



the Montessori
Country School

Parent Handbook
2017-2018

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

THE MONTESSORI COUNTRY SCHOOL PURPOSE	4
THE MONTESSORI COUNTRY SCHOOL VALUES	3
WELCOME TO MCS	3
A Brief History of the School	4
ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE	6
AUTHORIZATION TO PICK UP CHILD	6
CLOTHING	6
TOYS AND JEWELRY	7
WEATHER	7
EMERGENCY PROCEDURE	7
EVACUATION	7
“MISSING ITEMS”	8
NUTRITION POLICY	8
BIRTHDAY TREATS	8
PARENT-TEACHER MEETINGS AND REPORT CARDS	8
CELEBRATIONS	9
MEDICAL FORMS	9
MEDICINE IN SCHOOL	9
ILLNESS	9
GUIDELINES FOR EXCLUDING FROM SCHOOL	10
VOLUNTEER AND STUDENT POLICY	10

SECTION 2: RULES OF THE SCHOOL & CODE OF CONDUCT

RULES OF THE SCHOOL	11
For The Attention of Parents:	12
For The Attention of Children:	13
STUDENT DRESS AND APPEARANCE POLICY	14
Dress and Appearance Guidelines	15
CODE OF CONDUCT	15
Grace and Courtesy	13
Guiding Principles	15
Roles and Responsibilities	16
Standards of Behaviour	17
Factors to be Considered	18
Consequences for Unacceptable Behaviour	18
Consequences for Serious Misbehaviour	19
Consequences for Serious Offences	17

SECTION 3: CASA INFORMATION

EXTENDED HOURS	18
FULL DAY ATTENDANCE FOR CASA CHILDREN	19
STUDENT PROFILE SHEETS	19
THE CASA PROGRAM	19
CURRICULUM	19
IN THE HOME	20

THE MONTESSORI COUNTRY SCHOOL PURPOSE

To make a lasting difference in the lives of children by providing World Class Montessori Education in a relaxed and friendly setting.

THE MONTESSORI COUNTRY SCHOOL VALUES

The staff at the Montessori Country School is bound together by a common set of core values. We strive to set an example for all members of our school community by demonstrating each of these characteristics.

BEING THE BEST

We strive to give our best effort in everything we do.

TEAMWORK

We uphold our responsibilities as citizens of our classrooms, school, community and the world.

ETHICS

We cherish and protect each other, our school, our community and the world we all share.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Through community outreach and environmental initiatives, we strive to make a difference.

PROFESSIONALISM

We conduct ourselves as responsible ambassadors of our school at all times.

ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT

Each of us is passionate about Montessori Education and enjoys the process of innovation.

WELCOME TO MCS

We are pleased to welcome you to the school, and we hope that the year will be an exciting one for both you and your child.

At the Montessori Country School our objectives are to provide your child with an authentic Montessori Education.

Our goal is for each child to be happy, secure and relaxed in the environment. We aim to foster:

- A love of learning
- Confidence and self-esteem
- Development to the fullest potential
- Competence in handling emotions

- A sense of responsibility for one's own actions
- Cooperation
- Sensitivity toward others and a respect for all living things
- Insight into and sense of responsibility for social and environmental global conditions
- Resourcefulness and initiative
- The ability and drive to educate oneself on an ongoing basis
- Independence
- Individuality and creativity
- Good work habits, including self-discipline, concentration and coordination

We hope to arouse in each child an interest in the world around him, a sense of wonder, a spirit of discovery, a love of learning, an appreciation of beauty and a respect for all life.

Have a good year and please do not hesitate to speak to your child's teacher, our School Coordinator or our Director if you have any questions or concerns.

A Brief History of the School

1982

The Montessori Country School - Nobleton was founded by Marianne Broome-Perks, in response to a demand in the community for quality education for preschool children.

1985

The Elementary program was started with 6 Level 1 students and MCS Nobleton became recognized as a Private School with the Ministry of Education.

1989

The school moved to its current location on the 15th Sideroad in Nobleton. The 10 acre property allowed room for expansion and lots of outdoor space (field and forest) for the children to explore.

1997

An addition was built, adjoined to the rear of the Main Building, to house another Casa class. The following year more portables were added to house yet another new Casa class and the Elementary program.

2001

Ms. Broome-Perks retired from her position as Principal and sold the school to The Foray Group, an organization that has operated schools for over 30 years.

2005

MCS Nobleton became a fully accredited member of the CCMA (Canadian Council of Montessori Administrators) and the Montessori Toddler program was introduced to the school. That fall, the school undertook a development project to join the main house to the "annex" making the school one large, cohesive building.

2007

In September 2007, we opened the doors of our Milton Campus. Located in Milton's stunning County Heritage Park, this location has thrived and become the standard for Montessori education in the Milton area. This satellite location gives us the opportunity to offer World Class Montessori education in a relaxed country setting, as we do in Nobleton.

2009

MCS Nobleton begins its Parent Infant Program and, in September, launches the Middle School to provide an authentic Montessori experience for students up until the end of eighth grade.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Parents are to park and bring their children to the school playground. Once inside, a staff member will help the children change their shoes, hang up their clothes and escort them to their classroom.

Parents are encouraged to make every effort to get their children to school by 9:00 am.

