

PARENT HANDBOOK

2023-2024

School Year



COUNTRY MEADOWS
MONTESSORI SCHOOL

6151 Washington Street Gurnee, Illinois 60031 (847) 244-9352

www.cmmontessori.net

Welcome

Welcome to Country Meadows Montessori School. This handbook is provided to acquaint you and others involved in your child's school life with the procedures that help our school run smoothly, and some basic philosophy and practices underlying our Montessori program. We hope it increases your comfort level at this beginning point, and serves to help you throughout the year when a question arises regarding an aspect of your child's school year. Please become acquainted with the contents of this handbook and keep it handy for easy reference throughout the year. If you find that you need further explanation or more specific information, please call the school office and speak to one of our administrative staff, Ms. Mary, Ms. Yolanda or Ms. Jessica. This handbook is not part of the enrollment and tuition contract and the school reserves the right to revise, amend, and abolish its policies, and to make exceptions to them without notice and at any time.

Mission Statement

Country Meadows Montessori School respects, protects and celebrates childhood through the cultivation of inquisitive minds and critical thinking skills. Country Meadows Montessori School provides individualized learning and group experiences to enable the child's successful participation in a rapidly changing 21st century.

Principles of the Montessori Program

- ❖ Early childhood education is essential to human development and to the improvement of society.
- ❖ Children instinctively desire to learn. A child's development is the product of his or her own unique attributes, internal growth process, and external environment. The school, its teachers and its facilities guide children's innate curiosity by presenting them with a series of prepared environments that foster self-development.
- ❖ Carefully balanced classrooms provide diversity in age and gender. Background, skill level and diversity enriches the children's social development. This balance teaches cooperation, mutual respect, and peace; the foundations of civilized society.
- ❖ Movement is a natural activity of children and a significant contributor to their self-development. The school's indoor and outdoor environments improve the children's physical education and inspire their appreciation of the natural world.
- ❖ Children must be presented with not only the optimal materials and environment for their stage of development, they must also be given the freedom to explore and pursue the contents of their surroundings with limited interference.
- ❖ A child must be given sufficient independence to follow his or her internal teacher for the child's internal development process will naturally guide him or her towards elements in the environment best equipped to aid in their education and growth. Self-regulation is one of the goals we promote with each child.
- ❖ Excellence in education requires not only respect for the children, but also the active involvement of families and staff. The school promotes and expects staff development and parent participation in the children's education.

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Non-Discrimination Policy

Country Meadows Montessori School (CMMS) is responsible for ensuring that all individuals feel safe and are treated equitably in its programs and activities; and are provided an environment that is free from discrimination, harassment, intimidation, retaliation, and bullying consistent with federal and state nondiscrimination laws. All individuals participating in CMMS' programs and activities shall be afforded equal rights and opportunities regardless of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religious creed, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital or parental status, ancestry, national origin, ethnic group identification, disability, medical condition, homelessness or foster status, or political views; or on the basis of a person's association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics.

CMMS Faculty and Staff will refrain from teaching, coaching or prepping any student, parent, or staff member on specific topics of a sensitive or discriminatory matter or inserting a viewpoint or opinion; which may be misconstrued as part of the Montessori philosophy. The Faculty Staff's personal views or opinions will not be considered part of our curriculum. However, children are inquisitive by nature and we will, to the best of our ability, try to answer their questions in an unbiased way. If the children have further questions which may lead to in-depth discussions, they will be instructed to talk to their parents for more details. Parents will be notified via email or by phone regarding topics of this nature to make them aware of how these conversations were started and what was said by the Faculty/Staff member.

School Governance

The Board of Directors has the ultimate responsibility for all school policy. The Board is mostly comprised of former Montessori parents who also act as the administrative body of the school. The day-to-day operations and functions of the school are the responsibility of the principal, Mary O'Young, the Business Manager, Yolanda McKinley and the Office Manager, Ms. Jessica Landrey. The classroom teachers handle all issues pertaining to their classroom should a complication arise. It is always best to start with the individual who is involved with the issue. If the issue is not satisfactorily resolved, then ask to include the person(s) directly involved in the next level of decision-making.

Goals of the CMMS Program and Curriculum

Recognizing the individualism and needs of each child, the curriculum is not limited to just academic achievement of the child, but seeks to assist in the growth of the child – morally, socially, emotionally, and physically.

With the wide range of activities our school offers, the child experiences real life practical application in these areas, which leads to his appreciation and respect for the environment, class materials, learning, other children and adults, plants and animals, the historical progress of man and ultimately respect and appreciation for himself.

CMMS fosters independence, critical thinking, responsibility to self and others and peaceful appreciative stewardship of the earth.

The curriculum at CMMS, based on Dr. Maria Montessori's study of child development, is designed to maximize the development of children through prepared environments. Montessori trained Directors conduct carefully planned individual or small group lessons that children then carry out independently and repeatedly. Children have opportunities to build sensory-motor skills, socialization skills, self-esteem, inner security, and abiding habits of concentration. Great care goes

into purchasing and maintaining classroom materials that are beautiful and inviting and serve as essential components of the curriculum. Montessori pedagogy is over 100 years old and is practiced in nearly four thousand public and private schools in the United States, and throughout the world.

Starting at age three, Montessori classrooms group children in multi-aged classes over three-year spans. The child moves through periods of being the observer, the participant and the teacher. Older children help younger children to learn, which also strengthens their own skills and reinforces their own knowledge. Younger children admire their older classmates and eagerly anticipate the day when they too will have enough knowledge to act as role models. A caring atmosphere promotes the development of responsibility, collaboration, and cooperation.

Curriculum

Awareness of your child's readiness allows for us to offer your child an **individualized, developmentally appropriate** program. The teacher's role is as an observer and assessor of your child's readiness. We can work together with the principals of development and readiness as allies.

Understanding the concept of readiness and development will help you understand the reasons behind the kinds of "work" your child is doing at school this year, and will help you choose appropriate tasks for your child at home. Readiness is the necessary basis for your child's success with any challenge offered to your child. If a challenge matches your child's readiness it is developmentally appropriate and contributes to learning. Here are some guidelines we would like to recommend.

An activity needs to be designed to meet the general needs which are characteristic of the developmental stage in which your child is currently growing. There are several needs that characterize the child in the developmental stage of ages three through seven years of age. This is the reason for so many concrete materials in the classroom.

Development is an individual matter. Within the early childhood developmental stage there exist a wide range of neurological and emotional developmental rates regarding specific areas of learning.

Because development is neurologically and emotionally based, we cannot rush it or the readiness for learning which it makes possible. But we can support it through offering your child learning opportunities which match up with his or her current readiness, and therefore are challenging to your child. If presented as an invitation, tasks that meet with the child's readiness level will fully engage the child's interest, and will be sought out again later. This tells us that our invitation to an opportunity is on target. We need to provide the child with many opportunities to choose activities on his or her own, in order to maintain a love of learning while establishing a sense of autonomy.

The Toddler Classroom

Our Toddler classrooms are composed of children ranging in age from 15 months to 36 months. The Toddler curriculum follows the Montessori methodology under the direction of a Montessori toddler trained and a certified teacher who is familiar with the stages of development for this age group. The teacher has an extensive list of activities and developmentally appropriate educational materials that isolates one concept or skill at a time. The teacher prepares the environment based upon the needs of the individual child after continued on-going observation.

The toddler curriculum maximizes the development of the young child in a nurturing, and orderly setting. Activities lead the child to build sensory motor skills, self-esteem, inner security and habits of concentration. The goal of the curriculum is to foster independence, concentration, language and socialization. The toddler developmental stages are supported in the following areas:

Practical Life: activities that promote growth toward independent self-care including toileting, dressing, hygiene, eating, grace and courtesy, food preparation, strengthening the hand muscles, and care of the environment.

Sensorial Activities: experiences for the discrimination of the senses, motor coordination, and movement of the body in space.

Language Expression: opportunities for communication and vocabulary enrichment, including telling and listening to stories, singing, creating music and art, and engaging in learning materials that promote language.

Freedom of Movement: occasions for gross motor activities that includes dance, movement, finger plays and yoga, as well as, moving and interacting with the learning environment.

Cultivating Independence: opportunities for children to make choices, work collaboratively and independently, explore their classroom freely and express their curiosity.

Toddler Biting Policy

Biting is unfortunately not unexpected behavior for toddlers. Some children and many toddlers communicate through this behavior. However, biting can be harmful to other children and to staff. This biting policy has been developed with both of these ideas in mind. As a toddler program, we understand that biting unfortunately is a part of a toddler setting. Our goal is to help identify what is causing the biting and resolve these issues. If the issue cannot be resolved, this policy serves to protect the children that are bitten. If a biting incident occurs, state regulations requires that the parent of the child biting and the parent of the child who was bitten should be contacted. Names of the children are not shared with either parent.

When Biting Does Occur:

Our staff strongly disapproves of biting. The staff's job is to keep the children safe and help a child that bites learn different, more appropriate behavior. We do not use techniques to alarm, hurt, or frighten children.

1. The teacher will firmly tell the child, "We do not bite". And ask them to "check in" with the child who was hurt. (Use language like, "___ is crying; your bite hurt them; They are sad; They are scared")
2. The teacher will tell the child how the other child may feel and what other ways there are to deal with frustration. ("You need to use your words." Give them an example that pertains to the issue.)
3. The parents are notified. The "Incident Report" is filled out documenting the incident.
4. Teacher will contact the parents of the biting incident involving their child.

For the child that was bitten:

1. First aid is given to the bite. It is cleaned with soap and water. If the skin is broken, the bite is covered with a bandage.
2. Notify the parents by a phone call.
3. An Accident Report form is filled out documenting the nature of the injury, how it was taken care of and then given to the parents when child is picked up.

Moving forward:

The child who bit will be shadowed to help prevent any biting incidents. The child will be observed by the teaching staff to determine what is causing the child to bite (teething, communication, frustration, etc.) The child will be given positive attention and approval when exhibiting positive behavior.

When biting behavior continues:

1. If a child inflicts 2 bites in a one week period (5 days of school attendance) in which the skin of another child or staff member is broken or bruised or the bite leaves a significant mark, a conference will be held with the parents to discuss the child's behavior and how the behavior may be modified.
2. If the child again inflicts 2 bites in a one week period (5 weekdays) in which the skin of another child or staff member is broken or bruised or the bite leaves a significant mark, the child will be asked to take one week break from the school.
3. If a child who has been through step 1 and 2 and then goes 3 weeks (15 days of school attendance) without biting, we will go back to step 1 if the child bites again.
4. If a child bites/pushes twice in a 1 hour period, the child will be required to be picked up from the classroom for the remainder of the day. Steps need to be made for an alternative placement by the parents.

Video Surveillance Policy

Video/audio cameras have been installed and are now used in the toddler classroom for the purpose of monitoring the well-being and safety of the children, as well as teacher professional development. Access to the video footage will be limited to administration personnel, and the footage will be securely stored for approximately 60 days. This is common practice among childcare centers especially when working and caring for young children. To ensure the safety and security of our youngest children, staff, parents, and visitors, Country Meadows Montessori School's toddler classrooms are now equipped with a 24-hour video surveillance system. Security cameras have been installed in both the middle and south toddler classrooms. Our video cameras have been positioned in appropriate places within the toddler classrooms to have a panoramic view of the rooms.

The following are just some of the benefits of having video cameras installed in toddler classrooms:

- Security cameras keep children and childcare staff safe.
- People tend to perform better when there are security cameras around.
- Directors can better observe staff's interactions with children and with other staff members effectively.
- Our cameras can help provide peace of mind to our parents and our staff members. Because we respect the privacy of all children, parents, and staff in our school, our 24-hour video surveillance cameras are for internal purposes and only store up to 60 days.

The CMMS Administration (or any authorized persons deemed appropriate) is allowed to view the video footage either at the school's office on site OR live video footage may be viewed remotely by these persons at a different location when not on school grounds. There is no opt-out for the security images and these images will never be used/distributed except in the course of protecting the students and the school.

The Primary Classroom

Dr. Maria Montessori believed that no human being is educated by another person. He/she must do it by himself to be effective. A truly educated individual continues learning long after the hours and years they spend in the classroom because they are 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 a pre-selected course of studies, but rather to cultivate the child's own natural desire to learn and their interests.

The primary class is composed of a balanced, mixed-age group of three to six year old children. The mixed-age community allows children their unique growth patterns. At this crucial period of the "absorbent mind", the child's environment is enriched by Dr. Montessori's specially designed concrete and sequential materials which help each child "interact with and learn about the limits and realities of their world."

