



*the* Montessori  
Country School

***Parent Handbook***  
***2017-2018***

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## **THE MONTESSORI COUNTRY SCHOOL VALUES**

The community at the Montessori Country School, including staff, students and parents, is bound together by a common set of core values. We strive to demonstrate 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. Please do not hesitate to speak to your child's teacher, our Principal, Sarah Enright, or our Vice Principals, Joanne Hastie or Christina Corsetti, if you have any questions or concerns. 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

## **A Brief History of the School**

1982

The Montessori Country School 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 became recognized as a Private School with the Ministry of Education.

1989

The school moved to its current location on the 15<sup>th</sup> 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 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, we are confident this location will thrive and become the standard for Montessori education in the Milton area. This satellite location gives us the opportunity to offer authentic Montessori education in a beautiful country setting, as we do in Nobleton.

2009

In September, launches the Middle School to provide an authentic Montessori experience for students up until the end of eighth grade.

2010

MCS is re-accredited by CCMA (Canadian Council of Montessori Administrators).

2012

MCS celebrates its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary in September.

## MCS STAFF LISTING

**Sarah Enright**, Principal  
**Christina Corsetti**, Vice Principal  
**Joanne Hastie**, Vice Principal  
**Nina Schembre**, Administrative Assistant  
**Stephanie Haffenden**, Infant RECE Teacher  
**Laurie Zuech**, Toddler A Montessori Teacher  
**Valentina Marjin**, Toddler B Montessori Teacher  
**Sonia Singh**, Preschool A Montessori Teacher  
**Shelley Hunks**, Preschool B Montessori Teacher  
**Rosalie DeFrancesca**, Casa A Montessori Teacher  
**Amanda Moretto**, Casa B Montessori Teacher  
**Tanya Attard**, Casa C Montessori Teacher  
**Tracy Durisin**, Lower Elementary Teacher  
**Dawn Whitehead**, Upper Elementary Teacher  
**Lyne Boulet**, French & Art Teacher  
**Corine Mastronardi**, Physical Education Teacher  
**Alanna Kurt**, Music Teacher  
**Judi Johnson**, Library & Resource Teacher

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**Isabel Bolivar-Hernandez**, Infant Assistant  
**Teresa Masellis**, Infant Assistant  
**Sandra Torres**, Toddler A RECE  
**Fauzia Ijaz**, Toddler A Assistant  
**Amanda Gentile**, Toddler B Assistant, ECE student  
**Mudasra Naz**, Toddler B Assistant  
**Candice McNeil**, Toddler Lunch and Extended Teacher  
**Alexandrea Caldeira**, Preschool A Assistant  
**Bonnie Bahen**, Preschool B Assistant  
**Nancy Bentivoglio**, Casa A RECE  
**Lina Maraventano**, Casa A Assistant  
**Amandeep Kaur**, Casa B RECE  
**Ally Mena**, Casa B Assistant  
**Katie Lehman**, Casa C Montessori Intern  
**Shannon Gould**, Casa C Assistant  
**Rosanna Scalzo**, Casa Lunch and Extended Teacher  
**Alyssa Pugliuso**, Casa Lunch and Extended Teacher  
**Candice Budarick**, Kitchen Coordinator  
**Kevin Bulman**, Custodian

# The Montessori Country School Ministry Program Statement

(Regulation 46)

MCS's interpretation of Montessori pedagogy and programming is consistent with the Minister of Education's Policy Statement as set out in "*How Does Learning Happen (HDLH)?*" It is important to note that Montessori pedagogy often describes children's activities as 'work' where HDLH describes children's activity as 'play' but the activities, as experienced by a child, are one in the same.

This Ministry program statement will be reviewed with childcare staff and volunteers annually or whenever an amendment is made.

MCS holds the view that all children are competent, capable, curious and rich in potential.

This Ministry statement describes our goals for children at MCS and the approaches that we implement to meet those goals.

We promote the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of the children in our care by diligently meeting all the requirements of ONTARIO REGULATION 137/15.

We support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, child care providers and staff by communicating, promoting and adhering to our 'Values' and our 'Code of Conduct.' These are communicated in our staff policies and in the Parent Handbook and calendar. They are applied to all members of the MCS community – staff, Board, interns, students, parents, volunteers, observers and visitors.