Pickup for half day children is 11:45 (12:45 p.m. if staying for lunch) and for full day children 3:45 p.m.

Casa children will be picked up from the Playground (or from the front foyer if the weather is inclement).

Any child not picked up by 3:45 will join our After School Extended group and will be charged the applicable fee.

AUTHORIZATION TO PICK UP CHILD

No child will be released to a person other than the child's parents without written or verbal authorization from one of the parents. If you wish to have someone else pick up your child, please advise us in writing beforehand or let us know by phone or in person. You can avoid writing notes by naming people to your "pick up list". On the school application form, there is a space for writing names of people you authorize to pick up your child. Names can be added or deleted at any time by advising the Administrator in the office. Once we know the person on the list we will not continue to ask for identification, although they may be asked for ID if a staff who has not met them before is releasing children. Please be advised that any person on your pick up list can pick up your child but we prefer to have verbal authorization of this from the parents. Persons not on your "pick up list" will need to show proper identification to the supervising staff member.

CLOTHING

Please put your child's name on all outer clothing (sweaters, hats, coats, scarves, mittens, shoes and boots) to avoid confusion and loss.

Please supply a pair of indoor shoes and a complete change of seasonally appropriate clothing, all of which should be labeled with your child's name. Since we encourage independence in dressing and undressing, your child should wear shoes that allow independent dressing (e.g. tie up shoes if child can tie laces, Velcro or pull-on style if not). Clothing should have front fastenings, not back. Children should come to school with adequate outdoor clothing. Please bear in mind that whatever a child wears may come home soiled, depending on the outdoor conditions or activities of the day! With this in mind, students may wish to come equipped with a change of clothes on "soggy" days.

There is a "Lost & Found" in the main foyer. Please check this area if items are missing.

TOYS AND JEWELLERY

To avoid loss, children should not bring toys, valuables and jewellery to school, including to any of our Extended programs. However, if they have an item of educational interest that can be discussed in the classroom, check with the classroom teacher for "show and share" days when it is appropriate for children to bring such items to class. Trading cards of any description are strictly forbidden. In addition, all electronic gaming devices will not be permitted at the Montessori Country School.

WEATHER

In case of extremely severe weather the school may be closed.

In general, if public school buses in Milton are cancelled it is very likely that MCS, Milton campus will be closed.

If in doubt, please call the school number any time after 6:30 a.m.. We will also email blast all parents at 6:30 a.m. if the school will be closed.

Should it become necessary to close the school early on any day because of a storm, you will be contacted by telephone to advise you that early pick up arrangements are required.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURE

If your child appears to have symptoms of an illness, he will be immediately isolated from the other children and you will be contacted to arrange immediate pick up. In case of accidental injury, we will first attempt to contact the child's parents, or if they cannot be reached, the name listed for emergencies on the application form. Parents are expected to pick up their child, once contacted, as quickly as possible. Should we be unable to contact anyone, and medical attention seems necessary, we will arrange to have the child taken (by ambulance) to Milton hospital for treatment. You will be expected to assume responsibility for any resultant expense. All of our staff have completed a first aid training course and will give first aid assistance for any minor incidents as well as CPR and administration of an Epi-pen.

EVACUATION

In case of fire, or some other reason why the children would have to be evacuated from the school, they will be taken to a designated area within the Country Heritage Park.

“MISSING ITEMS”

From time to time items go missing from the classroom. **Please do not discard items that may come home with your child, as they may be parts of materials that belong to the classroom.** Many of these materials contain very small pieces, such as jigsaw puzzle map parts. When in doubt, please check with your child’s teacher. Items that belong to other children should also be returned to your child’s teacher.

NUTRITION POLICY

A nutritious snack will be provided in the morning and afternoon for all Casa children.

A hot lunch is provided for all full day children.

Due to the fact that we have children attending with severe, life-threatening allergies to peanuts and other nuts, we have banned **ALL NUTS AND NUT PRODUCTS** from the school. Even the tiniest residue of nuts, nut oil, and nuts in cookies, etc. left on a table can be fatal to susceptible children. Therefore, all snacks and lunches brought to school **must** be free of nuts and nut products. Teachers will check all lunch boxes and discard (if unsealed) or send home (if sealed) excluded items with a reminder notice. **This is not just our school policy – it is the law.**

BIRTHDAY TREATS

If you are planning to have your child celebrate their birthday at school, which we certainly encourage, please remember our Nut Ban and Nutrition Policies. Items must be store bought & must not include the warning that the product may contain nuts or have been made in a facility that processes nut products.

Please check with the teacher in advance to avoid disappointing your child if you are not sure that what you plan to bring is acceptable.

PARENT-TEACHER MEETINGS AND REPORT CARDS

Parent Teacher interviews are scheduled twice during the school year. Appointments will be scheduled before and after school. If you would like to talk to your child’s teacher at any other time, please make an appointment with them directly or schedule a time through the school office. Similarly, if you have any questions or any problems at all, please do not hesitate to call the School Administrator or Principal. We would appreciate it if you do not tie up the teachers’ time during class hours. Observation in the classroom is possible once the children have settled in at the beginning of the year.