Dr. Montessori discovered that children progress through "sensitive periods" during which they are especially ready for certain skills and activities. The Montessori "prepared environment" takes advantage of these periods of readiness by providing an array of educational materials geared to helping the child learn through his senses, his corresponding skills and knowledge with which he continues to teach himself.

Practical Life Exercises: For young children, there is something special about tasks which an adult considers ordinary—washing dishes, paring vegetables, polishing shoes, etc. They are exciting to children because they allow them to imitate adults. Imitation is one of the strongest urges during children's early years. In this area of the classroom, children perfect their coordination and become absorbed in activity. They gradually lengthen their span of concentration. They also learn to pay attention to details as they follow a regular sequence of actions. Finally, they learn good working habits as they finish each task and put away all the materials before beginning another activity.

Sensorial Exercises: The sensorial materials help children to distinguish, to categorize, and to relate new information to what they already know. Dr. Montessori believed that this is the beginning of conscious knowledge and is brought about by the intelligence working in a concentrated way on the impressions of the senses.

Mathematics: Dr. Montessori designed concrete materials to represent all types of quantities, after she observed that children who became interested in counting like to touch or move the items as they enumerate them. By combining this equipment, separating it, sharing it, counting and comparing it they can demonstrate to themselves the basic operations of math. Children learn math facts by actually performing the operations with concrete materials. They work the problems with appropriate materials and they record their results. Similar operations can be performed with a variety of materials. This variety maintains their interest while giving them many opportunities for the necessary repetition. As they commit the addition facts and the multiplication tables to memory, they gain a real understanding of what each operation means. In the classroom, there are many materials that can be used for the mathematical operations of adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing.

Language: Children learn the phonetic sounds of the letters before they learn the alphabetical names in sequence. The sounds are given first because these are the sounds they hear in words that they need to be able to read. The children first become aware of phonetic sounds when the teacher introduces the consonants with the Sandpaper Letters. The individual presentation of language materials in a Montessori classroom allows the teacher to take advantage of each child's greatest periods of interest. Reading instruction begins on the day when the child wants to know what a word says or when they show interest in using the Sandpaper Letters. Writing or the construction of words with the moveable alphabet letters nearly always precedes reading in a Montessori classroom. Gradually the children learn the irregular words and words with two or three syllables by doing many reading exercises that offer variety rather than monotonous repetition. We offer many attractive books using a large number of phonetic words. Proceeding at their own pace, children are encouraged to read about things which interest them. Their skill in phonetics gives them the means of decoding almost any new word, so that they are not limited to a specific number of words which

they have been trained to recognize by sight. The children are encouraged to explore books for answers to their questions, whether about frogs, stars, etc.

Handwriting: Handwriting coincides with their reading development. Children have been strengthening their hands and fingers with the vast array of manipulatives while increasing the development of the pincer grasp. Cursive handwriting is promoted due to its natural movement.

Physical Geography: Geography is presented as a science of relationship between the child and the space around him from a more global reference eventually to the child's immediate space in the home and his community. The apparatus for these lessons are at a sensorial level (large wooden maps, land and water formations, models of the planets, concepts of land, air and water to name a few). Language labeling these materials, concepts and subjects is simultaneously introduced and repeated throughout these learning experiences.

History: Montessori offers children a concrete presentation of history by the child's relation to time. The child lives in a continuous NOW relating to the routine of the day. Awareness continues with relation to today, tomorrow, yesterday, day, night, morning, afternoon, evening. Developmental awareness of the calendar by day, month and year is experienced daily in the classroom. Seasons are introduced and the work of the "Clock". Special traditions and celebrations expand the child's awareness. Children are given the opportunity to make their own Time Line showing time passing each year with pictures and events happening at those times.

Cultural Awareness: The children gain an awareness of the world around them by exploring other countries, their customs, food, music, language and animals. This helps raise their consciousness about other people, to gain tolerance and understanding and therefore compassion for all people in the world. Children discover through reading and shared experiences that the fundamental needs of man are universal.

Art in the primary environment strives to maintain the great joy the child finds in creating something of his or her own. The children have the freedom to explore and create with a variety of mediums used for expression. Process and not product is promoted. Music is a fundamental in the classroom. All types of music are integrated into all aspects of the classroom: as a subtle background during work time, to signal clean up time, as an integral part of the cultural curriculum, as a form of celebration and fun. An Orff trained music instructor meets with each classroom each week to explore the areas of movement, rhythm, beat, song and dance. The plant and animal kingdoms are studied in an orderly fashion to foster a love and appreciation of all living things. Classrooms have "pets" from the mammal, fish, reptile, bird categories to care for and maintain. Spanish is first introduced in the primary classroom for children to begin learning nouns relating to themselves, their home, their school and their community. The teacher uses songs and games to make the repetition needed exciting for the children, as well as, learn the culture of this country.

1. ***Country Meadows Montessori School does not offer a "Kindergarten" program. We offer a 3-6 program for children 3-6 years old that provides an all-inclusive curriculum that prepares the child for any Elementary classroom.***
2. ***According to Illinois Law, children must turn 5 years old on or before September 1st of the current school year to be considered a kindergartner. Children who turn 5 years old after September 1st will not be considered a kindergartner until the following school year.***

The Elementary Community

The elementary child is moving from the concrete material experience to the abstract by visualizing mental concepts once demonstrated by handling the concrete. The six to twelve-year-old

child is beginning to discover reason through active, conscious learning. The child is constructing his/her self-image through feedback from their peers. Work is done in small groups. The classroom is a mini society where children actively seek to find and create their place in the group.

The curriculum utilizes the imagination of the six to twelve-year-old child through the use of stories or The Great Lessons in the exploration of how the universe began. The study of the passage of time depicts a series of events and conditions that shaped our world, our future and us. The study of man continues with the study of how language and mathematics became the tools of man's survival. These five key areas of interconnected studies are intended to give children a "cosmic" perspective of the Earth and humanity's place within the cosmos. By introducing the child to the "whole" and the ability to see how the parts of the whole are interconnected, Maria Montessori felt this was the only approach that would satisfy the imagination of this age group.

The approach is largely based on library research, with children gathering information, assembling reports, teaching what they have learned to fellow students, and assembling portfolios and handmade books of their own.

The advanced elementary Montessori materials move on to more complex and abstract concepts in mathematics, geometry, and pre-algebra. The goal is to lead the child away from a dependency on concrete models that visually represent abstract concepts towards the ability to solve problems with pen and paper alone. Part of this is made possible by the older child's ability to grasp abstract concepts, but it has been greatly enhanced over the years by countless hours of work with the concrete materials that made the abstract real and helped him visualize the abstraction.

In the Montessori program, the subject matter is not separated into small little packages: this is geography, this is social studies, this is math, etc. Everything is interrelated. The subjects weave in and out of each other. Literature, art, music, drama, history, political science, science, and the study of technology all complement one another in the curriculum. Children put together hands-on projects based upon topics of interest such as Greek mythology. Plays are written and put on by the children to represent a special time in history. Research and writing skills are promoted; children are encouraged to write and share plays, stories, poetry and class newspapers. Literature is connected with all of the other areas of the curriculum with students reading stories and plays about cultures and historical periods that they are studying.

Computers are a basic tool in the elementary classroom. Not only is the computer used as a resource for research by accessing information not readily available from the classroom library via Internet, but the children have the opportunity to also master desktop publishing, develop multimedia presentations, video editing and create their own newspapers or published works of their own.

Field trips or "going out" are an integral part of the program. Visiting places in the community or outlying area extend the classroom to include museums, nature centers, businesses, art galleries, and more. Children explore the possibilities themselves based upon interest and what they are working on in the classroom. Initiating the proposal, calling for information or reservations, finding transportation, all give the children a sense of independence and self-confidence and expands their world.

Spanish is incorporated in the elementary Montessori program in order to develop conversational skills, vocabulary, and ability to understand basic written information but most importantly, the appreciation and respect for the culture of the country and people where the language is spoken.

Today it has become common to find parents who feel the need to help their children excel. They seem to fear that if they do not provide this external 'push', their children will not exceed. "...children should be free to choose their own occupations, just as they must never be interrupted in their spontaneous activities. No work may be imposed; no threats, no rewards, and no punishments used." *Dr. Maria Montessori.*

Montessori urges parents to allow children to develop at their own pace, within a home environment that sets a good example and provides all the right stimulation, support and values. In

an atmosphere that truly respects children as people; parents have to allow them to master new skills when they are ready, not when it says they should in a curriculum guide.

Why don't Montessori schools traditionally assign homework like everyone else? Why should we believe assigning hours of homework to children after a long school day is the right way to go? School is one part of a child's day. Children work hard in school, just as their parents do at the office or whatever venue. Homework does not teach children responsibility, time management skills, self-discipline, or more of what they should be learning during the day. After school, children should have time to follow their own interests and play with family and friends. The elementary Directress/Director can provide families with a list of suggested after school activities that children will find interesting and challenging. Whenever children voluntarily decide to learn something, they tend to engage in their work with a passion and attention that few students will ever invest in tasks that have been assigned. Our goal is to inspire joyful thinking, not compliance. Homework is promoted in the child's 6th year as a transition to the Adolescent program.

Dress Code Guidelines

The idea of what to wear to school becomes a major decision made by elementary (9-12) and adolescent students every day. At this age what they wear seems to be what defines them as a person and oftentimes what opinions and attitudes they want to promote.

Our role as parents and educators continues to be as "guides" at this stage of development versus authoritarians.

The goal at school is to provide a safe and comfortable setting for our students so we can promote a positive educational environment in which everyone can learn. Clothing should foster student concentration, not detract, or distract. Common sense cannot be the guide since that is relative depending on the individual.

Discretion, maturity, good judgement should be considered and if there is a question, the parents should initiate guidance based upon appropriateness of clothing choices before the student comes to school. Individuality and identity are extremely important at this age so allowing students decision-making power and independence should be considered.

In keeping with the safety of the school community, here are guidelines you should follow when it comes to school attire.

Guidelines for "appropriate":

- Students should wear clothing that covers "private" areas
- Student's clothing should be able to cover undergarments (with or without adjustment).
- Students clothing cannot depict inappropriate imagery or verbiage based on the above definition outlined.

Not considered appropriate school clothing:

- Clothing with logos, slogans, words, or pictures promoting or depicting alcohol, tobacco, drugs, vandalism, bigotry, violence, sexual connotations, or profanity. This includes clothing with phrases or pictures that have double meanings or illusions.

The Adolescent Program

Dr. Montessori's model of secondary education is based on her understanding of the developmental needs and learning tendencies of early adolescents....a period of tremendous personal growth and change.

Country Meadows Montessori offers an Adolescent Program respectful of each child as an individual. The courses of study reflect an integration of the Illinois requirements of essential elements, the newest research on the developmental needs of early adolescents, the Montessori philosophy, the state of the art in current learning theory, and the predictions of the skills needed for a productive life in the twenty-first century. Students receive individual guidance through a rigorous and challenging curriculum which demonstrates the interdisciplinary nature of the world and prepares adolescents to understand and meet the challenges of today and the future. Curiosity, creativity, character, choice, and community are central to the program which fosters friendship, focus, justice, identity, leadership, and reflection. Here we look beyond test scores to meet the cognitive, social, and emotional needs of the whole child.

The Adolescent Program (also known as junior high or seventh and eighth grade) covers the broad spectrum of traditional subjects necessary for success, literacy and cultural understanding in today's world, including reading, science, mathematics, language arts, social studies, technology, Spanish and physical education. In addition, students are also empowered to go far beyond a traditional education as they continue the daily life lessons they began in the 6-12 year old classrooms. The Secondary Core Curriculum comes from Houston Montessori Center developed by Dr. Betsy Coe and the secondary faculty of the Houston Montessori Center. It represents over 30 years of development, research, and field study.

The Adolescent Program is an adolescent community based upon Dr. Maria Montessori's concept of Erdkinder ("Children of the Earth") and her Plan of Work and Study. The children will engage mentally and physically in practical life work that will put meaning and action to their elementary knowledge. A micro-economy is established based on the production and selling of agriculture products, which allows student to experience the budgeting and handling of money. This gives them an understanding of the role that the economy plays in adult society and where they can best contribute within that economy. Upon graduation from the Adolescent Program, each student will transition into the community with a solid knowledge base of the world and self-confidence with their abilities and contributions.