We encourage the children to interact and communicate in a positive way and we support their ability to self-regulate by having mixed-age Montessori communities where children remain with the same adults for three years. This provides many opportunities for interactions with children older and younger than themselves, and with adults. We also have a Code of Conduct that is applied consistently throughout the school but according to the maturity of the children involved.

We foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry by having fully equipped Montessori play/learn environments in which activities are present for the full range of three ages in each room. There are activities that assist children to become independent or able to assist others in care of the self, care of the environment and care of others (Grace and Courtesy); activities to explore and refine all the senses as well as discover sequencing and order; activities to increase vocabulary, encourage discussion, explore sounds, and begin to develop the process of writing and reading, and activities to develop number sense, numeracy, understanding of large quantities, the mathematical operations, geometry and even rudimentary algebra concepts and then lots of activities to introduce all the wonderful things in our world. In addition there are activities for cutting, colouring, painting, exploring colour, shape and texture, pasting, etc. Children understand where everything is kept and they are able to choose and return things independently and with their friends.

We provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences. All Montessori materials are introduced to a child by an adult or by another child, and while the Montessori adults are always observing

children to see what support each child might need, they are very sensitive to allowing children their own initiative as this most often results in children being deeply engaged and peaceful in what they are doing. Adults are always trying to find exactly the right moment to introduce a child to something new so that they have enough time to master something but also are always being gently challenged.

We plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development is supported by using the international Montessori curriculum and materials that have been proven through research to be effective with children from all socio-economic and cultural groups.

We incorporate indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest and quiet time, into the day, and give consideration to the individual needs of the children by allowing the children to manage a great deal of their day. Children can choose to move about the class carrying things or building things, or sit quietly at a table moving intricate pieces. Children can choose to have snack or a drink when they are hungry or thirsty; they do not have to wait for the whole group. Our classes have large, well equipped outdoor environments, that children access in groups twice each day.

We foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children by having regular group meetings with parents to explain what is happening in the classrooms, inviting parents in to observe their children, writing monthly class newsletters and sending home little explanations of the creations that children bring home. Parents can access their child's teacher by leaving a voicemail/email or by chatting briefly at the door during arrival and dismissal. We also have whole school events where the parents of the younger children can meet and discuss their child's experience with parents of older children.

We involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families and staff. We welcome specialists from CCAC and find spaces for them to work with our children and we meet with the parents and these specialists as necessary.

We support our staff and others who interact with the children in relation to continuous professional learning by having an annual policy review meeting in the fall, at which time all staff review and complete all necessary documentation required by ONTARIO REGULATION 137/15. Our staff also set goals for themselves in discussion with their direct reports and we plan for how to support them in the achievement of those goals. We have a budget dedicated to Professional Development that any staff person can access depending on their particular needs. We have three Professional Development days set aside each year where staff are encouraged to either work together and plan for improvements or attend workshops/conferences. Our Vice Principal and Principal walk about the school regularly, observing in classes and then engaging the staff in conversation about their observations. We also meet monthly to discuss ongoing issues or topics of particular interest. Each staff member also spends time three times per year observing in another's class.

We document and review the impact of the above strategies on the children and their families through observation, conversation, meetings, surveys, etc.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **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.

### **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 all school members, including staff, students and parents; endeavour to reinforce the following areas in the children’s social interactions with others, through role-modeling of correct behaviour and by practicing the following:

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 quietly 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.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

**The Board** provides direction to the school that ensures opportunity, excellence and accountability.

- 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 Principal and Vice Principal**, take a leadership role in the daily operation of the school. The Principal and Vice Principal provide 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 and Vice 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 upholds 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, following uniform policy for Casa through Middle School students;
- 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;
- advise the school immediately in writing of any changes to contact information, including address, email address, phone contact, emergency contacts, and pick-up authorization;
- advise the school immediately in writing of any changes in health, specifically, allergies, medications (even if only administered at home), doctor contact information and specially dietary requirements;
- advise the school immediately of any results of testing that may influence a child's performance in school, including but not limited to hearing tests, vision tests, speech assessments, developmental assessments and psycho-educational assessments. The school should be given copies of any assessments which include school recommendations;
- advise the school immediately in the case of separation or divorce and provide documentation of any custody agreement.