Progress Reports will be sent home twice a year, in December and June. Parent-teacher interviews will be held in January and March. There are also interviews or updates in October for parents of children new to their class, so parents can get a sense of how their child is adjusting to their new

environment. These interviews are scheduled before and after school on regular school days or may be conducted by telephone.

In addition, we will complete Nipissing Developmental Screens annually for all students and parents will be informed should any concerns be observed.

CELEBRATIONS

We hope to expose the children to a multicultural experience by celebrating special events of people around the world. We will celebrate the traditional holidays as observed/listed on Canadian calendars and as per statutory holidays and we welcome your input of information regarding your heritage, culture, customs and celebrations as well.

MEDICAL FORMS

If you did not submit a Medical Form along with your initial Application, you need to do this by the first day of school. You should include any allergies or medical conditions the school needs to be aware of for your child/ren. Your child will not be permitted to attend unless we have his medical information. A medical update is required each year, prior to the first day of classes.

MEDICINE IN SCHOOL

If your child needs medication of any sort whilst at school, we require a completed “Administration of Medication” form (available in the Main Office). Medicine should be labeled and dropped off in the office for safe storage in our health room, out of reach of other children. **Please do not leave medications in your child’s bag.** Also, please note that we are only able to administer medication that has been prescribed by a doctor.

NOTIFICATION OF ILLNESS

If there is a reason that your child will be absent from class, please inform the school office. This helps us keep an eye on each child’s health and well-being and aids in daily activity planning.

Health authorities require that children’s illnesses are reported to the school. If there is no one in the office at the time you call, please leave a message on our voicemail. Any parents who do not contact the school when their child is absent may be contacted by the school.

ILLNESS

Please keep a child who has a serious cold, with a harsh cough, at home. Contact the office immediately if your child contracts a contagious disease (e.g. German measles, chicken pox, pink eye, strep throat, etc).

The only place for a sick child is at home and it is important for us to protect the health and welfare of the other children. Please keep your child at home if any symptoms listed in the following Guidelines for Excluding from School are present.

GUIDELINES FOR EXCLUDING FROM SCHOOL

Fever and other symptoms in children may suggest the presence of a communicable disease. Children who have the following symptoms should be excluded from school until: (1) a physician has certified that the symptoms are not associated with an infectious agent, or they are no longer a threat to the health of other children at school (please bring doctor's certificate) or (2) the symptoms have subsided or (3) there is no danger to the child who has been ill to resume attendance.

Fever	If present within the previous twenty-four hour period Auxiliary (oral) temperature: 100 F (37.4 C) or higher Rectal Temperature: 101 F (38.3 C) or higher Especially if accompanied by other symptoms such as vomiting, sore throat, diarrhea, headache and stiff neck, or undiagnosed cough
Respiratory Symptoms	Difficult or rapid breathing, or severe coughing High-pitched, croupy, or whooping sound after coughing Child unable to lie comfortably due to continuous cough
Diarrhea	Increased number of abnormally loose stools (i.e. liquid or semi-liquid) in the previous twenty-four hours
Vomiting	More than one episode of vomiting in 24 hour period
Eye-nose Drainage	Thick mucus or pus draining from the eye or nose
Sore Throat	Sore throat, especially when fever or swollen glands in the neck are present
Itching	Persistent itching (or scratching) of body or scalp
Skin Problems	Skin rashes, undiagnosed or contagious Skin patches - crusty, yellow, dry or gummy areas of skin
Appearance/ Behaviour	Child looks or acts differently: is unusually tired, pale, lacking appetite, tearful, irritable, feels general discomfort or just seems unwell
Unusual colour	The symptoms can be found in hepatitis and should be evaluated by a physician: Eyes or skin Yellow (jaundice) Stool Gray or white Urine Dark, tea-colored
Head Lice	The presence of any live lice or nits in your child's hair necessitates that they be sent home immediately for treatment. The child must be free of lice and all nits before returning to school.

We will call you, or a designated emergency person, if your child becomes sick at school. A sick child should be picked up as soon as possible.

Volunteer Policy

The Montessori Country School provides hands on learning opportunities for students and volunteers and encourages a cooperative relationship with families and within the community. We recognize the benefits to both the children and volunteers from participating in a positive and diverse learning environment.

All employees, students and volunteers supervising children in our centres must be a minimum of 18 years of age (as per CCEYA). Only employees will have direct unsupervised access to children; volunteers and students are not to be left alone with children under any circumstances, even for short periods of time. In addition, volunteers and students are not to be counted in the staffing ratios.

All students and volunteers will complete an orientation to review all centre policies, including program statement and implementation policy, child abuse, infection control, anaphylaxis, serious occurrence and supervision policies and procedures prior to providing care or guidance in a classroom and annually thereafter.

Individual needs of the children enrolled in the centre will be reviewed with the students/volunteers prior to supporting in a classroom, including individual plans and the emergency procedures for children with anaphylaxis.

The school's Administration is responsible for monitoring the behaviour management practices of volunteers or students as set out by the Montessori Country School's Behaviour Management Policy and Code of Conduct. Employees, volunteers and students are required to report any contraventions to this policy.