Video Surveillance Policy

Video/audio cameras have now been installed and are now used in the Adolescent classroom for the purpose of monitoring the well-being and safety of the students, as well as teacher professional development. Access to the video footage will be limited to administration personnel, and the footage will be securely stored for approximately 60 days.

To ensure the safety and security of our children, staff, parents, and visitors, Country Meadows Montessori School's Adolescent classroom is now equipped with a 24-hour video surveillance system. Our video cameras have been positioned in appropriate places within the Adolescent classroom to have a panoramic view of the room.

The following are just some of the benefits of having video cameras installed in the Adolescent classroom:

- Security cameras keep students and staff safe.
- People tend to perform better when there are security cameras around.
- Directors can better observe staff's interactions with students and with other staff members effectively.
- Our cameras can help provide peace of mind to our parents and our staff members.

Because we respect the privacy of all children, parents, and staff in our school, our 24-hour video surveillance cameras are for internal purposes and only store up to 60 days.

The CMMS Administration (or any authorized persons deemed appropriate) is allowed to view the video footage either at the school's office on site OR live video footage may be viewed remotely by these persons at a different location when not on school grounds.

Video surveillance/recording policy receipt forms are to be signed by parents/guardians and personnel enrolled at Country Meadows Montessori School and is a condition of enrollment and employment. There is no opt-out for the security images and these images will never be used/distributed except in the course of protecting the students and the school.

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Discretion, maturity, good judgement should be considered and if there is a question, the parents should initiate guidance based upon appropriateness of clothing choices before the student comes to school. Individuality and identity are extremely important at this age so allowing students decision-making power and independence should be considered.

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- Students should wear clothing that covers "private" areas
- Student's clothing should be able to cover undergarments (with or without adjustment).
- Students clothing cannot depict inappropriate imagery or verbiage based on the above definition outlined.

Not considered appropriate school clothing:

- Clothing with logos, slogans, words, or pictures promoting or depicting alcohol, tobacco, drugs, vandalism, bigotry, violence, sexual connotations, or profanity. This includes clothing with phrases or pictures that have double meanings or illusions.

Admissions and Enrollment

Each February enrollment packets are sent home to the parents of currently enrolled students to determine if the child will be returning the next school year. Written confirmation of intentions to re-enroll must be received by no later than the beginning of March of the current school year. At this time, siblings of currently enrolled students are given first priority for opening availability.

The formula for determining the number of openings for each class will be based upon the maximum allowable number of students per classroom minus the number of returning students.

Student openings will be filled on a first come, first serve basis as follows:

1. CMMS will host an Open House to publicize program enrollment and will begin to receive admission applications to fill fall openings.

2. In order to achieve a “balance” in each classroom, openings will be filled based upon the availability of program hours, age, and gender of the child, as well as, the date the application was received.
3. Parents will be notified in writing of an enrollment position for their child as they occur. The enrollment process begins with the child visiting in the classroom in order for the teacher to acquaint themselves with the child, sense their readiness for school and to give the child some preparation of this new experience. If the child shows readiness, the enrollment process will advance to the next level. Parents will complete the Enrollment Agreement and make a registration payment to reserve their child’s position in the classroom. The child may start as long as he/she meets the age and toileting criteria.
4. If there are no available openings for a particular program, parents will be notified in writing if their child has been placed on a waiting list. As openings become available, wait list applications will be reviewed based upon the following criteria: program hours, sibling of a currently enrolled family, previous Montessori experience, and previously mentioned criteria to achieve the balanced classroom. Parents will be notified by telephone or email.

Class Placement

When families enroll at Country Meadows Montessori School the information they provide on their application and questionnaire is important in making the decision in what classroom they are placed. With any classroom, administration is aware of the many factors to consider in order to keep the classrooms “balanced”. Boy/girl ratio, age and program hours are basic factors in placing a child in the right classroom. When and if parents make requests, the Administrator will let the parents know why it is impossible to take requests for specific classrooms or teachers. Parents do not realize the many factors taken into consideration when making class placements, so their input is not part of the placement decision. Teachers should not discuss class placement with families prior to our notification. All referrals should be directed to the Administrator.

Our Staff

The administrative faculty at CMMS is an experienced group comprised of Montessori parents dedicated to the Montessori philosophy and the day-to-day operations of Country Meadows Montessori School. These staff members are here to ensure that the school’s policies are being carried out, as well as, the safety of the children, state and local codes and requirements are met, qualified staff is employed and the financial status of the school is secure.

The Directresses/Directors at Country Meadows Montessori School must meet all credential requirements as outlined and dictated by the American Montessori Society (the school’s monitoring and governing organization). Teachers are Montessori trained and certified by either the American Montessori Society or the Association Montessori Internationale. Directresses/Directors have different professional backgrounds and are certified in a specific age group with Montessori training from an accredited Montessori training center. We are fortunate that additionally our Directresses/Directors bring a cultural and experiential diversity to our school. Dr. Montessori preferred the term “Directress” to that of “teacher” because the role of the Montessorian is to put the child in contact with the elements of the specially prepared environment that he needs for his development and growth.

The teaching assistants work under the supervision of the Directress/Directors and assist in the classroom. They are employed based upon their experience, education, temperament and commitment to the Montessori core principles. All employees go through an extensive hiring process including fingerprinting, annual physical examinations, background checks and previous employment references. Teaching Assistants are required to participate in the Paraprofessional

Training prior to working with the children. In addition, all employees are CPR and First Aid Certified; which includes training on the defibrillator. Continuing education is mandated and followed as long as staff are employed at CMMS.

In partnership with the parents, our staff is dedicated to our mission of guiding each child to develop their skills and their love of learning to become an advocate of peace and a participating citizen in society.

Faculty email addresses are:

Alejandra Cano - Music/Spanish/Dance Teacher	a_cano@cmmontessori.net
Stephanie Davis – Lower Elementary Directress	s_davis@cmmontessori.net
Patty Gehrig – P.E. Teacher	p_gehrig@cmmontessori.net
Fran Blandford – Primary Directress	f_blandford@cmmontessori.net
Jessica Landrey – Office Manager	j_landrey@cmmontessori.net
Yolanda McKinley – Business Manager	ymckinley@cmmontessori.net
Roger Melka – Adolescent Director	r_melka@cmmontessori.net
Nasreen Neumeyer—Lower Elementary Directress	n_neumeyer@cmmontessori.net
Benjamin O’Young – Upper Elementary Director	b_oyoung@cmmontessori.net
Mary O’Young – Administrator	moyoung@cmmontessori.net
Trewaunda Stackhouse – Primary Directress	t_stackhouse@cmmontessori.net
Genie Torcende – Toddler Directress	g_torcende@cmmontessori.net

Staffs to student ratios in the different programs are reflected below:

1:5 in the Toddler Program Classroom (depending on ages of children)
1:10 in the Primary Children’s House (3-6 years)
1:15 in the Elementary Community (6-12 years)

School Hours

TODDLER CLASSROOM (15 MONTHS – 3 YEARS)

Morning Half Day:	8:45 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.
Early Morning Half Day	7:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.
Extended Morning:	7:00 a.m. to 3:15 p.m.
Extended Day:	8:45 a.m. to 3:15 p.m.
Extended Day Plus:	8:45 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
*Full Day:	7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

PRIMARY CLASSES (3 to 6 years old)

Morning Half Day:	8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. (available to 3 and 4 year olds)
Early Morning Half Day:	7:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. (available to 3 and 4 year olds)
Extended Morning:	7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Extended Day:	8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Extended Day Plus:	8:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
*Full Day:	7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

ELEMENTARY CLASSES (6 to 12 years old)

Extended Day:	8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Extended Morning:	7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Extended Day Plus:	8:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
*Full Day:	7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

ADOLESCENT CLASSES (12-14 years old)

Extended Day:	8:30 a.m. to 3:45 p.m.
Extended Morning:	7:00 a.m. to 3:45 p.m.
Extended Day Plus:	8:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
*Full Day:	7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

*Please note that full day hours (7:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.) are considered before and after school care. These hours are only available to those families who have enrolled in this program as we have a limited number per classroom. Reservations for this program must be made at the time of enrollment due to the limited space available.

Hours of operation are 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. School office hours are 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Any phone calls or messages must be made through the school's main office number (847) 244-9352. Calls to the teachers should be made after the 3:00 p.m. dismissal. Teachers will be able to speak to parents after class time is over, or in some cases, during their lunch break. We will be happy to take a message from the school office for the Directress/Director. You can set up to communicate via email, if preferred.

School Calendar

The academic school year runs from the end of August through the month of May. The school calendar is set up each year by the School Board members and classroom teachers taking into consideration the number of school days we provide (180), as well as, the Lake County Superintendent's recommendations for winter and spring breaks. Our school holidays and professional days are kept to a minimum and we try to make conference days convenient for the parents coinciding with the school district's days off. Parents will be provided with the current calendar at the beginning of each school year. We offer a summer camp program for our returning students, as well as, children from the community.

First Week Phase-In Schedule

If your child is new to the school, your child's first week of school may be a partial week, so that returning students can re-acquaint themselves with the ground rules and routines they learned previously. This makes for a happy, peaceful classroom to start off the new school year and an easier transition for the new children.

Getting Started

Items Your Child Needs for School

Please help your child have these items ready to bring on the first day of school. Explain to your child that except for their backpack and reusable water bottle, these items will remain at school.

- ❑ **Complete Set of Clothing**-in a labeled Ziploc bag, which your child might need at school due to accidents of various sorts. Please update these clothes as the weather changes and replace immediately when used.
- ❑ **A Pair of Gym Shoes** to keep and wear inside school. These gym shoes will work as their inside the classroom pair of shoes, as well as, their foot wear for their weekly gym classes. **PLEASE, NO BELLS, LIGHTS, MUSIC OR OTHER FORMS OF ENTERTAINMENT ON THESE SHOES.**

- ❑ A **large backpack with a loop** on the back that hangs. Hall space does not accommodate backpacks with rollers.
- ❑ A **lunch box** with an ice pack to keep food cool and reusable containers to store the food. The school will provide utensils, plates, and glasses. Each child should bring a cloth napkin every day.

Candy, chocolate, chips, chewing gum and soda pop are not allowed at school.

Country Meadows is a nut free school.

- ❑ **Reusable water bottle** NOTE: Cups and drinking fountains will not be available.
- ❑ Nappers (3 & 4 year old's) will need a **trifold mat** with blanket and sheet stored in a plastic bag (taken home every Friday for cleaning).
- ❑ **Casual, Comfortable, Sturdy Play Clothing.** We would like your child to feel free every day to participate in all the activities we have available for them at school. Please send your child to school in casual, sturdy play clothing, as opposed to what we think of as fancy, dressy or formal clothing. It should be designed for and conducive to safe, uninhibited, active play and for artistic work. We do use aprons with very messy work, but paint, glue, etc. can still occasionally get on clothing and even "washable" tempera seems to vary greatly in its actual wash ability. Also, given a choice, young children tend to be unable to envision in advance how they will react if their special outfit is soiled or damaged.
- ❑ **Dresses**, even if sturdy, may be cumbersome to allow for working on the floor, running around the gym and playing on the playground equipment. If your child wears a dress, please make sure they are wearing a pair of shorts or leggings underneath, so their undergarments are not exposed.
- ❑ **No action figure/T.V. character clothing or accessories.** Young children are very likely to act like the clothing in which they dress. Clothing often influences the child's mode of operation and social interaction for the day. This draws the child from the kind of special experiences and cooperative play that are available at school. Please help your child have a morning of work/play unrelated to television super-heroes and other like characters by leaving superhero and heroine attire, including capes, at home.
- ❑ **Clothing for Inclement Weather (All Students)**
We will be going outside everyday so please ensure that your child is wearing the proper attire for the season and weather conditions forecasted each day. In mildly cool weather the usual light jacket or sweatshirt to wear is fine. In very cold weather, your child will need extra warm clothing including snow pants, boots, gloves/mittens and hat. Their daily backpack needs to be large enough to accommodate all of this clothing (exception, boots).

Upper Elementary/Adolescent Dress Guidelines

- You may wear shirts with positive messages and images.
- Bottoms (shorts, skirts, and dresses) must be to the tips of your fingers or longer.
- Undergarments, including bra straps and boxer shorts, should be covered at all times.
- Crocs, slip-ons or slippers may be worn as indoor shoes
- Athletic shoes must be worn during P.E. and outside.
- The only spandex acceptable is under acceptable clothing.
- When you raise your hand, your navel must be covered.
- Shirts must be of modest style, showing little bare skin. Camisoles are not allowed.