Police and community members are essential partners in making our schools and communities safer.

## **Standards of Behaviour**

### **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.

### **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 Principal or Vice Principal and contacts the parents. An appropriate consequence is decided on and recorded.

**Step 3** If misbehaviour continues, the student, the teacher, the parents and Principal/Vice Principal 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 Principal on behalf of the Board:

- swearing;
- destruction of school materials or property;
- fighting, punching, hitting, kicking 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 and cyber bullying.

### **Consequences for Serious Offences:**

In the following instances, police can 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 premise;
- Activities engaged in by the student on or off school property that cause the student's continued 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 Infant, Toddler, Preschool 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. An Elementary student is expected to abide by the Code of Conduct and, while we will continue to correct unacceptable behaviour, Elementary students are held to a higher level of expectation and, therefore, are subject to the penalties mentioned above. Teachers, parents and Administration,

working together, will ensure a safe and happy learning environment for all children at the Montessori Country School.

### **Suspensions, Expulsion and Withdrawal**

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).

### **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)

## **RULES OF THE SCHOOL**

### **Attendance**

Children shall arrive at school prior to the time designated for the commencement of classes and be picked up at the time designated for the completion of classes.

### **Waitlist Policy**

The Montessori Country School does not charge a fee to be placed on a wait list to obtain a child care space. Families who have inquired with us and wish to be placed on our wait list will need to inform us by submitting the application form and registration fee (which will only be cashed upon acceptance into the school) either in person or by e-mail.

Our wait list will be organized by age group, the date care is required and the date of the request to be placed on the list.

Any time it is confirmed that a space is becoming available for a date close to the time care is needed, we will contact the first name on the list either via telephone or email to discuss their continued need/desire to enroll. If we do not reach you in person, we will wait 48 hours before going on to the next name.

To obtain a space by the date required, you will be offered spaces up to a month before should they become available earlier than your desired start date or longer if you have indicated your flexibility. The parent will confirm within 48 hours if they want the space, or not, and if they wish to proceed. If the parent agrees to the space, a letter of acceptance will be sent via email, with confirmation of

the starting date. At this time, the non-refundable registration fee will be cashed. We cannot guarantee a space later than the date we have on record as available but may be able to delay start in some situations. Should you turn down the available space we will go on to the next family on the wait list.

Priority is given to siblings of children in the centre, as well as, families with more than one child waiting to enroll should spaces become available in the appropriate age groups.

To ensure transparency, should you want to check where you are on our wait list please call and we will be glad to share your status with you. Confidentiality of others on the wait list will be maintained.

One week prior to start date, we require the first month's fees for your child. This confirms with us that you continue to want/need the child care space and assists us in being able to offer spaces to others on the wait list as they become available. These fees are non-refundable should you decide later that you no longer require the space as we have held it for you and, very likely, turned down other applicants.

Please note – the sooner you register when a spot does become open the better able you are to obtain the space you need.

### **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. Please see payment policy and Terms of Admissions below:

**Tuition:** For the school year, all tuition payments are required to be given to the office in the form of post-dated cheques (as per the payment option schedule) before the child starts school. Payments not received will result in the student not considered registered until all post-dated cheques have been received.

**Ancillary Services:** ancillary services, such as clubs, hot lunch, day use extended, resource, music lessons, etc. will be billed on a monthly basis. We will be processing all ancillary charges at the end of each month by **credit card only**. We hope that this system reduces the need for the office to chase parents for small amounts outstanding and eliminates the small cheques and cash. This will also provide parents a simple record of all ancillary services that were purchased in the month and be easier for making claims at tax time. It also eliminates the need to prepay for daily extended services. We are very excited to continue this service as it will allow us to spend less time reconciling accounts and more time being of service to our students. **All families must have a credit card form on file before the student will be considered registered.**

### **Terms of Infant/Toddler Admission**

#### **General Terms**

- I. The non-refundable registration fee of \$200.00 must accompany the application for new children only (only cashed upon acceptance into the program).
- II. The school reserves the right to accept or reject this application.

