

January 3, 2021

Hello Families!

I hope you all had a safe and happy New Year and holiday season. I am so excited to see all of the little ones tomorrow! We are welcoming two new students to our classroom, Iris and Charles. I am sure your little ones will help them feel right at home in no time.

As a reminder, we will still be going outside every day, unless there is a severe weather advisory for cold or wind chill. Please send your child to school with appropriate winter (or rain) gear such as a heavy coat, winter hat, and cotton gloves or mittens. In my experience, toddlers are more likely to take off thick snow mittens because they cannot pick up objects or manipulate their hands. Simple cotton mittens or gloves work best for our outdoor exploration.

If anyone comes across extra disinfecting wipes in their shopping trips, the classroom is in dire need of a restocking. I also have a few take home jobs if anyone needs volunteer hours. As we enter into our winter weather months, it is a good idea to text the word mountain to 84483 to receive texts about any delays, cancellations, or school closings. You can also check our webpage and/or your email to be informed about any changes in our schedule.

If anyone has any questions please feel free to email me.

Warmly,
Sarah Veitenthal

Grocery List:

Ashton: Jan-4-8

Charles: Jan-11-15

Iris: Jan-18-22

Kylan: Jan- 25-29

Sloane: Feb- 1-5

Madeline: Feb- 8-12

January 6, 2021

Dear Families,

As many of you have probably noticed, our morning car line has gotten quite long. In order to help this process, go more smoothly, we are creating some new morning guidelines. Beginning tomorrow, our classroom will have a new arrival procedure. Please park your car and walk your child to the back door of the toddler building (up the ramp, behind the two-story building). Show your child how to ring the bell so they will eventually be able to help with this process. At that time, either myself or Mrs. Yount will open the door, greet your child, take your child's temperature, and ask you the daily health questions. It is important for everyone's safety, and to help your child transition well into school, that we keep this process as simple and brief as possible. If you have any questions or concerns you wish to discuss with me please email me or write me a quick note you can pass when I open the door. Please give your child a quick goodbye and exit down the ramp quickly.

If you are waiting in the car line to get to a parking spot, please do not go around other cars. There are times when older elementary children may hop out of the vehicle on the passenger side and we need to keep all of the children safe. Once you are in the parking area, you may maneuver your car into a spot. You may want to park in the lower, side spaces, on the decline of our driveway, to easily walk up the backside of our building. There is a gate for easy access that borders those spaces. Our arrival time is from 8:15-8:30. We will allow for some extra time for arrival as we work out these new procedures. After 8:40, Mrs. Yount and myself will need to stay in the classroom to keep all of the children safe and to begin our morning work period. We will not be able to answer the door after this time. If you are arriving after 8:40 because of being stuck in the car line, please stay in the car line as you have done thus far, and a support staff will exit your child from the vehicle and walk him/her to class.

As always, if anyone is confused or has additional questions, please feel free to email me. I am posting an additional paragraph from my previous welcome letters at the bottom of this email for further reading, if you desire.

Have a great night!

Sarah

Welcome Letter Excerpt:

The arrival of all toddler students is between 8:15-8:30. All toddler families are invited to park their car and walk with their child to the toddler door. You will see the primary children getting out of a car line with a teacher, please wait patiently to maneuver your car into a parking spot as it is not safe to go around cars unloading children. Once you have parked, please allow your toddler to walk up the courtyard to the door. We ask that you refrain from carrying your child, as tempting as this is, to help your toddler foster a sense of independence and boost self-confidence. Once you arrive at the door please show your toddler how to ring the bell and then allow them to have the opportunity to ring. I will then open the door and greet your child, welcoming them into school. At this time please give a quick goodbye to your child and walk down the stairs quickly. Some of your children may cry the first couple of weeks, as to be expected, but the more confident you are in saying good-bye and knowing their tears will be short lived will help your child feel confident. We will do our best to quickly ease your child's tears and get them involved in our delightful work period.

January 13, 2021

Dear Families,

The children are settling into being back at school and are enjoying their friendships with one another. On Monday, we said good-bye to Ryley as he joined one of our Primary classes and said hello to Silas, a new student for our class! All of our veteran students have been so kind and patient with our new friends and are showing them how to push in chairs, return work to the shelves, and where to put coats and slippers. Our new students are learning our daily routine and comprehending where the boundaries and limitations are at school. The children are working on their impulse control and we are getting lots of practice using the phrase, "This is my work, please find your work on the shelf". This is a great phrase to let all of our friends know that work being used by another must be respected, but there are plenty of other options available.

All of the children have loved our watercolor tray, snowman stamper, and the paint easel. Our older friends have been busy in the practical life area mopping, washing cloths, watering plants, dusting, glass polishing, washing windows, and making flower arrangements. Some of our current language work includes various types of birds. The younger children have enjoyed learning the names of our bird replicas such as oriole, flamingo, cockatoo, macaw, blue jay, and penguin. The older children are learning the parts of the bird and thoroughly enjoy our bird matching cards which include the Great Horned Owl, Steller's Jay, Puffin, Anna's Hummingbird, and the Eastern Bluebird. We will soon have a practical life activity which will help feed native birds and encourage your child's care of the environment.

All of the children are really enjoying our snack and lunch time. Everyone is working hard on using their forks, spoons, pitchers, cups, and remaining in their seat while eating. I encourage all of you to offer your child various kitchen utensils at home to encourage fine motor development and strengthening the muscles in their hands. This will serve them well in the future when it is time to hold a pencil for handwriting!

Thank you to everyone who has brought in groceries, wipes, and sanitizing cloths so far. It has really helped our classroom to be successful. Have a wonderful evening!

Warmly,
Sarah Veitenthal

January 21, 2021

Dear Families,

I spent some time this past weekend rearranging the classroom and putting out new work. The children LOVE the new environment and are exploring with new vigor. A new beloved work is the practical skill of making tea. The children fill the pitcher with warm water, pour the water over an organic bay leaf, and then we count to ten. We remove the leaf and taste the flavored water. Some skills that are learned from this activity include grace and courtesy, refinement of fine motor skills, cultural and social development, care of self, and practicing impulse control while we wait for the tea to steep. It is a really beautiful lesson and easy to do at home!

The children have also enjoyed our new hair and face washing stations. These two activities are placed in front of the mirror to help the child see what needs to be done in order to help take care of their hair or face. The children are working so hard to find all the cream cheese or jelly on their face with a damp cloth. Others are coming right into the classroom to brush their hair and choose a bow. It is very sweet work and a great addition to the daily practical life routine.

I have also added a gross motor movement area to the classroom. Your children are working hard to strengthen their equilibrium on the balance beam and to jump really high on the jumping square. I have included a maraca and a scarf in the movement area for creative movement and dancing!

Anything your child learns is learned through movement. This is because when the child is moving purposely, he is concentrating on the present moment and is able to concentrate on the task at hand. Only through concentration are the higher functioning parts of the brain activated to catapult the child forward in development. Things that require children to use their maximum effort will produce concentration. Movement is a key element to effective children's education. And Montessori classrooms are great at recognizing the child's need to learn through movement!

Have a wonderful evening,
Sarah