Personal Belongings

Please routinely help your child keep all personal belongings, such as trinkets, (including wearable ones, i.e. watches with special gadgets) toys, costume attire, etc. at home or in the car. We ask that these items not be brought or worn even momentarily into the school in order to allow

children to focus fully on the many opportunities available in the school environment, and to avoid the problems that come with lost or damaged personal treasures. We would like your child's arrival at school and separation for you to be happy and free of issues in which teachers must then be involved, and that could have been avoided if your child honors this request. Therefore, please set a toy boundary for your child that is at home in the car and not inside the school. It is our school policy for children to keep their personal belongings at home. If by chance an item slips by you and it finds its way in the classroom, we will inform the child of our safe keeping rule and put the item in their backpack to take home.

Access Key Cards/School Safety

For the safety of our children, the outside doors are designed for Access Key Cards only and **firearms are prohibited** on the school premises at any time, unless the parent/guardian is part of the police force or sheriff's department.

Parents will have access inside the school building, but you will need to purchase a key card if you no longer have one. If you still have yours, please send Ms. Jessica the **first 5 numbers** on the card to reactivate it. If you need to purchase a new key card, they are **\$15** (cash or check made out to Country Meadows).

Key cards are only active from:

7:00am-9:00am- Early Morning Half Day, Ext Morning or Full Day program hours

8:00am-9:00am- Half Day, Ext Day, or Ext Day Plus program hours

3:15pm-6:00pm- Ext Day Plus or Full Day program hours

Key cards will not work outside of these hours

Arrival and Departure Procedures ***No Child Will Be Released to an Unauthorized Person***

Transportation of students is the responsibility of parents. It is imperative that arrival and dismissal times be closely adhered to. We ask that Morning Half Day and Extended Day families arrive no earlier than 8:10 a.m. for 3-12 years old and 8:30 a.m. for Toddlers.

Promptness in a child's life is very important. Children who arrive late feel awkward and uncomfortable. They miss that community time at the start of the school day that prepares them for what will be occurring. Because CMMS is a school, we require that all students be in the classroom by the beginning of the school day at 8:30 a.m.

When arriving to school, please allow for as much independence with your child as they can handle. They should be escorted to the entrance door most assessable to their individual classroom and good-byes given. The child should be encouraged to hang up their backpack and go directly to their classroom teacher or assistant. One of these adults will be there to greet your child.

If you arrive after 8:30 A.M. (when school starts), please come to the main office and a staff member will walk your child to their classroom. Regular tardiness will not be accepted. Occasional exceptions include medical/dental appointments.

Drop Off

If your child is enrolled in our **before school program hours (7am start)**, below is where they need to be dropped off in the morning:

- Ms. Genie- Toddlers- **West Barn back door**
- Ms. Blandford (Primary 3-6)- **East barn front door**
- Ms. Trewaunda (Primary 3-6)- **West barn front door**
- Ms. Stephanie & Ms. Nasreen (1st-3rd grade)- **East barn front door**
- Mr. Ben (4th-6th grade)- **East barn front door**
- Mr. Melka (7th & 8th grade)- **East barn front door**

If your child is enrolled in our **regular school day program hours (8:30/8:45am start)**, below is where they need to be dropped off in the morning:

- Ms. Genie- Toddlers- **West Barn back door**
- Ms. Blandford (Primary 3-6)- **East barn front door**
- Ms. Trewaunda (Primary 3-6)- **West barn front door**
- Ms. Stephanie & Ms. Nasreen (1st-3rd grade)- **East barn front door**
- Mr. Ben (4th-6th grade)- **West Barn side door**
- Mr. Melka (7th & 8th grade)- **Adolescent classroom FRONT door** (do not go to the back door)

To avoid congestion at **8:15 A.M** drop off, please park your car and walk your child to the designated entrance and most importantly, be patient.

Pick Up

Parents picking up at the **11:30 A.M. and the 3:00 P.M. dismissal** will be asked to park outside their child's classroom door in a designated parking space (**Toddlers, Ms. Trewaunda's & Mr. Ben's class**) or line up two-by-two in the circle drive in front of the school (**Ms. Blandford, Ms. Stephanie & Ms. Nasreen's classrooms**). Teachers will keep an eye out for your car and escort your child outside the building to you. Please get out of your car to retrieve your child as we are not placing them in the car anymore.

Adolescent parents picking up at **3:45 P.M. dismissal** will be asked to line up two-by-two in the circle drive in front of the East Barn.

Children picked up **after 3:10 P.M. (in our after-school program)** will be in their classroom or on the playground. Each classroom has a colored flag that designates which classroom is on the playground.

- **Toddlers- White**
- **Blandford- Yellow**
- **Trewaunda- Green**
- **Nasreen & Stephanie- Red**
- **Ben- Purple** (Adolescents in after school look for this flag color)

If your child is on the playground, parents should park their car in the designated parking spaces provided, turn off their car and pick up their child from the playground fence (**DO NOT GO INSIDE THE PLAYGROUND FENCE**). If you do not see their flag, they are inside the building. See below for designated pick-up areas:

- Ms. Genie-Toddlers- **West Barn side door (middle classroom)**
- Ms. Blandford (Primary 3-6)- **East barn front door**
- Ms. Trewaunda (Primary 3-6)- **West barn front door**
- Ms. Stephanie & Ms. Nasreen (1st-3rd grade)- **East barn front door**
- Mr. Ben (4th-6th grade)- **West Barn side door**
- Mr. Melka (7th & 8th grade)- **West Barn side door**. Adolescents in after school will be with Ms. Ambur for after school.

****Anyone who is picking up between 5:45pm-6:00pm, all children will be over in the East Barn ready for pick up****

For your child’s protection, the school will not release any child to someone other than the parents in the absence of written authorization. We are very strict about this point and will not allow any child to ride in a car with a person we do not know or about whom we have not been notified previously in writing. **Please make sure we have written authorization for anyone other than the parents picking up your child. They can be listed on the Authorization for Child Release form.**

Regulatory signs have been posted on the school property indicating speed limits, drop off zones, no parking and school crossings. It is imperative that parents adhere to these posted messages upon starting school. We will have parent volunteers and school faculty available in order to ensure that all parents adhere to these policies. Safety for our children is the most important factor in these endeavors.

1. **There is no parking, standing or leaving a vehicle unattended at ANY TIME in the front of the school buildings.**
2. All unattended vehicles must be parked in a designated parking spot indicated by yellow lines on the asphalt.
3. Posted speed limit signs dictate the 5-MPH speed cars should be going. **PLEASE SLOW DOWN WHEN DRIVING THROUGH THE PARKING LOT!**
4. At no time will vehicles stop abreast of one another by having to cross in front of other vehicles.
5. The parents of children in Mrs. Genie’s classrooms may not park in the rear of the West Barn. This is a thoroughfare for cars going around the back of the school buildings and cars parked there will interfere and block this thoroughfare.
6. **Children should never be left unattended in the parking lots**
7. When you are dropping off or picking up your child at the playground, **PARK YOUR CAR** first in a designated parking spot. ***Do not pick up at the playground gate/fence!***

Playground Flag Colors

Ms. Blandford – Yellow
 Ms. Trewaunda – Green
 Ms. Nasreen—Red
 Mrs. Stephanie – Blue
 Mr. Ben – Purple
 Mrs. Genie – White

We need the full cooperation of all parents to ensure the safety of our children and families. Parents will be “cited” if witnessed to be speeding on the school grounds or parking in “drop off” zones. On behalf of the Board of Directors of Country Meadows Montessori School, thank you in advance for your acknowledgement and compliance to these policies and procedures.

Cellular Phone Usage Policy

Transitions are a crucial part of your child's day. Parents and guardians: When arriving at school to drop-off or pick-up, our school stresses the importance of being "present" for your child. Your child deserves your full attention. **Please do not use your cell phone or hand-held device during this time or upon entry into the school.** Please leave your cell phone in your vehicle during drop-off or pick-up. When your child enters your car, please do not be on your cell phone out of respect both to the staff member and the child.

In addition, students are not allowed to have cell phones in school. Please advise your child to leave their cell phones or hand-held devices in the car or at home.

Social Media/Photography Policy

When it comes to sharing photos of the students whether it is while they are working in the classroom or dancing in the Autumn fest, permission from the parents is required and necessary. All parents are asked to complete a Photo Waiver Form at enrollment. Permission is given for newsletters, our CMMS website, marketing pieces and Facebook. If permission is not given, photos of their children are prohibited. No one should be sharing photos of children unless they check with Administration to see if permission has been given. Parents may not share photos of CMMS students on their personal social media pages.

Lunch and Snacks

The health and welfare of all children is of the utmost importance at Country Meadows Montessori School. Throughout the curriculum, children from 3-14 years of age will be exposed to information on food and resources of nutrition. We will be promoting and encouraging children and parents to make healthy, nutritious choices for snacks and lunches for the children. Children are to bring a completely disposable lunch and snack daily.

Healthy food taken into the body creates a healthy brain. Educating our families and students to make good choices supports:

- ❖ Eating a good breakfast to start the day off right
- ❖ Eating foods that are more effectively used by the body
- ❖ Increased mental performance, concentration, and sharpened memory
- ❖ Consistency of mood
- ❖ The establishment of lifelong healthy eating habits

Teachers will address suggestions for good food choices. Your child should not bring the following food items to school:

- ❑ Beverages with added sugars (pop, Gatorade, fruit drinks or punch, HiC, Capri Sun, juice boxes, etc.)
- ❑ Candy, cookies, cake, pudding, chocolate treats, or desserts.
- ❑ Fruit roll-ups or fruit snacks not 100% fruit
- ❑ Anything with frosting, added chocolate, or candy sprinkles
- ❑ Lunchables

A lunch containing items from all of the food groups below constitutes a well-balanced, nutritional lunch:

- ✓ A protein source: meat, fish, cheese, eggs, beans, and plain yogurt
- ✓ Complex Carbohydrates: whole grain bread, rice, crackers, and pretzels
- ✓ Fresh fruits and vegetables
- ✓ *Beverage: water

Water is always available to your child.

In the Toddler Program, the lunch meal is catered according to the DCFS licensing standards. Our teacher is qualified with Food and Sanitation Requirements and uses all necessary procedures for the food preparation, serving, storage and sanitation.

Recess Time



Outdoor play is an essential part of the curriculum and when weather permits, children will go outside each day. For this reason, we ask parents to provide proper clothing. The children will go outside unless there is severe cold, extreme heat, or drenching rain. We encourage children to wear gym shoes to school and keep a pair at school, as well. These types of shoes are more comfortable for the children and they need them for gym class and to wear outside. When the weather gets cold, children will need to come to school with outerwear that will keep them protected from the cold conditions. Including wind chill, we will use approximately 25 degrees F. as our guide. Snow pants, boots, scarves, hats and mittens will be the outerwear attire needed.

Our outdoor play area is fenced and uses equipment designed for safe play for children. The play surface is soft wood chips that are refreshed annually to the required depth for safety. There is specific equipment on the play area designed for different age groups. We have Playground Safety Rules that outline code of conduct, which equipment each age group may play and how many at a time. Staff monitor the children closely to prevent accidents from occurring. Sand toys are provided for the sand box and kept in good, clean condition. Broken toys are removed immediately.

Elementary children, the younger primary children and the toddler-aged children each have their own designated space for play area and equipment. They respectively have a different schedule for recess time so that we have a manageable number of children at any given time.

Napping

The toddlers, 3 and young 4 year old children in the primary program who are enrolled in the extended or full day program will be scheduled a napping time/rest period. Toddlers will be provided with a resting cot, although parents are asked to provide a crib sheet, small blanket and pillow. The 3 and 4 year olds will be required to bring to school each Monday a clean nap mat to rest on (nap mats also available in the office for a \$30 fee). These must be portable, waterproof, and easy to fold. These nap mats will be sent home each Friday for cleaning. If your child requires a blanket to sleep with, this will be allowed, however, we will try to minimize its use, if possible. The older 4 year old and the 5 year old children are not required to nap. The work cycle from the morning will be extended to the afternoons.

Classroom Celebrations

At CMMS, we have a myriad of cultural diversity. We encourage parents to share their family customs and traditions in their child's classroom so the customs and traditions may be shared with the children.