- III. Tuition Fees are payable in accordance with the “Annual Tuition Schedule”, a copy of which is enclosed.
- IV. The child is enrolled until withdrawn (see terms below).
- V. The parents acknowledge and agree that they must provide a minimum of 30 days written notice of the withdrawal. If 30 days written notice is not provided, payment in lieu of notice is required. The parent will be responsible for payment of all services rendered (paid or payable) up to the date of withdrawal (including the required notice period). The School will return post-dated cheques or refund tuition fees for services not rendered after the notice period. Parents are not entitled to further reduction or refunds of tuition fees for reasons including, but not limited to; absence, voluntary withdrawal, suspension, cancellation, non-attendance, payment default, expulsion or otherwise.
- VI. The school has and reserves the right to cancel enrollment and/or expel the student if fees remain outstanding. The parent will remain responsible for payment of all tuition fees, as outlined in Clause 5.

#### **Financial Terms:**

- I. Payment of tuition fees may be made by cash, cheque, Visa/Mastercard, debit card or pre-authorized debit. A 2.0% charge applies to all Visa/Mastercard payments.
- II. A Sibling discount outlined on the “Tuition Fee Schedule” will be applied for each additional child from the same family registered in the school. This discount is conditional on all tuition fees being paid by their due dates.
- III. Postdated cheques for the entire year must be submitted upon acceptance of the application to complete enrollment process.
- IV. A \$50.00 service charge will apply to any item that does not clear the bank for any reason. If two cheques are returned for any reason, we will require that we be supplied with a Visa or Mastercard number or that all future payments of any sort be made by Certified Cheque or Bank Draft.
- V. Interest will be charged at a rate of 4.5% per month on all overdue accounts, commencing fifteen days after their due date.

#### **Terms of Preschool/Casa Admission**

##### **General Terms:**

- I. The non-refundable registration fee of \$200.00 must accompany the application for new children only (only cashed upon acceptance into the program).
- II. The school reserves the right to accept or reject this application.
- III. Tuition Fees are payable in accordance with the “Annual Tuition Schedule”, a copy of which is enclosed. A personalized Tuition Schedule will be created upon acceptance. Ancillary Fees are payable in accordance with the “Ancillary Fees” schedule, a copy of which is enclosed.
- IV. The child is enrolled for the entire school year and the parents hereby agree to and are therefore liable and responsible to pay the full year’s tuition (or the balance thereof if the child is enrolled following the commencement of the school year).

- V. The parents acknowledge and agree that should the child be withdrawn from the school prior to the end of the school year, parents must provide a minimum of 30 days written notice of the withdrawal. If 30 days written notice is not provided, payment in lieu of notice is required. The parent will be responsible for payment of all services rendered (paid or payable) up to the date of withdrawal (including the required notice period). The School will return post-dated cheques or refund tuition fees for services not rendered after the notice period, less the 10% non-refundable deposit. Parents are not entitled to further reduction or refunds of tuition fees for reasons including, but not limited to; absence, voluntary withdrawal, suspension, cancellation, non-attendance, payment default, expulsion or otherwise.
- VI. The school has and reserves the right to cancel enrollment and/or expel the student if fees remain outstanding. The parent will remain responsible for payment of all tuition fees, as outlined in Clause 5.

#### **Financial Terms:**

- VI. A 2% discount will be applied to all tuition fees for applications using the single payment method.
- VII. Payment of tuition fees may be made by cash, cheque, Visa/Mastercard, debit card or pre-authorized debit. A 2.0% charge applies to all Visa/Mastercard payments.
- VIII. A Sibling discount outlined on the “Tuition Fee Schedule” will be applied for each additional child from the same family registered in the school. This discount is conditional on all tuition fees being paid by their due dates.
- IX. If parents choose the Monthly payment plan, post-dated cheques for the entire school year must be submitted upon acceptance of the application to complete enrollment process.
- X. A \$50.00 service charge will apply to any item that does not clear the bank for any reason. If two cheques are returned for any reason, we will require that we be supplied with a Visa or Mastercard number or that all future payments of any sort be made by Certified Cheque or Bank Draft.
- XI. Interest will be charged at a rate of 4.5% per month on all overdue accounts, commencing fifteen days after their due date.

