easter is the celebration of Christ's death and resurrection. A time of rebirth, a time of new life which is so prevalent in the Spring. I omit discussing the Easter bunny.

Missing Objects

Please check your child's pockets subtly for unusual (hard-to-replace) items. Sometimes things disappear (i.e. puzzle pieces, beads, marbles, rocks, sound bucket objects, number tiles....). NEVER feel embarrassed about returning one of our odds and ends. The children are very honest. Sometimes they simply desire to take part of their school home with them.

Items from Home

Please leave all toys, gadgets, stickers, fantasy books, work books, purses with make-up, felt pens, mirrors, candy, gum and money etc. at home.

Inquiries

Please avoid questioning me about your child before or after class if in the presence of your child. At the beginning of class I am obligated to focus attention on the children or to complete teacher preparation. Please feel free after class. Communication is encouraged. The hour between 12:00 and 1:30 is my hour of cleaning the classroom, rest and preparation. **Please contact me after 5:00 p.m. Thank you for your cooperation.**

Tuition Payments:

- 1 **Due by the first and late by the 8th of each month.
\$3 late fee per day until tuition is paid.**
- 2 Processing fee for returned checks is \$20.
- 3 Registration fee is \$40, it is non-refundable.
- 4 Supply fee of \$50 will be collected twice a year, in September and February. Thank you for your support because this fee enables me to keep our room looking good.
- 5 Monthly tuition:

Five days a week	\$300
Four days a week	\$240
Three days a week	\$192
Two day a week	\$136

This includes Holidays.

What to bring to school:

- 1 One set of clothes, labeled
- 2 One pair of house shoes with a back, or other soft soled shoes dedicated for the classroom.
- 3 Enrollment form
- 4 Child's immunization record
- 5 Signed portion of agreement of this Mustard Seed Montessori Parent Information Book

Letter Sounds used in Montessori Phonetic Program

Please avoid referring to the letters of the alphabet as "a,b,c,d..." You may complement our reading program by calling the letters by the certain sound it generally makes as listed below.

a as in apple	n as in nose
b as in boy	o as in octopus
c as in cat	p as in pan
d as in dog	q as in quick
e as in elephant	r as in rat
f as in farmer	s as in snake
g as in girl	t as in turtle
h as in hand	u as in umbrella
i as in igloo	v as in valentine
j as in jump	w as in water
k as in kitten	x as in fox
l as in ladder	y as in yo-yo
m as in monkey	z as in zoo

Ideas for Correlating Montessori and Home

- 1 Show the child how to clean up after working with something and where to return it to its place. Be sure that this is done before other activities are begun.
- 2 Whenever demonstrating a task to your child, first perform actions very carefully yourself. Show step by step, using as few words as possible. It's always a good idea to keep demonstrations brief, to allow your child to learn more through discovery rather than imitation.
- 3 Do NOT redo any part of your child's project in front of him, and if possible do not correct any part of it at all. At a later time, give your child a new demonstration of the activity.

- 4 Introduce your rules and limits of your household gradually. Make them possible for your child to adapt to. Once you have made them, be as consistent as possible and remember, your example is the best teacher. The child is observing you with his/her entire being.
- 5 Toy rotation results in better use of toys. Only 8-9 toys need to be on the toy shelves at one time. Others should be stored accessibly. As you child tires of some toys, they can be replaced by stored toys.
- 6 Toys should be safe, clean, and consist of all their parts. Discard broken toys. I do not recommend toys that encourage violence.
- 7 Children learn by imitating the adults so set a good example of being on time for commitments involving the family.
- 8 Reflect on a typical day. Were the majority of your encounters with your child of a negative or restraining nature? Build up a positive relationship between you and your child. Give your total attention, if only for a few moments.

Some suggested home activities are:

Dusting, sweeping, pouring, help unload groceries, set table, put away toys, store clothes, roll socks, sort laundry, water plants indoors/outdoors, rake leaves, help wash car, wash/dry dishes, make bed, care for pets.....

Reason for Refusing Admission

The director is authorized to refuse admission to any child that bites, fights, causes general confusion, uses inappropriate language or is considered a detriment to the welfare of the other children attending Mustard Seed Montessori School. Several steps will be taken before this refusal is issued.

- 1 I will work with the child
- 2 I will meet with the parent/guardian and the child

Should the behavior remain consistent, the child will then be refused admittance in writing.

Reporting Child Abuse

I am required by law to report any suspected incidences of possible child abuse or neglect. The Child Abuse Hotline is 1-800-252-5400.

Minimum Standards – Licensing Inspection Report

As a parent you have the right to review a copy of the minimum standards, as well as the home's most recent licensing inspection report. The local Licensing office is located at 317 Casa Drive in Copperas Cove, phone: (254) 547-4286.

Since I am the secretary and the teacher PLEASE avoid calling during school hours-except for true emergencies. Thank you for your cooperation.

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Agreement Form

Please sign and return this portion of this Parent Information Book acknowledging that you read and agreed with its content. Return this page before or on the first day of your child's attendance. Thank you!

Signature _____ Date _____

Please let me know if you choose to pay:

Monthly _____

Bimonthly _____

Please let me know how you found out about this school:

Your e-mail address: _____

Occasionally, I will take digital pictures and would like to send them to you via e-mail. In addition, this is a convenient tool to exchange some information. Thank you.