For birthdays, our school tradition for the toddler and elementary aged children is to acknowledge them on their actual birthday. In primary classrooms all the children who have a birthday that month celebrate on the third Wednesday of the month. In the past, parents of the birthday child were asked to bring in some form of refreshment/snack. ***However, for health reasons we have substituted this tradition of food for a new tradition. Instead, the child may bring in a donated book to the classroom to be read aloud to the class.***

The Celebration of Life is done in the toddler and primary classrooms. Parents will be given a write-up of this classroom birthday procedure since it involves writing a story of the child's life and photos for this special occasion.

Your cooperation is needed with regard to personal birthday parties. **Distribution of invitations, gifts and thank you notes should not take place at school.** At all costs, we want to spare children not invited whose feelings would be hurt. If you would like to donate a book to the class on behalf of your child's birthday, please let the teacher know so that mention of it can be made and a dedication be placed on the inside of the book.

Play Dates

If your child has a scheduled play date on a school day with another child and/or will be picked up by someone other than the parents, it is mandatory that this information be communicated in writing to the office staff and teacher. Please send a note with your signature giving permission with the name of the child he/she will be going home with, the date and time they will be picked up. We ask that these arrangements and permission notes be made in advance.

Daily Attendance/Tardiness

Country Meadows Montessori School Directresses/Directors take attendance daily. All students in the Lake County Area Schools are expected to attend school every day. The Compulsory School Attendance Law states that whoever has custody or control of any child between the ages of 7 and 17 years of age must send the child to a public or private day school on a regular basis. Truancy is defined as a child who is absent without valid cause from school. Chronic Truancy is a child who is absent without valid cause from school for 10% or more of the previous 180 regular attendance days. Valid causes for absences include, but are not limited to: illness, observance of religious holidays, death in immediate family, and a family emergency. Poor attendance can affect your child's attitude and self-esteem. If parents are having difficulty getting the child to attend school regularly, or if family problems are affecting the child's attendance, the parents should contact their Director/Directress for assistance. Tardiness is detrimental to the child and the classroom. All children are expected to be at school on time which in this case is **no later than 8:30 AM** the beginning of the Montessori morning work cycle. If not adhered to, the Administrator will schedule a meeting with the parents. If your family is scheduling an extended trip which requires the elementary child to be out of school for more than a week, we ask that you complete an Absenteeism Form which includes the reason for the time away. The child's teacher may give them "homework" to do in their absence. The teacher keeps track of time off from school. A high record of absences may ultimately affect the child's progression in our program.

Attendance/Health

Symptoms of COVID-19 vary widely. Recognizable symptoms include fever (100.4 or higher), new onset of moderate to severe headache, shortness of breath, new cough, sore throat, vomiting, diarrhea, new loss of taste or smell, fatigue from unknown cause, or muscle or body aches from unknown cause.

The guidelines for a positive case area as follows:

Regardless of vaccination status

Isolate for 5 days from the first day of symptoms or date of the positive test (if asymptomatic).

Day 0 is the first day of symptoms or date of the positive test.

The child can return to school on Day 6, but **must wear** a mask for days 6-10, **this will not be optional.**

If a child is too young to wear a mask properly (our toddler classroom), they will need to continue to **isolate for a full 10 days.**

All protocols include faculty.

Health and Safety Protocols

Parents are asked to contact the school office if their child will be absent for any reason, especially if the absence is due to illness or injury. CMMS is legally required to document all student absences. Should your child contract a contagious disease (i.e., COVID-19, strep throat, chicken pox, pink eye, measles, head lice, scarlet fever, etc.), please contact the school immediately so that the teacher and parents of the class can be alerted. We must report all contagious diseases to the Lake County Health Department and must follow their guidelines as to when the child can return to school. A medical certificate stating that the child may return to school is needed when a child has been absent from school for five or more consecutive days.

Please make sure a Medication Form has been filled out prior to your child receiving prescription medication or over-the-counter medication. The office personnel will administer prescribed medication. All medication must be turned in to the school office where it will be kept unless it requires refrigeration.

Many of our children have allergies or other health issues that require more than administration of medication. All parents are required, per policy, to complete a Food Allergy Action Plan form if their child has an allergy. One copy will be given to the classroom, where parents and teachers will meet to discuss any procedures or allowances that need to be made for the child. The original of the action plan will be kept in the school office. Any children requiring special services for health reasons must have an Action Plan on file and all school personnel working with that child be trained in any procedures needing to be performed and kept abreast of changes as they occur (nebulizer, sugar levels tested, and inhaler, as examples). All procedures, medications and/or actions taken on behalf of the child will be documented and signed by the adult in the school office in our medical log.

All physical injuries involving the child will be reported to the school office and an Accident Report completed and signed by the staff in charge. All staff members have been CPR and First Aid Certified for infants to adults for minor injuries. In case of an emergency, parents will be immediately notified by the school administration. 911 can be dialed from every classroom phone, as well as, the school office. In case of dire emergencies, the ambulance will be directed to Condell Medical Center East in Libertyville, the closest medical trauma center in this area. A Country Meadows staff member will accompany the child if the parent(s) is not available.

*******Disclaimer: Emergency care and medical treatment will be provided to all children enrolled at Country Meadows Montessori School if required.**

Allergy Policy

CMMS's Allergy Policy responds to the needs of the rising number of people with serious allergies in the population.

Parents need to:

- Notify the school of the child's allergy.

- Work with the school to develop a plan that accommodates the child's needs throughout the school, including the classroom, school-sponsored activities, as well as to develop a child-specific Allergy Action Plan.
- Provide written medical documentation, instructions, and medications as directed by a physician, using the child's Allergy Action Plan.
- Provide properly labeled medications and replace medications after use or upon expiration.
- Provide emergency contact information.
- Educate the child in self-management of their allergy, as age appropriate.

Student responsibilities:

- May not trade food with others.
- Should notify an adult immediately if they eat something they believe may contain the food to which they are allergic, or if they are exposed to an allergen that they know may cause a reaction.

School will be responsible for:

- Reviewing health records submitted by parents/physician.
- Include students with allergies in school activities.
- Train staff that work regularly with the student to recognize symptoms and know what to do in an emergency.
- Store medications properly and safely in an accessible but locked container.
- Provide the classroom with written information concerning the student's allergy and the Allergy Action Plan. Train staff in how to recognize allergic reactions and in the use of an epinephrine pen.
- The school will work with the parents to help the child feel included and safe. If a student has a life-threatening allergy, the student will only be permitted to eat what the parent provides from home.
- Nut allergies are the most common allergy; therefore CMMS asks that nuts and foods containing nut derivatives are not to be sent to school.
- If a student with a food allergy forgets their lunch or snack, arrangements to substitute food for them will be made by a faculty member.
- Any item brought to a gathering must be labeled with ingredients.
- Staff will wash their hands with soap and water before returning to common school areas if they have handled food containers with possible food allergens.

Pet Policy

Due to the variety and number of allergies and reactions the students at Country Meadows have to animal dander or their fears, parents are asked to please refrain from bringing their pets from home to school. As much as the majority of children love animals, for their safety they should not have to be exposed to potential harm. Please leave pets at home.

Outside Care – Conflict of Interest

It is inappropriate for parents to employ Country Meadows faculty and staff for in-home childcare. This policy is furnished in order to maintain the professional integrity of our school program.

Employees of CMMS may not provide babysitting or childcare for CMMS students during the school hours of 8:30 AM – 3:00 PM.

Parents of CMMS children must refrain from discussing CMMS students or issues when they are in the company of CMMS parents or staff at social events, sports events, public encounters, etc. Mini conferences should not occur away from school.

Emergency Information

Emergency Illness or Accident

In the event of an accident or sudden onset of illness, the school will seek proper care for a child. The child's individual emergency instructions on file in the school office are consulted immediately and the parents are called. If necessary, the child will be transported to the hospital via ambulance. In such circumstances, a staff member from the school will accompany the child. The consent statement the parent has signed will accompany the child so that treatment can be given immediately in the absence of the parents. The classroom teacher will complete the necessary accident reports. **It is imperative that you keep the emergency contact information in the office up to date.**

Power Failure

In case of a power failure, the school hallways will be lit by battery-operated lights. The Gurnee Fire Station and Commonwealth Edison will be informed of any power failures by cell phone. School may be canceled if the heat or power is out longer than 2 hours.

Fire and Tornado Drills

In accordance with state law, fire drills are held on a regular basis. Evacuation routes are posted inside each classroom and staff reviews the procedures during Staff Orientation. During tornado drills, children are moved to the hallways, bathrooms and kitchen and asked to assume a "crouch position" with hands over their head for protection. Children are kept away from glass windows, and all doors to classrooms are shut. The children remain as such until the "all clear" signal has been sounded by one of the administrative staff/emergency personnel.

Emergency Closing

For all school emergency-closing decisions, the Board of Directors will determine whether school will be closed. In case of severe weather, the school office has a weather alert radio. If needed, the school will take precautionary action to move children to interior hallways and away from windows. Children will not be dismissed from school during a tornado warning.

In our effort to improve communication between parents and school, Country Meadows is instituting a telephone broadcast system that will enable school personnel to notify all households and parents by phone within minutes of an emergency or unplanned event that causes early dismissal, school cancellation or late start. The service may also be used from time-to-time to communicate general announcements or reminders. This service is provided by SchoolReach, a company specializing in school-to-parent communications. Country Meadows will continue to report school closings due to snow or inclement weather on The Emergency Closing Center website: www.emergencyclosingcenter.com

As a rule, we will be closed if the Woodland School district closes since this usually means that transportation is not possible due to unsafe road conditions.

If an emergency occurs during school hours, a letter will be sent home explaining the occurrence.

In the event that the school has no heat or no electricity, classes will not be held.

Child Abuse and Neglect

The State of Illinois requires that all staff members of child care institutions be on the alert for, and report to the State, any and all cases of abuse to a child. CMMS is therefore obligated to report to the State any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. CMMS staff are trained as mandated reporters.

Hazardous Materials or Solutions

All chemicals, solvents or cleaning solutions are kept locked up and out of the reach of children in storage. Access to these materials is limited to authorized personnel who have a key.

Medication

CMMS and Illinois State Policy mandate that only those medications absolutely necessary for the maintenance of a student's health and comfort should be administered during the school day. If at all possible, daily medications should be given at home. In the event that a child does require the administration of a prescription or over the counter medication (including homeopathic preparations) during the course of the school day, the following conditions must be met:

- The item must be delivered to the school office in its original packaging;
- The medication must be accompanied by a medication consent form (available in the school office);
- Both the parent and the prescribing physician must sign the medication consent form;
- A new Medication consent form is required at the beginning of each school year.

Student Records/Confidentiality

School records are confidential and maintained by the administrative staff and kept in the school office. Permanent records on each child will consist of medical forms, application for enrollment and other forms required by the state. All records, files, conversations and conferences are held for the benefit of the child and are considered to be strictly confidential. This would include any personal information about children and families. Permanent records (biographical information) are held for 60 years. Temporary records are held for 7 years. In the event of school closure, records would be transferred to the Illinois State Board of Education, pursuant to state regulations.

Parents and Directresses/Directors may have access to these files, but they may not leave the school office. If a child changes schools, records will be forwarded to the new school once the parents have completed a signed transcript request and it is sent to us either by mail or by fax. Requests for student records to be sent to another school must be approved by the parents. Information that will be passed on to other schools includes progress reports, test scores (elementary) and any other information requested by the parent. **Student records will not be released if the family has outstanding tuition due until payment is made in full.** The copy of records of transferred students is then boxed, sealed and stored in a locked storage facility. Our policy is to keep all information regarding the child and family confidential. No outside agencies, professionals, non-family members, will have access to private information, unless they are requested by court order. Our staff has an employment policy of keeping all information regarding individual students confidential. However, the Department of Public Health does have access to all of the student's health/immunization records.

Illinois State Law requires that all children must complete a physical examination prior to entering Illinois schools for the first time, prior to entering 3rd year primary or first grade, and prior to entering sixth grade. All students enrolled in 3rd year primary, second and sixth grades are also required to have a dental examination. All students enrolling in kindergarten or elementary for the first time must have an eye examination performed by a licensed optometrist. ISBE Missing Children's Act and DCFS require that every toddler student have a birth certificate on file.