#### **Terms of Elementary School Admission**

##### **General Terms:**

- I. The non-refundable registration fee of \$200.00 must accompany the application for new children only (only cashed upon acceptance into the program).
- II. The school reserves the right to accept or reject this application.
- III. Tuition Fees are payable in accordance with the “Annual Tuition Schedule”, a copy of which is enclosed. A personalized Tuition Schedule will be created upon acceptance. Ancillary Fees are payable in accordance with the “Ancillary Fee” schedule, a copy of which is enclosed.
- IV. The child is enrolled for the entire school year and the parents hereby agree to and are therefore liable and responsible to pay the full year’s tuition (or the balance thereof if the child is enrolled following the commencement of the school year).
- V. The parents acknowledge and agree that they intend to enroll their child for the entire school year. In the unlikely event where a withdrawal of an Elementary student in the middle of the

year is necessary for any reason, the parent will be required to provide a minimum of 30 days written notice of withdrawal. If 30 days' notice is not provided, payment in lieu of notice is required. The parent is responsible for payment of all services rendered (paid or payable), plus 55% of the total unused tuition for the remainder of the school year. As such, the school will return 45% of unused tuition, less the 10% non-refundable deposit, by returning post-dated cheques or providing a refund cheque to the parents. Parents are not entitled to further reductions or refunds of tuition fees for reasons including, but not limited to; absence, voluntary withdrawal, payment default, suspension, cancellation, non-attendance, dismissal, expulsion or otherwise.

- VI. The school has and reserves the right to cancel enrollment and/or expel the student if fees remain outstanding. The parent will remain responsible for payment of all tuition fees, as outlined in Clause 5.

### **Financial Terms:**

- I. A 2% discount will be applied to all tuition fees for applications using the single payment method.
- II. Payment of tuition fees may be made by cash, cheque, Visa/Mastercard, debit card or pre-authorized debit. A 2.0% charge applies to all Visa/Mastercard payments.
- III. A Sibling discount outlined on the "Tuition Fee Schedule" will be applied for each additional child from the same family registered in the school. This discount is conditional on all tuition fees being paid by their due dates.
- IV. If parents choose the Monthly payment plan, post-dated cheques for the entire school year must be submitted upon acceptance of the application to complete enrollment process.
- V. A \$50.00 service charge will apply to any item that does not clear the bank for any reason. If two cheques are returned for any reason, we will require that we be supplied with a Visa or Mastercard number or that all future payments of any sort be made by Certified Cheque or Bank Draft.
- VI. Interest will be charged at a rate of 4.5% per month on all overdue accounts, commencing fifteen days after their due date.

## **ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE**

### **Parking Lot**

Anyone coming to the Montessori Country School must enter the property via the posted entrance driveway and exit via the posted exit driveway. Our parking lot has a posted speed limit of 10 km/hr. This is to ensure the safety of small children who sometimes get away from their parents. We expect all persons using the parking lot to respect the posted limit. Failure to abide by these procedures will result in a written notice.

### **Entry to & Exit from School Building**

All parents must enter and exit the school via the main front doors (by main office). We require the cooperation of all MCS families in order to ensure school security. Breaches of this policy are unacceptable. All doors other than the main front doors are locked from the outside and are

considered fire exits only. Students may only use doors other than the front doors under teacher supervision and may leave via main front doors only under the supervision of a parent/guardian.

**Morning Extended Program: 7:00 – 8:30 a.m.**

- Parents are to park and bring their child(ren) directly to the Extended room and ensure that the Extended staff know the child has arrived
- Infants and Toddlers go outdoors to the Toddler playground (weather permitting) or to the Gross Motor Room - Rm. 103
- Preschool, Casa and Elementary students go outdoors to the Casa playground (weather permitting) or to their classroom

**Drop off: 8:30 – 9:00 a.m.**

- Any 3<sup>rd</sup> year Casa and Elementary students arriving at the school during this time must use the Drop Off system
- Infant, Toddler, Preschool and Casa 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> year parents must still park and bring their child into the school and check in with the teaching staff
- Parents are to pull up to the curb where the child(ren) are safe to get out of the car and into the school
- Parents do not need to leave their vehicles – in fact, the process is expedited by parents remaining in their vehicles
- Once your child has entered the building you may continue through the drop off loop and out the exit
- Once inside the school, students can proceed to their classrooms. Young children will be escorted by the staff who is inside the front foyer, if necessary