Employees are legally responsible for the children at all times, thus it is imperative that students and volunteers follow the direction and guidance of employees while assisting in the supervision of children. Employees should take the lead in dealing with difficult situations (i.e. guiding challenging behaviours) and sharing of information with clients. Volunteers and students are required to comply with all policies and procedures as set out by the Montessori Country School while supervising children enrolled in our programs, including supervision, health & safety, de-escalation and confidentiality policies and procedures.

Volunteers and students are to identify themselves as such to clients and visitors by wearing a name tag and a written posting introducing themselves and the purpose of their visit near the entrance of the classroom they are volunteering in.

Volunteers and students are to conduct themselves professionally while in the centre and should refer all clients and visitors to a staff member or the centre director for any questions or concerns regarding their child or the centre.

Current vulnerable sector checks are required for all volunteers having direct contact with children (valid within a maximum of 1 month from beginning of volunteer period).

Roles and Responsibilities

For students or intern teachers, MCS will follow the roles and responsibilities set out by the student/intern's training centre. Volunteers at MCS assist with field trips, special events or classroom presentations. Field trip volunteers follow the attached responsibilities. Volunteers assisting with special events or classroom presentations are responsible for assisting with the event or presentation. Guidance, redirection and discipline are the responsibility of the classroom teachers, not the volunteer.

RULES OF THE SCHOOL

*** It is important to note that the Rules of the School and Code of Conduct is written for all students at the Montessori Country School from Toddler to Middle School and encompasses both of our locations in Nobleton and Milton. Policies with regard to student behaviour are implemented with the age of the children in mind, however the Guiding Principles of Grace and Courtesy apply at all our locations and at all levels.***

For The Attention of Parents:

1. Attendance

Children shall arrive at school by 9:00 am for the commencement of classes and be picked up at 11:45 for Half Day children or 3:45 for Full Day children.

2. Fees

Shall be paid pursuant to the schedule designated by the school unless alternative arrangements have been made with the Principal. The school reserves the right to request the withdrawal of a child if fees are in arrears.

3. Parent-Teacher Interviews

Parents are expected to attend scheduled parent-teacher interviews and be available to meet with the teachers, at mutually convenient times, should specific concerns arise.

4. Parent-Teacher Communication

Concerns and issues about your child or your child's class should be addressed with the class teachers. Parents can make appointments to meet with their child's teacher through the office. **Teachers are not to be emailed directly.** Any email communication can be sent to the main e-mail address and it will be forwarded to the appropriate recipient.

5. Extended Hours Program

Children using the extended hours program and parents of such children shall abide by the pick-up times and other rules of this program.

6. Absenteeism for Illness

A child with an illness of a highly contagious nature (e.g. strep throat or chicken pox) shall be kept home until the child's doctor determines that the child is no longer infectious. Parents of a child with an illness of a highly contagious nature should immediately notify the school.

7. **Rules of the School**

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their children abide by the rules of the school. Any significant breach of these rules by a child will result in notification to the parents.

8. **Suspensions and Expulsion**

Should a child's influence be considered by the school to be harmful as a result of a breach of these rules or for any other reason, or if the child's presence in the school is regarded as undesirable by the school, the Principal has the discretion to request of parents the immediate withdrawal of the child. This withdrawal may take the form of either a suspension or an expulsion:

(a) Suspension: where the Principal deems that a suspension is warranted, parents will be notified in writing of the suspension and the reasons therefore. The duration of the suspension of a child for breach of these rules or for any other reason will be deemed by the school to be a repudiation of the contract on the part of the parents who are thereby notified of such repudiation upon receipt of the notification of suspension and reasons thereof.

(b) Expulsion: the decision to expel a child will be solely at the discretion of the Principal who may, on behalf of the school:

- (i) accept the repudiation of this contract by the parents as a result of the child's conduct; or
- (ii) unilaterally terminate this contract and thus the child's education at The Montessori Country School.

NOTE: Parents should be aware that a general attitude of cooperation on the part of both child and parents is expected, and is essential to the smooth running of the child's class and to the teacher's ability to educate the child (socially, emotionally and academically).

For The Attention of Children:

1. **Toys:** Shall not be brought to the school without the specific permission of the child's teacher.
2. **Valuables:** Shall not be brought to school. Valuables shall include money (except for special sales, field trips, etc.)
3. **Candies, Chocolate, Carbonated Beverages and Gum:** Children shall not be allowed candy, chocolate, carbonated beverages or gum at the school.
4. **Playground Rules:** Children shall obey the playground rules as set forth from time to time by the school and as directed by teachers and other staff.
5. **Instructions or Directions of Teachers and Staff:** Students shall obey instructions or directions from teachers or staff as given from time to time and students shall not take steps to oppose

such instructions or directions or to encourage others to so oppose such instructions or directions.