Academic Reporting/Evaluations/Testing

In keeping with the Montessori philosophy whereby each child's work cycle and activity is directed by his own initiative and guided by the Directress/Director, there is not a traditional approach to grading and testing at CMMS. However, it is the role of the Directress/Director to observe the children and to record details of where they are developmentally and academically in order to better link them to materials which will best suit them, monitor their progress and continue to offer challenging experiences. Much of the Montessori philosophy is based upon observation of the development of each child and suiting the attitude and environment for him. Precise record keeping and daily observation is part of the role of each Directress/Director.

At the primary level, student evaluation consists of teacher observation notes and recording presentations of the materials to the child, degree of practice and mastery of skills and activities from a checklist. A parent/teacher conference is scheduled in the fall and in the winter to share student information at all levels.

For the elementary level, their work is tracked with greater particularity. Students take part in their record keeping through their daily journaling, work plans, and periodic meetings with the Directress/Director. The Directress/Director, through observation, will invite children to individual or small group lessons to introduce materials/concepts that they require to advance. Students, on their own initiative, will record work that they also have selected and completed which will be reviewed by the Directress/Director regularly. Daily lessons and anecdotal notes will be documented on a web-based record keeping system. Parent/Teacher conferences will give the parents updates on the child's progress in all areas of the curriculum.

Recommendations will be made to parents for outside evaluation or services if the parent and teacher feel this is necessary for the individual child. Difficulties with certain areas or behavioral problems may warrant a need for a more structured individualized approach. Referrals to the Woodland School District for evaluations that will give parents and teachers information and recommendations for intervention can be made by Mary-Administrator or parents. Mobile Therapy Center provides free screening for all our students, unless waived by parents.

Standardized academic achievement tests will be administered annually to the children in fourth through eighth grade. The school's elementary faculty proctors the tests in the spring. The purpose of the testing is to give our older students an opportunity to experience the life skill of test taking. Additionally, it will help children become accustomed to demonstrating their knowledge through a traditional measure. The test results combined with the daily classroom performance and teacher observations can help develop an understanding of the individual child's academic strengths and weaknesses. Test taking is an acquired skill that develops through practice each successive year. It is never intended to give a true measure of the child's knowledge standing on its own. Test results will be shared with the parents along with a letter of how to interpret them from the Administrator.

Communication

Country Meadows Montessori School views communication with the parents as very important. To keep parents well informed, the school hosts a Parent Orientation at the beginning of the school year that parents are expected to attend in order that each classroom Directress/Director can welcome and "orient" the family to this new experience and make a successful transition for their child. Each family will receive a copy of the Parent Handbook at the beginning of the school year. This handbook provides information on Montessori philosophy, CMMS curriculum, the school's policies and procedures and other school information.

Parent information meetings are held periodically during the school year for your benefit. You will be given the topic/presenter in advance in order for parents to make plans to attend.

Additionally, a school newsletter will be sent home each month bringing you current with special events, calendar events, and notes from the school Administrator. Teachers will write and email a classroom newsletter every month regarding the specific areas of study and general classroom news. Additional notices and announcements will also be emailed to the families as they come up. Information of an extremely important or urgent nature will most likely be mailed to your home.

Google Classroom is used in our Upper Elementary and Adolescent classrooms for homework, assignments, and other information. The teachers will provide log in information for the students as well as parents to monitor assignments.

Individual classroom Directresses/Directors will hold parent education meetings during the school year to offer discussion and presentations on the workings of the Montessori Method. Parents find these get-together's very informative and have an opportunity to ask questions about the learning process and child development. It is also a wonderful opportunity to network with the other parents from the classroom.

During the course of the school year, parents are encouraged to phone or schedule informal meetings with their child's Directress/Director if they have any questions or concerns involving the child and his relationship to the classroom, teacher, or other students. Should you feel that your concerns require further attention, do not hesitate to contact the school administrator, who will be happy to assist in finding workable solutions. However, it has been found that most situations are handled best by direct communication between parents and teachers involved.

Please feel free to contact your child's Directress to clarify issues or answer questions. The school office will leave your message with the Directress, who will return your call as soon as possible. We discourage parents from meeting with the Directresses/Directors first thing in the morning since these are not opportune times to focus on issues or concerns and take away valuable time from the preparation of the classroom and greeting and guiding the children in attendance.

Custody Information

In cases of separation or divorce where one parent or guardian has custody of the children, the school sometimes receives special requests or instructions regarding the child. In order to clarify legal regulations and to prevent any misunderstanding, the following information is offered. While most parents are aware of the appropriate rules and regulations in this matter, it has been our experience that some parents are unaware of the rights of non-custodial parents. According to Public Law 93-380, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and Illinois Public Act 85-1389: "In the case of divorce or separation, a school district must provide equal access to both natural parents, custodial and non-custodial, unless there is a legal binding document that specifically removes that parent's FERPA rights."

In this context, a legally binding document is a certified court order or other legal paper that prohibits access to education records or removes the parent's right to have knowledge about his or her child's records. A certified court order would also be required if restrictions were placed on when and where a parent may contact or visit the child at school.

This information is provided because parents sometimes give special directions regarding their child's custody that CMMS cannot legally follow. A handwritten note, telephone call or meeting is not sufficient. Any legal action or information regarding court orders may require the assistance of your attorney or the courts.

In all cases CMMS will duplicate communication to both parties so parents and school are working together to best meet the needs of the child.

Parenting Information

Recognizing that parenting is one of the most important and challenging responsibilities many of us face, CMMS is committed to fostering a climate of mutual respect and cooperation in a peaceful and non-competitive atmosphere as expressed in our Mission Statement. It is in this spirit that the school offers information sessions and provides information about consultants for children and families with special needs. Parents are welcome to discuss these options with the school Administrator.

During the school year, CMMS offers opportunities for parents to attend parent information meetings in the evening. These meetings are intended to offer not only valuable insights, but also parent networking. Please take advantage of these invaluable occasions.

Parental Agreement Policy

Parents are asked to agree to permit the participation of their child in the portrayal of the school activities in films, photographs or other representation of the school, including photographs posted to our website and the CMMS facebook page.

Parents are also asked to agree to permit their child to take part in any scheduled school outings realizing there is a possibility of a change in regular school hours on these days.

The school asks that parents agree to attend meetings and conferences specifically set up for parents. These are our main vehicles for communication with parents in sharing the child's developmental growth and experiences, as well as, education and updates in areas of education.

A request to change a child's program hours on the part of the family must be made in writing 30 days prior to the desired date of change. However, this does not guarantee the availability of the program. Every effort will be made by the school to honor this change, but again, we cannot guarantee the opening availability.

Parents understand and agree that children are accepted to the program up to a four-week trial basis. In addition, if the children present a clear physical danger to themselves, other students, the teachers in the classroom, is not completely toilet trained or if the tuition is not paid in a timely manner, the school reserves the right to cancel the enrollment without written notice.

Parents are asked to understand that their child is admitted for the full academic school year and that your agreement to pay is not subject to adjustments for illness, absences, holidays or vacations. The school enters annual staffing contracts based upon the number of students enrolled for the year and continues to incur these staffing costs if the student leaves the school for any reason. **If a child is withdrawn from school, parents are held responsible for all remaining tuition balance through the end of the school calendar year, per the tuition agreement signed at the time of the child's enrollment.**

Dismissal Policy

CMMS is a private institution. It reserves the right to dismiss any child for any reason if it is in the best interest of the child, the school or school community. Parents who fail to treat faculty of CMMS with respect, or whose behavior interferes with the educational work of the school, cannot expect their children to continue at the school. CMMS reserves the right to dismiss any child from the school due to non-payment of tuition or fees.

Peace Education and Conflict Resolution (Guidance and Discipline)



Maria Montessori believed that within the child rests the power that could wheel humanity forward toward the possibility of world peace. Parents and teachers of young children are at the beginning of the wonderful enterprise of nurturing a human spirit. Therefore, our responsibility is to create a place of safety where children are free to investigate the world, their inner emotions and human relationships. By emphasizing non-violence, compassion, civility, and the understanding of a shared community, we create peace.

The Montessori “prepared environment” is a model for peace itself. Our lessons in grace and courtesy, sharing food from snack prep, singing the community song, promoting older children to help younger children and the maintaining of the classroom ground rules encourage children to develop peacemaking skills. Respect for ourselves, respect for each other and respect for our environment are major components of the Montessori program with daily activities that promote and develop these values.

Conflict resolution is practiced with the children to enable them to work together to solve their problems and help to preserve their relationships. Group lessons provide structured examples of how to help the children identify and recognize emotions, role-playing to demonstrate the “how to’s”, activities that foster friendship, cooperation, and kindness. Staff members are aware of behavior management techniques that include keeping children occupied productively, redirecting children that may be disrupting or need a change of venue, interrupting children’s activities that are disrupting others or getting too rambunctious, preventing problems by close supervision and observation of children from a designated chair.

When peace is interrupted at school:

- ◆ In the classroom, we talk about ground rules and why we have them; safety and respect are important for any social community.
- ◆ Give examples of what happens when peace is interrupted.
- ◆ Talk about words you can use when peace is interrupted.
- ◆ Practicing “cooling off” and where you can go to do this.
- ◆ Use of the conflict resolution process is utilized to solve problems: each child is given an opportunity to speak about what was upsetting to him. Children will take turns listening and speaking. The adult may help to guide expressions of their emotions and using “I” statements.

If a child’s behavior presents a clear danger to himself, another or the environment, they will be removed from the area, brought to the school office, and the parents will be called. For elementary students that have been aggressive, a day suspension will be imposed. Once we can help calm the child, they will remain close to one of the adults in the classroom or school office. If the child cannot calm down or the behavior continues, the parents will be called to come for the child and a meeting will be scheduled to discuss the situation and recommendations made. Children who have continuous “acting out” behavior will be asked to withdraw from the program.

Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment Policy

Identifying the Problem

Bullying is one of those words that tends to walk a fine line and requires some unpacking. While bullying and the effects of bullying behavior are real and sometimes what adults see as bullying is disrespect manifesting early and often. Bullying itself means a repeated attack on the same person or many people, using the same bullying behaviors and intimidation tactics. It’s about seeking power and control over a situation in order to stand-in for control over feelings or emotions that haven’t

been fully explored Although a child was teased once about his new haircut, or made fun of her name doesn't mean they were bullied but it does mean they were disrespected and treated unfairly.

Definition of Bullying

For the purposes of providing a secure and safe place where all can learn without anxiety at Country Meadows Montessori School, we will identify bullying as repeated action taken by one or more persons with deliberate intention of hurting another either physically or emotionally. It may be of a physical, verbal or social nature or a combination of these. A person who is bullying has reached a stage of cognitive development where he or she is able to plan to carry out a premeditated intent to cause distress/harm to another.

Students will from time to time engage in teasing with friends. CMMS strives to help both parties involved in such a situation understand intent versus impact and guide students to resolving the interaction. Bullying, including cyberbullying, is a more serious act and is recognized as any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property;
2. Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health;
3. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' academic performance; or
4. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Bullying may take various forms, including without limitation one or more of the following: harassment, threats, spreading rumors, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, theft, public humiliation, purposefully excluding someone from a group, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. This list is meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive. We require all members of the CMMS community including but not limited to administration, faculty, staff, consultants, parents, students, and volunteers, to not engage in bullying, discrimination, or harassment of any other member of the CMMS community. This includes but is not limited to offensive comments or jokes, gestures, graffiti, or other verbal or physical conduct that creates a hostile or abusive environment or is intimidating, demeaning, or threatening.

Cyber-bullying means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including without limitation any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photo electronic system, or photo-optical system, including without limitation electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying in this Section.

Cyber-bullying also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons if the distribution or posting creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying above.

The school may not request or require a student to provide a password or other related account information in order to gain access to the student's account or profile on a social networking site. The school may investigate or require a student to cooperate in an investigation if there is sufficient

evidence to suggest the student's social network account violates the school's disciplinary policy. The school may require the student to share content during such an investigation.

Free Speech

Bullying is contrary to State law and the policy of the school and is consistent with the right to exercise free expression or the free exercise of religion or religiously based views protected under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution or under Section 3 of Article 1 of the Illinois Constitution.

Preventative Strategies

Country Meadows Montessori School promotes the idea of respect and civility with our entire school community and makes expectations clear to children and adults about their behavior with others. This includes the teaching, modelling and practicing of "ground rules" taught and revisited at the beginning of each school year. The classroom communities meet regularly to discuss reminders of these ground rules that are focused on respect.

Conflict resolution is another practice promoted in order that the students learn to use their words to solve conflict with each other. This resolution process is something that is taught and practiced as early as toddlers. Of course, we take into account the developmental level of the children involved and the adults are present as arbitrators. Students are directed to use these practices whenever the occasion arises to prevent verbal and emotional conflict.

Reporting

When an incident occurs, staff members are required to complete a Special Incident Report and to send copies to the Head of School. Students are encouraged to immediately report bullying. A report may be made orally or in writing to the Head of School or any staff member with whom the student is comfortable speaking. Anyone, including staff members and parents/guardians, who has information about actual or threatened bullying is encouraged to report it to the Head of School or any staff member.

Mary O'Young, Head of School moyoung@cmmontessori.net (847)244-9352

Anonymous reports are also accepted; however, this shall not be construed to permit formal disciplinary action solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

Restorative Measures

Any reported alleged incident will be kept confidential to the extent possible while they are investigated. Consistent with Federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights, the Head of School or designee shall promptly inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) of every student who is involved in an alleged incident of bullying and offer an opportunity to meet with the Head of School or designee to discuss the investigation, the findings of the investigation, and the actions taken to address the reported incident of bullying, including, as appropriate, the availability of social work services, counseling, other interventions and restorative measures.

"Restorative measures" means a continuum of school-based alternatives to exclusionary discipline, such as suspensions and expulsions, that:

- are adapted to the particular needs of the Country Meadows Montessori School community,
- contribute to maintaining school safety,
- protect the integrity of a positive and productive learning climate,
- teach students the personal and interpersonal skills they will need to be successful in school and society,
- serve to build and restore relationships among students, families, schools, and communities, and
- reduce the likelihood of future disruption by balancing accountability with an understanding of students' behavioral health needs in order to keep students in school.

- increase student accountability if the incident of bullying is based on religion, race, ethnicity, or any other category that is identified in the Illinois Human Rights Act.

Procedures

All reports will be taken seriously and investigated promptly by:

1. Making all reasonable efforts to complete the investigation in less than five (5) school days after the date the report of the incident of bullying was received and taking into consideration additional relevant information received during the course of the investigation about the reported incident of bullying.
2. Involving appropriate school support personnel and other staff persons with knowledge, experience, and training on bullying prevention, as deemed appropriate, in the investigation process.
3. Notifying the Head of School or their designee of the report of the incident of bullying as soon as possible after the report is received.
4. Consistent with federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights, providing parents and guardians of the students who are parties to the investigation information about the investigation and an opportunity to meet with the principal or school administrator or his or her designee to discuss the investigation, the findings of the investigation, and the actions taken to address the reported incident of bullying.

Interventions

The Head of School or designee shall investigate whether a reported incident of bullying is within the permissible scope of the school's jurisdiction.

- If the behavior is deemed or becomes extreme, the teacher will schedule a meeting with the parents, and, depending on the circumstance, with the Head of School or appropriate staff. Staff, parents, and child will respectfully work together to modify the behavior.
- If a pattern of willful, disruptive behavior develops, consequences may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension, expulsion, and/or reports to law enforcement as is required by law:

- A. Teachers will record behavior observation
- B. The teacher will inform the student's parents o Appropriate staff will be notified
- C. The student, teacher, parents, and Head of School will work together to modify behavior and when appropriate additional professional help will be solicited.

- If a child persists in the unprovoked, willful, and deliberate hurting of others, after being reasoned with and experiencing consequences, there will be an immediate one (1) day suspension from school. Continued negative behavior will result in the school requiring a behavioral evaluation by a professional, and the possible removal of the student from the school.

The Head of School shall ensure the school provides the victim with information regarding services that available within the community, such as counseling, support services, and other programs.

Retaliation

A reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying is strictly prohibited. A student's act of reprisal or retaliation will be treated as bullying for the purposes of determining any consequences of other appropriate remedial actions. A student will not be punished for reporting bullying or supplying information, even if the school's investigation concludes that no bullying occurred.

However, knowingly making a false accusation or providing knowingly false information will be treated as bullying for purposes of determining any consequences of other appropriate remedial actions.

Policy & Review

Country Meadows Montessori School's **Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment Policy** is based on the engagement of a range of school stakeholders, including students and families.

A copy of this bullying policy is included in the Parent Handbook, which is distributed annually to parents/guardians. A sign-off form acknowledging the parent/guardian has received and read the bullying policy is required annually for all Elementary and older school children. Staff members, including new employees upon hiring, receive a copy of the Staff Handbook, which contains this policy. The policy is posted on the school's website for reference.

The Country Meadows Montessori School's **Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment Policy** is reviewed every two years. As part of the process of reviewing and re-evaluating this policy, the school's Incident Reporting data is reviewed to assess the outcomes and effectiveness of the policy that includes, but is not limited to, factors such as the frequency of victimization; student, staff, and family observations of safety at a school; identification of areas of a school where bullying occurs; the types of bullying utilized; and bystander intervention or participation. The information developed as a result of the policy evaluation is made available in the school's Parent Handbook, Employee Handbook, accessible to school administrators, school board members, staff members, parents/guardians, and students and on the school's website.

Country Meadows Montessori School's **Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment Policy** is consistent with the policies of the school.

Board of Directors last approval date: **August 21, 2023.**

Air Quality and Outdoor Activity Guidance Policy

1. Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to ensure the health and safety of children attending Country Meadows Montessori School by providing guidelines for outdoor activities in relation to air quality. This policy aims to minimize exposure to poor air quality conditions and promote a healthy learning and play environment.
2. Air Quality Monitoring: We will regularly monitor air quality using www.airnow.gov as a reliable resource along with local air quality index to assure accurate information for decision-making.
3. Air Quality Categories:
 - a. Good Air Quality is suitable for outdoor activities, and children can engage in regular outdoor play and learning experiences.
 - b. Moderate Air Quality is acceptable, but prolonged exposure or strenuous activities may be restricted for sensitive individuals.
 - c. Poor Air Quality poses a risk to children's health, and outdoor activities should be very limited or avoided.
4. All classrooms will run their Air Purifiers during the day to maintain better quality air indoors. Air conditioning will be used preferable to open windows when air quality is not acceptable.
5. Outdoor Activity Guidelines:
 - a. Good Air Quality index children can freely engage in outdoor activities, such as playing, running, exploring, taking walks. 1. Sunscreen, hats, and appropriate clothing will be provided to protect children from the sun. 2. Hydration will be available via individual water bottles, and children encouraged to drink water regularly. Water is always available indoors at classroom sinks.
 - b. Moderate Air Quality: 1. Outdoor activities will be modified to reduce strenuous physical exertion. Children will have limited time outside relative to the typical outdoor routines. Children will be closely monitored for any signs of discomfort or respiratory

- issues. 2. Extended outdoor exposure will be limited for sensitive individuals and alternatives such as indoor activities or shorter outdoor sessions will be provided depending on the sensitivities, age, and index number.
- c. Poor Air Quality: 1. Outdoor activities will be suspended to minimize exposure to pollutants. 2. Children will engage in indoor activities that promote active play, learning, and social interaction.
6. Communication and Parental Involvement: a. Parents will be notified of Country Meadow's air quality policy during enrollment. b. Regular updates regarding air quality conditions and any necessary modifications to outdoor activities will be communicated to parents through emails. c. Parents will be encouraged to provide additional information about their child's sensitivities to air quality issues, if applicable. Allergy Action Plans must be provided with all Pertinent information and updated as changes occur.
7. Staff Training and Preparedness: a. Staff members will be provided with the Country Meadows Montessori School Air Quality and Outdoor Activity Policy. This policy will be reviewed in order that staff understand the AQI categories and index values, have the needed information to monitor the children under their care as well as know how to distress. b. Staff members will be provided with regular air quality index updates in order to follow the implementation of the policy. Staff members will become familiar with which children have sensitivities including but not limited to asthma, allergies, and the very young ones.
8. Collaboration with Government and Local Authorities: Administration will follow official guidelines and directives provided by relevant authorities during air quality issues and emergencies.
9. Policy Review: This policy will be reviewed annually each school year to ensure its effectiveness and compliance and any necessary revisions or updates will be made to improve the policies clarity and alignment with best practices.

School Discipline Policy

Philosophy

Discipline is the ongoing process of helping children to develop their self-control so that they can manage their own behavior in socially approved/acceptable ways. As adults (parents and teachers) we are responsible for the safety and welfare of all children and must act as their advocate at all times. Every moment we are with children is a teachable moment and as such we must always act as appropriate role models and give them examples of expected behavior that is in harmony with our core philosophy of SAFETY AND RESPECT FOR ALL.

How Discipline Will Be Implemented By Staff

Appropriate discipline techniques include:

- Responsibility of the Teacher: model, guide, caretaker of child's safety, welfare, self-esteem and the environment.
- Preparation of the Environment: prepare it to be beautiful, enticing, orderly, clean, and safe.
- Present Group Lessons: Teach, maintain and reinforce Ground Rules, Grace & Courtesy, and Conflict Resolution.
- Give Opportunities for Spontaneous Purposeful Work: Developing concentration, freedom of choice within limits, acquiring work habits, developing self knowledge, developing confidence in activities through an organized, stimulating program.
- Provide Multi-age Classrooms: older children act as "guides" and role models to younger children and peers.

- Teaching Children to Make Silence: method of developing listening skills, control of movement, inner discipline opportunity, increased concentration, and self-regulation.
- Give Affirmations Often: Subtle acknowledgement of good behavior with compliments and positive affirmations builds confidence, gives positive feedback, and motivates positive behavior.
- Natural Consequences: gives child "real life" social experience.
- Modeling appropriate and socially accepted behavior
- Redirection to a more acceptable behavior, setting clear limits and offering choices of work or activity to guide their decisions.
- Ignoring small negative infractions if they are not a threat to the child, others or the environment.
- Removal of child from the area for short period of time in order for them to regain composure with an adult always present.
- Include the child in resolution of conflict.

The following discipline techniques are PROHIBITED BY ANY ADULT/PARENT IN THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY.

- Physical punishment.
- Screaming/yelling at a child with intent to intimidate or shame.
- Ridiculing a child or child's family.
- Blaming, teasing, insulting, name calling or threatening the child with punishment.
- Withholding food or recess as a punishment.
- Withholding of affection or positive attention.
- Intimidating or causing fear in the child.

No child will be subjected to, under any circumstances; any form of corporal punishment, which includes hitting, spanking, swatting, beating, shaking, pinching, grabbing limbs, and other measures intended to induce physical pain or fear. The staff/parent will never use abusive or profane language or deprive children of food, rest or use of restrooms. Children will not be punished for toilet accidents. Such actions will result in the immediate dismissal of the adult/family from the school.

How Parents Will Be Involved in Guidance Process

- As needed, the teacher will discuss with the parent(s) the child's behavior if an unacceptable behavior occurs during the day or a behavior is uncharacteristic of the child.
- The Teacher will verbally notify the child's parents if a pattern of unacceptable behavior is noted. Teacher will be able to present observation notes noting specific information regarding that behavior. A meeting will be held with the classroom teacher and parents to discuss how the parents and classroom staff can work together to help correct the behavior(s) with an action plan that outlines specifically how this will be done.
- If deemed necessary for the safety and well being of the class, the parent may be asked to pick up the child from the school and/or remove the child for the next business/school day.
- The parents will be called in to meet with the teacher and the Administrator to discuss any information regarding the action plan and status of child's behavior. It will be determined at this time if the plan is working or if our Montessori school program fits the needs of the child. If it is determined that the plan needs to be revised, parents and school staff will make

the necessary changes and reconvene to meet with the parents the following week. A specialist or outside service may need to be involved for either consultation or intervention.

- If the behavior continues to disrupt the dynamics of the classroom or is harmful to another child or children, the family will be asked to withdraw their child from the program.

How Children Will Be Involved in the Process

- Children will be aware and taught to use the Classroom Ground Rules. Staff will act as role model and remind children of the Ground Rules throughout the day.
- Older children may be brought to the office with the Teacher to discuss alternative behavior or better choices. Natural consequences will be addressed for the specific behavior (s).
- Children in the classroom will have reasonable opportunity to resolve their own conflicts, with the Teacher acting as arbitrator in these matters. Using our words to deal with conflict will always be taught and reminded.

Family Dismissal Policy

Any child who, after attempts have been made to meet the child's individual needs, demonstrates the inability to benefit from the type of care offered by the school, or whose presence is detrimental to the group, may be dismissed from the school.