6. **Self-discipline:** Students are responsible for controlling their own behaviour in accordance with these rules and the instructions and directions provided by teachers and staff.
7. **School Property:** Children shall not engage in destructive behaviour such as the intentional damage of school property including, but not limited to, all books, equipment, and furniture or school buildings. The parents of any child who so willfully damages school property shall be assessed sufficiently to repair or replace the damage to school property and such assessments shall be paid immediately.
8. **Moral Tone of the School:** Children are expected to be courteous to other children and adults and shall not engage in conduct injurious to the moral tone of this school or to the physical or mental well-being of others in the school including:
 - (a) all conduct which falls below the moral tone of the school including, but not limited to, conduct which is disrespectful, discriminatory or abusive of other students or staff, e.g. hitting, biting, etc. and use of language or gestures that are vulgar, coarse or irreverent.
 - (b) all conduct that, while not necessarily criminal or quasi-criminal in nature threatens or is injurious to the well-being of the students and staff in the school including but not limited to possession of intoxicating liquors, cigarettes, non-medical drugs, unauthorized use of prescription drugs, possession of pornographic literature, etc.
 - (c) all criminal or quasi-criminal conduct including conduct in breach of the Narcotics Control Act, the Food and Drug Act, the Criminal Court of Canada and Ontario provincial offenses.
9. A breach of any of these rules may result in the withdrawal of the student. Such a withdrawal may take the form of a suspension or expulsion as more fully set forth above.

STUDENT DRESS AND APPEARANCE POLICY

The Montessori Country School respects a student's right to choose his or her style of dress or appearance. However, the school requires that students adhere to standards of dress that are compatible with a safe and productive school environment.

All students are to be groomed appropriately for school and school activities. A student's dress or appearance shall:

1. Support not disrupt the learning environment
2. Constitute no threat to health or safety
3. Be tasteful and unable to be construed as provocative or obscene
4. Reflect practices of good hygiene and cleanliness

The Principal shall ensure that the policy is enforced in a consistent manner and require the student and the student's parent or guardian to take appropriate action to remedy situations determined to be in conflict with the policy.

Dress and Appearance Guidelines

- No clothing with written slogans or messages that may be construed to be offensive
- Hats are not permitted inside the school
- Sensible footwear for classroom activities

CODE OF CONDUCT

Grace and Courtesy

At The Montessori Country School, we are committed to developing the whole child, intellectually, spiritually, physically and socially. It is this last area, social development, that we need a stronger focus so as to strengthen sensitive, respectful attitudes. Let us endeavour to reinforce the following areas in the children's social interactions with others:

1. Greeting others, such as "Good morning"
2. Saying "Thank you" when people do things for them
3. Establishing eye contact when speaking
4. Responding when spoken to, when name is called and complying with the request
5. Holding the doors for others
6. Making way in the halls for younger children and adults
7. Waiting for turn in line
8. Walking on the right in halls and not talking when moving from one class to another
9. Entering another classroom quietly when making a request of the teacher
10. Respecting the environment and other people's spaces
11. Working to reach out and be inclusive of others

The Montessori Country School promotes responsibility, respect, civility and academic excellence in a safe learning and teaching environment.

All students, parents, teachers and staff have the right to be safe, and feel safe in their school community. With this right comes the responsibility to be law-abiding citizens and to be accountable for actions that put at risk the safety of others or oneself.

Guiding Principles

All participants involved in the school – students, teachers and other staff members, parents or guardians (hereafter "school members") – are included in this Code of Conduct whether they are on school property, on school buses or at school-authorized events or community events representing The Montessori Country School.

All members of the school community are to be treated with respect and dignity at all times.

Responsible citizenship involves appropriate participation in the civic life of the school community. Active and engaged citizens are aware of their rights, but more importantly, they accept responsibility for protecting their rights and the rights of others.

Members of the school community are expected to use non-violent means to resolve conflict. Physically aggressive behaviour is not a responsible way to interact with others.

Members of the school community may not possess, use or threaten to use any object to injure another person or endanger their own safety or that of others.

Insults, disrespect, abusive language, swearing and other hurtful acts disrupt learning and teaching in a school community. Members of the school community have a responsibility to maintain an environment where conflict and difference can be addressed in a manner characterized by respect and civility.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Board of the Montessori Country School provides direction to the school that ensures opportunity, excellence and accountability.

The Board

- develops policies that set out how the school will implement and enforce the Code of Conduct and all other rules that relate to standards for respect, civility, responsible citizenship and physical safety;
- ensures an effective intervention strategy and response to infractions related to the standards for respect, civility, responsible citizenship and physical safety;

The School Administrator, under the direction of the Principal, takes a leadership role in the daily operation of the school. The Administrator provides this leadership by:

- demonstrating care and commitment to academic excellence and a safe teaching and learning environment;
- reviewing these policies regularly with students, staff, parents or guardians, volunteers;
- holding everyone accountable for their behaviour and actions;
- establishing a process that clearly communicates the Code of Conduct to all members of the school community in a manner that ensures their commitment and support; providing opportunities for all staff to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to develop and maintain academic excellence and safe learning and teaching environments.

Teachers and school staff, under the leadership of the Principal, maintain order in the school and are expected to hold everyone to the highest standard of respectful and responsible behaviour.

As role models, staff members uphold these high standards when they:

- implement the Code of Conduct;
- nurture and challenge students to do their best and develop their self-worth;

- communicate regularly and meaningfully with parents;
- maintain consistent standards of behaviour for all students;
- demonstrate respect for all students, staff and parents;
- prepare students for the full responsibilities of citizenship.

Students are to be treated with respect and dignity. In return, they must demonstrate respect for themselves, for others and for the responsibilities of citizenship through acceptable behaviour. Respect and responsibility are demonstrated when a student:

- comes to school appropriately dressed, prepared, on time and ready to learn;
- shows respect for themselves, for others and for those in authority;
- refrains from bringing anything to school that may compromise the safety of others;
- follows the established rules and takes responsibility for his own actions.

Parents play an important role in the education of their children and have a responsibility to support the efforts of school staff in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students.

Parents fulfill this responsibility when they:

- act as a role model for their children;
- guide and support the whole child
- show an active interest in their child's school work and progress;
- communicate regularly with the school, particularly if there are any concerns;
- help their child be neat, appropriately dressed and prepared for school;
- ensure that their child attends school regularly and on time;
- promptly report to the school their child's absence or late arrival;
- become familiar with the Code of Conduct and school rules;
- encourage and assist their child in following the rules of behaviour;
- assist school staff in dealing with disciplinary issues.

Should there be any concern regarding the welfare of a child and/or an allegation of abuse by any child the school will inform The Children's Aid Society. This is in compliance with the law. Police and community members are essential partners in making our schools and communities safer.

Standards of Behaviour

a. Respect, Civility and Responsible Citizenship

All school members must:

- demonstrate honesty and integrity;

- respect differences in people, their ideas and opinions;
- treat one another with dignity and respect at all times, and especially when there is disagreement;
- respect and treat others fairly, regardless of their race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age or disability;
- respect the rights of others;
- show proper care and regard for school property and the property of others;
- take appropriate measures to help those in need;
- respect persons who are in a position of authority;
- respect the need of others to work in an environment of learning and teaching.

b. Safety

All school members must:

- not be in possession of any weapon, including but not limited to firearms and knives;
- not use any object to threaten or intimidate another person;
- not cause injury with an object to any person;
- not inflict or encourage others to inflict bodily harm on another person;
- seek staff assistance, if necessary, to resolve conflict peacefully.

Factors to be Considered

In selecting the most appropriate consequence, the following factors will be taken into account:

- nature of the offence;
- number of individuals involved;
- degree of harm caused to the victim and school community (both people and property);
- intent to cause harm;
- age of the individuals involved, as it pertains to the child's ability to understand the nature and consequences of his/her actions;
- history of offences;
- level of parental cooperation.

Consequences for Unacceptable Behaviour

Disrespectful behaviour or general classroom disruption that interferes with the orderly educational process in the classroom or other areas will be dealt with in the following manner:

Step 1 The teacher redirects the student toward work that will engage him/her. The teacher records the incident.

Step 2 If misbehaviour continues (three occurrences), the teacher informs the Administrator and/or Director or such person as is authorized by the Director and contacts the parents. An appropriate consequence is decided on and recorded.

Step 3 If misbehaviour continues, the student, the teacher, the parent and Coordinator and/or Director, or such person as is authorized by the Director, will meet. An appropriate consequence is decided on and recorded.

Step 4 In the case of repeated unacceptable behaviour, the parents may

- be asked to engage the services of a counselor (at their expense) who will suggest strategies for the teacher to follow, and/or
- be asked to withdraw the child from the school. Suggestions for a more appropriate learning environment will be discussed with the parent.

Consequences for Serious Misbehaviour

In the following instances, the student will receive an in-school suspension. Conditions to return to regular classes will be decided in consultation with the Director on behalf of the Board.

- swearing at a staff member;
- striking a staff member;
- destruction of school materials or property;
- fighting, punching, hitting or biting;
- stealing;
- other acts deemed serious by staff members;
- acts that jeopardize the personal safety of the child or the safety of others, including bullying or cyber bullying.

Consequences for Serious Offences

In the following instances, police will be involved, and the student will be immediately suspended:

- possession of a weapon with the intent to cause bodily harm, or to threaten serious harm;
- physical assault causing bodily harm requiring professional medical treatment;
- uttering a threat to inflict serious bodily harm;
- acts of vandalism causing extensive damage to school property or property located on school premises;
- Activities engaged in by the student on or off school property that causes the student's continuing presence in the school to create an unacceptable risk to the physical or mental well-being of another person in the school.

An expulsion or conditions to return to school will be decided in consultation with the Board. Counseling, at the parents' expense, may be required as a condition of returning to the school.

While we discuss consequences of misbehaviour above, it should be understood that Toddler and Casa children are learning about correct behaviour and it is our responsibility, as adults, to model correct behaviour and to correct unacceptable behaviour so that children may come to a full understanding of what is and what is not acceptable. Teachers, parents and Administration, working together, will ensure a safe and happy learning environment for all children at the Montessori Country School.

PROHIBITED PRACTICES

At no time will staff

- a. Corporal punishment of the child;
- b. Deliberate use of harsh or degrading measures on the child that would humiliate the child or undermine his or her self-respect;
- c. Depriving the child of basic needs including food, shelter, clothing or bedding;
- d. Locking the exits of the child care centre or home child care premises for the purpose of confining the child; or
- e. Using a locked or lockable room or structure to confine the child if he or she has been separated from other children.

BULLYING POLICY

The Montessori Country School believes that all children deserve a safe learning environment. It is our belief that bullying goes against our values and it will not be tolerated. It will be considered a *Serious Misbehaviour* or a *Serious Offence* and the consequences will follow our behavior protocols and may result in suspension, expulsion and/or withdrawal.