Parents who fail to treat faculty, other adults or children of Country Meadows Montessori School with support and respect or whose behavior interferes with the educational work of the school will be dismissed from the school.

Families, who have not paid their tuition bill for two consecutive months, will be dismissed from the school and subject to collections.

All adults in our school community will be expected to uphold the policies and procedures and the well being of all children in our school. If this is not the case, they will be dismissed from our school.

Summer Camp



Country Meadows Montessori School provides an opportunity to incorporate the Montessori philosophy and experience in a camp setting thereby extending the developmental work of the children. Recognizing the need for both indoor and outdoor environments, there is a balance of activities, which enhance the program. Every summer, new and returning students aged 12 and under unite with us to participate and renew their Montessori experiences and friendships.

Our environmental education program is a large part of the summer camp experience. Our organic garden is up and running with the children totally involved with what is grown, how it is grown and then harvested. Plant and animal life evolve from this gardening. Art opportunities are afforded with the natural hands-on experience the children participate in watching the vegetables, flowers, insects and butterflies prosper. More opportunities for nature excursions, water play, swimming, drama, art, Spanish and field trips are incorporated into the summer camp. Our gym program continues to offer participation in soccer, volleyball, gymnastics, basketball and T-ball. Montessori camp emphasizes fun and learning through a hands-on approach. Music is an integral part of our Summer Camp. Traditions have been established with International Day, Father's Day Luncheon, Talent Show, and dance performances.

Tuition Registration Fee

All parents are required to pay an annual tuition registration fee to reserve each child's placement in the upcoming academic year. This non-refundable payment is due when the child's enrollment is turned in to the school. At that time, parents are asked to select a payment plan for the school year. (Please note the registration fee is one component of the total tuition for the school year and is not used to reduce any month's tuition payment.)

Tuition Payment Plans

Tuition is for a full academic year basis. Because of the nature of education and the program at our school, in accepting the enrollment agreement, the parents accept responsibility for tuition for the full school year. **The agreement to pay for the school year is not subject to withdrawal, illnesses, absence, family vacations or holidays under any circumstances.** Parents select one of the following payment plans:

Single Payment Plan: On or before August 15th of the school year, parents may select to pay full tuition. A 3% discount is applied off the tuition balance.

Two Payment Plan: The tuition is divided into two payments with a 1.5% discount applied, due August 15th and January 15th of the school year.

Ten Payment Plan: The tuition is divided into ten payments, due on the first of each month, August through May.

Nine Payment Plan: The tuition is divided into nine payments, due on the first of each month, September through May. Children enrolled after the start of school will automatically be placed on the nine-payment plan vs. the ten-payment plan.

Special arrangements for tuition payment should be made through the school office. Invoices or receipts are available upon request.

Family discount: Families with two siblings enrolled simultaneously will receive a 3% reduction in total tuition (excluding the tuition registration fee). Families with three or more siblings enrolled simultaneously will receive a 7% discount in tuition (excluding the tuition registration fee).

Country Meadows Montessori School is pleased to offer online payment through **CompuWorx**. We would like to encourage all parents to participate in this online payment system if you have not done so in the past. This is a **safe, secure, and convenient** site for handling all financial transactions via credit/debit card or e-check payments. You will be able to pay tuition, fees and/or make donations seven days a week 24 hours a day through any device with our online system. Visit our website at www.cmmontessori.net and click on the Pay Online Here button. Please note, credit card payments now incur a 2.5% processing fee.

Receipt of payments is to be made in online bill pay via check through your financial in, cash or credit card. Checks can be dropped off in the school office or mailed to the school. The mailing address is:

Country Meadows Montessori School
6151 Washington Street
Gurnee, IL 60031

Cash payments should be hand delivered to one of the administrative staff in the school office. Receipts will be given for all cash payments at the time of the transaction. If you need a receipt for flexible spending reimbursement or other reason, please inform the school office of your needs; receipts will be sent home with your child, as they are prepared.

Unpaid Tuition Policy: Nine and ten payment plan tuition payments are due on the first of each month. One and two payment plans are due on the 15th of the month as scheduled.

Invoices unpaid 8 (eight) days after the due date may incur a \$50.00 late fee for each occurrence. With the third occurrence of late tuition payment, the child may not return to school until the account is brought current. Any further late payments may result in the withdrawal of the child from the program.

Students with tuition balance 30 days overdue or more may not return to school until all overdue and current amounts are paid. Accounts over 60 days past due may be sent to our agency for collection. A 10% late fee and legal fees may be charged to the account.

After Hours Charges: Parent agrees to pay a charge of \$25.00 per hour for students staying after the contracted program hours. The Parent is obliged to contact the school office manager prior to making these late stay arrangements in order that the proper supervision can be made available for these occasions. *Parent agrees to pay a charge of \$2.00 for every minute that the student is left after the hour of 6:00 PM.*

If the Parent(s) fail, without notice, to pick up their child/children at the contracted time, or arrange for someone else to pick them up, the provider will make 3 attempts to contact the Parent. If the provider is unable to contact the Parent, the provider should contact the emergency person listed on the Application/Record of Child Information sheet, or persons on the contingency list, to advise them the child/children are still in their care without notice from the Parent. If, for any reason, there is no telephone service the provider will contact police to request assistance in contacting the Parent or their emergency contact person(s). Provider agrees to keep the child/children for 1 hour after the contracted pick-up time, with late fees accruing, before contacting the local police and/or the Child Abuse Hotline if contact cannot be made with parents/guardians or emergency persons. Provider will continue normal responsibilities for the child's protection and well being and agrees not to discuss your tardiness in arriving with your child/children beyond reassuring them you, or someone known to them will be there soon to pick them up.

Parents/Guardians agree to advise provider immediately of any changes regarding their personal contact information, including addresses and phone numbers for home and work and cell phone numbers. Parents/Guardians also agree to provide immediate notice to the provider of any changes for their emergency contact or contingency persons.

Not Sufficient Funds/Credit Card Declined: Parent agrees to pay a \$35.00 not sufficient funds penalty in the event that a check written to the school is returned. In addition, the Parent further agrees to pay the \$50.00 late tuition fee that will be incurred for the same returned check. Parents agree that if a check is returned for not sufficient funds (NSF) more than once, then all future monies paid to the school will be in the form of cashier's check, money order or cash. No checks will be accepted after the second NSF occurrence.

Pesticides and Pest Management

Country Meadows shall notify all parents and/or guardians before a pesticide application is administered. Notification of the intended date of the application of the pesticide may be in the form of newsletters, bulletins, calendars, emails, or other written communication methods presently used. The notification will be given at least 2 days before the pesticide application, but not more than 30 days in advance.

Chemicals for insect and rodent control shall be applied in minimum amounts and shall not be used when children are present in the facility. Toys and other items mouthed or handled by the children will be removed from the area before pesticides are applied. Children will not return to the

treated area(s) within 2 hours after a pesticide application or as specified on the pesticide label, whichever time is greater. Over-the-counter products may be used only according to package instructions. Commercial chemicals, if used, shall be applied by a licensed pest control operator and shall meet all standards of the Department of Public Health (Structural Pest Control Code, 77 III. Adm. Code 830).

Prior notice of pesticide application is not required if the application is due to an immediate threat to the health of the children or property, in which case the pesticide must be immediately applied. In these instances, the children shall not be present during the application and shall not return to the treated area within 2 hours after the application or as specified on the pesticide label, whichever time is greater. If such a situation arises, Country Meadows will issue a statement describing the circumstances that gave rise to the health threat and ensure that written notice is provided to parents or guardians as soon as practicable.

Pesticides subject to notification requirements shall not include antimicrobial agents, such as disinfectants, sanitizers, or deodorizers, or insecticide baits and rodenticide baits.

Affiliations and Memberships

Member, Affiliation and Governance by American Montessori Society

Annual Membership:

North American Montessori Society

Association of Illinois Montessori Schools

Illinois Coalition of Non-Public Schools

Monitored by:

Lake County Department of Public Health

Lake County Fire Marshall/Gurnee Fire Department

Registered by:

Illinois Department of Education

Licensed by:

**Department of Children and Family Services Toddler Program only

Early Childhood Community Coalition

YWCA of Lake County

*****Parents please be advised and understand that Country Meadows Montessori School's primary, elementary, and adolescent facilities and programs are not licensed or regulated by the Department of Children and Family Services.***

About Dr. Maria Montessori

Dr. Maria Montessori, the creator of what is called the Montessori Method of Education, based this new education experience on her scientific observations of the behavior of young children. As the first woman physician to graduate from the University of Rome, Montessori first became involved in education as a doctor treating children labeled mentally handicapped. In 1907, she was invited to open a childcare center for children of impoverished families in San Lorenzo slums of Rome. She called it "Casa dei Bambini", A Children's House, and based the program on her observations that young children learn best in a home-like setting, filled with materials that provide experiences contributing to the growth of self-motivated, independent learners. Montessori's theories include such revolutionary premises as: Children are to be respected as different from adults and as individuals who are different from one another. Children create themselves through purposeful activity. The most important years for learning are from birth to age

six. Children possess unusual sensitivity and mental powers for absorbing and learning from their environment, which includes people as well as materials.

The Montessori educational apparatus is self-directed in that it provides the children with motives for purposeful activity perfectly adapted to each stage of their development. In order for the children to derive optimum benefit from the use of the materials, certain conditions are absolutely necessary. The first and foremost of their conditions is that the adults in charge of a Montessori environment must be well-versed in Montessori pedagogy, and have a thorough knowledge of the materials, their use, their possibilities and scope. Materials should be complete, clean and in perfect condition.

Montessori began a life of world travel – establishing schools and teacher training centers, lecturing and writing. The first comprehensive account of her work, *The Montessori Method*, was published in 1909. Except for the temporary closing of Montessori schools in countries taken over by Nazi regimes, Montessori flourished in other parts of the world. In 1939, Montessori went to India to give a training course and was interned as an Italian national for the duration of WW II. Montessori died in the Netherlands in 1952, receiving in her later years' honorary degrees and tributes for her teachings and writings throughout the world.



Recommended Reading for Montessori Parents

The staff at Country Meadows Montessori School would like to stress that no educational organization can supersede the parent's role with their child. The purpose of the parent education program is not to lecture or dictate to the parents on how to raise their children, but rather to supply them with a new way of seeing themselves in relation to their children and the school. It is in this spirit of sharing and offering that we make the following suggestions of recommended reading for our Montessori parents. At the beginning of the first year of enrollment, parents will receive a copy of the book, "[A Parent's Guide to the Montessori Classroom](#)", a very useful book giving explanations and descriptions in detail of the Montessori program. Every other school newsletter will include articles that are very informative regarding what goes on in a Montessori classroom or the educational program of your child.

Books by Maria Montessori

The Secret of Childhood

The Absorbent Mind

The Discovery of the Child

From Childhood to Adolescence

To Educate the Human Potential

The Advanced Montessori Method, Vol. 1 and Vol. 2

Education for a New World

The Formation of Man

Education and Peace

Dr. Montessori's Own Handbook

Other readings:

Beth A. Grosshans, Ph.D., *Beyond Time-Out, From Chaos to Calm*

Sir Ken Robinson, Ph.D., *The Element, Out of Our Minds – Learning to be creative*

Martha Heineman Pieper & William J. Pieper, *Smart Love*
E. M. Standing, *Maria Montessori, Her Life and Work*
Aline D. Wolf, *A Parents Guide to Montessori Classroom*
Aline D. Wolf, *A Peaceful Classroom*
Paula Polk Lillard, *Montessori Today*
Paula Polk Lillard, *Montessori-A Modern Approach*
Lesley Britton, *Montessori Play and Learn*
Lynne Lawrence, *Montessori Read & Write*
Charles A. Smith, *The Peaceful Classroom*
David Elkind, *The Hurried Child*
Lise Eliot, Ph.D., *What's Going On in There?*
Mel Levine, M. D., *Ready or Not, Here Life Comes*
Mel Levine, M. D., *A Mind At a Time*
Angeline Stoll Lillard, *Montessori: The Science Behind the Genius*
Tim Seldin, *How to Raise an Amazing Child the Montessori Way*
Jane Nelsen, Linda Escobar, Kate Ortolano, Roslyn Duffy and Deborah Owen-Sohocki: *Positive Discipline*
Trevor Eissler, *Montessori Madness – A Parent to Parent Argument for Montessori Education*

“Scientific observation then 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 a New Man who will not be the 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