Definition

‘Bullying’ means aggressive and typically repeated behavior by a pupil where,

- a. The behavior is intended by the pupil to have the effect of, or the pupil ought to know that the behavior* would be likely to have the effect of,
 - I. Causing harm, fear or distress to another individual, including physical, psychological, social or academic harm, harm to the individual’s reputation or harm to the individual’s property, or
 - II. Creating a negative environment at a school for another individual, and
- b. The behavior occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance between the pupil and the individual based on factors such as size, strength, age, intelligence, peer group power, economic status, social status, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, family circumstance, race, disability or the receipt of special education

*behavior includes the use of any physical, verbal, electronic, written or other means

‘Cyber Bullying’ includes:

- a. Creating a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person;
- b. Impersonating another person as the author of content or messages posted on the internet; and
- c. Communicating material electronically to more than one individual or posting material on a website that may be accessed by one or more individuals

(From Bill 13, “Accepting Schools Act”, Ontario Ministry of Education, 2012)

CASA INFORMATION

EXTENDED HOURS

MORNING EXTENDED	7:00 a.m. to 8:45 a.m.
CASA AM PROGRAM	8:45 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.
LUNCH	11:45 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
PM PROGRAM	1:00 p.m. to 3:45 p.m.
AFTERNOON EXTENDED	3:45 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

FULL DAY ATTENDANCE FOR CASA CHILDREN

Full day attendance is mandatory for third year Casa students and recommended for second year Casa students.

STUDENT PROFILE SHEETS

A student profile form is used to document information about your child that both the office and classroom teacher can keep with your child's records. Forms should be updated every term with new information. Classroom teachers will review existing forms with parents and distribute new profile forms if needed during parent-teacher interviews.

THE CASA PROGRAM – AGES 2.5 TO 6 YEARS

In the Casa class the teacher-student ratio is 1:8 and the Head Teacher holds an AMI or MACTE Accredited (AMS/MTC/TMS/etc.) Montessori Teaching Diploma. Children in the class are a mix of 2, 3, 4 and 5 year olds. This mixed age grouping encourages peer learning, peer modeling, confidence and self-esteem as children are afforded the opportunity to learn from observing others (younger children get to watch what older children are doing) as well as helping others (teaching is the extension of learning that helps solidify the child's skill).

CURRICULUM

The Montessori Casa classroom is organized into five main curriculum areas. These are Practical Life, Sensorial, Language, Math and Culture. In addition, there is an art area and library corner. Music is an integral part of the class, as well as a Specialist subject. Other Specialist subjects for Casa students are French and Physical Education. The Montessori materials are designed to stimulate the child into logical thought and discovery. Apart from conveying basic educational information, they develop the child's senses and coordinate movement in preparation for reading, writing and calculating. The child learns through practice with presented materials. These concrete experiences lead to a thorough understanding of each step of a process, laying a solid foundation for more complex future work.

Practical Life exercises assist the children in learning to care for themselves, for the environment and for others. Through tasks such as pouring, polishing, preparing food, tying shoes, washing a table and in cleaning up and putting away each exercise; children develop coordination, concentration and good work habits. Their self-confidence and independence increase with each accomplishment.

Sensorial activities help children to develop and refine their sensory powers of smelling, tasting, hearing, feeling and seeing in order to better discriminate and classify their impressions. For example, through the manipulation of a sphere or cube, different lengths of rods or fitting cylinders of different sizes into holes, the children begin to order their perceptions of size and space.

Language permeates the program, developing the areas of reading, literature, grammar, creative writing and handwriting, enriching vocabulary and enhancing self-expression. The child progresses from learning the form and sounds of letters to making words with a moveable alphabet, writing words and sentences, learning non-phonetic words and combining these skills to read and write stories.

Mathematics presents a unique and exciting concrete exploration of patterns and number concepts. The materials introduce the concept of quantity and the symbols for the numbers 1 to 10. Using a variety of beads and symbol cards the child becomes familiar with the numbers as a decimal system, including hands-on experiences with the operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. The children acquire a deep understanding of how numbers function and as they learn real mathematical concepts, the materials lead to the abstract. Because of the concrete nature of the materials, the young child is able to work with the basic concepts of the operations, squaring and cubing, fractions and geometry.

Cultural Subjects include botany, zoology, science, geography, history, music and art. To the probing, questioning mind of the Casa child, these areas are fertile fields for exploration and an extremely rich and varied curriculum is presented through real life experiences and an exciting array of Montessori materials.

In addition to the basic Montessori program, children participate in Outdoor Education and Field Trips.

IN THE HOME

Parents often ask the teachers what they can do at home with their child to support what they are learning in school. Below are some suggestions:

Practical Life Area

Practical Life exercises teach children how to care for their classroom. Everyone has the responsibility for maintaining it. The more children become comfortable in their environment, the more they will want to look after it. Practical Life exercises allow them to participate in real life activities and encourage self-sufficiency. Children take part in simple chores at home such as:

- tidying their room, sorting and folding small articles of clothing (socks, small face towels) and sweeping
- care of the home environment can also include setting the table, cleaning up spills, watering plants and caring for household pets

Children should always be treated with dignity and respect. Learning how to clean and dress themselves provides children with a sense of accomplishment. It boosts their self-esteem. As they begin to care for themselves, they understand the importance of caring for others. Simple daily rituals at home would include:

- children can wash their face, hands, brush their own teeth and hair independently
- parents can encourage children to choose their own clothing the night before school and help to pack their own lunch

Creating a weekly schedule of simple daily tasks can be an easy way for children to remember their responsibilities and feel a great sense of accomplishment as they tick off each task when completed!

Grace and Courtesy deals with the development of morals and values. It is the basis of the Montessori pedagogy that provides children with the tools for treating others, their immediate environment and, in the future, the entire world with respect. Children should be encouraged to:

- greet visitors with a handshake, share with their siblings, cousins and neighbourhood friends, as well as giving and using manners, such as “please” and “thank you”
- consideration of others, such as making way for someone to pass and interrupting (how to wait for their turn by placing their hand on someone’s shoulder)

Sensorial Area

Sensorial materials cannot show children how to feel, or tell them what they are seeing, etc. These materials are used by children to consciously classify the sense impressions that are received. They build up cognitive capabilities to their full potential. Sensorial materials provide ‘keys’ to the universe. Colour, texture, taste, sound and smell are individually introduced. Each exercise provides a key which motivates children to explore the environment through games and, later, appropriate language is added to enrich the experience. Activities encourage matching, grading and sequencing, which are preparation for Math and Language work.

Children continue to explore their home environment through their senses. Simple games can be played with children at home or even when traveling by vehicle or foot, such as:

- asking children to find primary and secondary colours in and out of doors
- pointing out the visual shades of colours, diversity of size, length, dimension and diameter of objects and encouraging children to use language such as tallest/ shortest, largest/smallest, thickest/thinnest and darkest/lightest
- encouraging children to use their tactile sense to explore and continue to enrich language such as rough/smooth, heavy/light and cold/hot

- exploring the sense of hearing when taking walks outdoors (listening for nature sounds, mechanical sounds, etc.)
- involving children in cooking and encouraging smelling and tasting of a diversity of foods
- enriching awareness and language of both 2 and 3 dimensional geometric shapes (2 dimensional: oval, ellipse, circle, square, etc./ 3 dimensional: ovoid, ellipsoid, cube, cone, cylinder, etc.)

Language Area

Language is a learned behaviour. Children come to class in a sensitive period for language. The materials isolate elements of language. Every exercise is a key to its exploration. Through the exercises for the ear, eye and hand, development occurs. Children will learn how to listen and express themselves verbally and, eventually, on paper. Language is the expression of the human spirit within each of us. Preliminary exercises can be practiced at home; these exercises provide the basic foundation for writing, such as:

- naming objects in the home environment
- exploring books that cover topics such as transportation, clothing and tools
- reading stories and poetry
- Question, I Spy and Sound Games that explore phonetic sounds of letters

Writing

Writing is complex and requires different skills. Control and coordination of hand movements is necessary. The hand must be able to adapt its movement according to the space available. This can be practiced at home:

- introduce 3 individual lower case cursive letters in one sitting and practice 3 letters until child can identify, then move on to new letters
- letters are presented in class by grouping, first orange letter box explores the following letters: a, b, c, n, s, t
- a tray with corn meal or sand for practicing the formation of lower case cursive letters

Reading

- matching first letter to a picture, i.e. “a” for apple
- practicing 3 letters at a time (m, a, c) and hiding them in the house and asking child to retrieve them one at a time
- writing out 3 phonetic word labels and matching to things in the environment (i.e. jar, cat, rug)

Math Area

Mathematics is based on order, classification and quantity. Order, precision and exactness in the environment will draw children naturally into math. Each exercise has a specific purpose (i.e. learning numbers to ten) and allows repetition and exploration. Children learn to identify, form and associate the symbol (numeral) to its quantity.

- review numerals in groupings, such as 0-9, 11- 19, 20 – 90

- work with 3 numerals at a times, play hiding games where the child hides 3 numbers around the home and retrieves the numbers the parent asks for
- play a memory game by forming numerals (by groupings) on small pieces of paper, ask child to look at number, than turn paper over, ask child to go and find the quantity of items in the house (i.e. 2 pillows, 4 pens, 7 forks, etc.)
- form numerals on a cornmeal tray or chalkboard
- count out objects or items that are used every day (how many napkins are needed for dinner)

Culture Area

Children come into our environment trying to find trying to find their place in the world. Soon, they are curious about the world around them. How do we fit in the animal kingdom? How do we affect the world? Where are we in relation to other human beings? Culture is there when children are ready to explore beyond their immediate surroundings. It's a curiosity of what lies beyond their backyard. Children can continue to explore the topics of the Botany, Zoology and Geography at home by being active listeners and participants in the environment that surrounds them:

- take nature walks and learning about parts and diversity of the plants, trees, flowers and leaf shapes found in Ontario and other places visited
- explore the world of animals through books, the zoo, the backyard and nature areas. Touch on topics such as parts of the bird, fish, turtle, horse and frog and the Living/Non-Living Worlds as well as adult/young, vertebrates/invertebrates
- visit landmarks in your town, city, province or beyond!