**Late Arrival: after 9:00 a.m.**

- Parents are encouraged to make every effort to get their child(ren) to school on time
- Students arriving after 9:00 a.m. must sign-in their child and get a late slip from the office to give to their teacher and will be accompanied to their classroom by an MCS staff member (if necessary)
- Parents arriving after 9:00 a.m. must leave any communication for the teacher with the office as classes are in session at this time and are not to be interrupted

**Pick Up for Half Day Children: 1:00 p.m.**

- Toddler, Preschool and Casa children who are half day can be picked up directly from their classroom by **no later than 1:00 p.m.**
- **Please make sure to sign your child out with supervising teacher**

**Pick Up for Full Day Children: 3:45 – 4:00 p.m.**

- Parents may park and enter the school to pick up their children. Infant, Toddler, Preschool and Casa children will be outside in their respective playgrounds. Elementary students will be in their classrooms.

**Early Pick Up: 9:01 a.m. – 3:45 p.m.**

- Parents wishing to pick up their child between 9:01 a.m. and 3:45 p.m. must sign in at the office. We will have a log for you to sign that will ask for the time and your reason for picking up early. **While you are filling this out, our Admin. Assistant will call your child to the office.**

**Extended Pick Up: 3:45 – 6:00 p.m.**

- Any children not picked up by 3:45 p.m. are taken to our After School Extended programs
- Infant and Toddler Extended will be in the playground (weather permitting) or in the Gross Motor Room – Rm 103
- Preschool and Casa Extended will be in the playground (weather permitting) or their classroom. At 5:00, all remaining children gather in Room 217
- Elementary will be in the Elementary Playground (weather permitting) or in the Library. At 5:30, remaining students will be in Room 217
- Anyone picking up a child during these hours who is not the child's parent, whether or not they are on the pick-up list, must check in at the office in order for the child to be released to them.

**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. Parents coming to drop off or pick up their children to Extended programs must understand that the first priority of the Extended staff is to monitor the safety of, and attend to the needs of, the children in the program. Parents are to make sure to check their children in and out of these programs but are not to linger, as the supervisors must get back to the children. Parents are to pick up at the door of the classroom or at the deck of the playground, and are not to enter the program areas. Children are welcome to take home a snack that has already been served but not eaten in a provided Ziplock bag.

**SECURITY****Authorization to Pick Up Child**

No child will be released to a person other than the child's parents, or persons authorized by parents (i.e. on pick up list), 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 and/or child's profile sheet, 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 Admin Assistant in the office. Once we know the person on the list, we will not continue to ask for identification. 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 get a pick up pass from the office in order to have your child released to them. This pass ensures our staff that identification has been verified and permission was given by the parents.

**Door Security System**

To help ensure the safety of our children and staff, we have a keypad entry security system. Please keep in mind that the effectiveness of the door security system depends on all of us! For example, we can only ensure unauthorized persons are not able to enter the premises if we use the system

wisely. We ask that you do not hold the door open for others. All parties must use the main front doors for entry and for exit as well.

Everyone entering the school at times other than drop off (8:30 – 9:00 a.m.) will need to enter their code into the keypad.

There is a two way speaker system installed beside the key pad system. If you are having trouble with your code, please use the buzzer. This is also to be used by delivery people and visitors. Visitors will then be asked to sign in with the office and will be given a visitor pass.

Codes may be changed periodically throughout the year. New cards with your code on them will be issued at such times.

### **CLOTHING**

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

Each child registered in an Infant, Toddler, Preschool or Casa class will require one of our canvas school bags to hang on their hook for storage of spare clothes etc.

Please supply a pair of gym 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, including rain pants/splash pants for the fall and spring. 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, even Elementary students may wish to come equipped with a change of clothes on "soggy" days.

There is a "Lost & Found" in the main foyer, in the area of the hall that leads out to the Casa & Toddler playgrounds. Please check this box if items are missing.

### **TOYS, ELECTRONICS AND JEWELRY**

To avoid loss, children should not bring toys, electronics and jewelry 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 "news" 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 devices, including cells phones, will not be permitted at the Montessori Country School.

### **"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.

## **WEATHER AND SCHOOL CLOSURE**

In case of extremely severe weather, the school may be closed. We will send an email blast to all parents informing you of the closure on or before 6:30 a.m. If in doubt, please call the school number any time after 6:30 a.m. There is a notification on the main line to go to extension 21 for news of school closure on inclement weather days.

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.

## **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 the Arbour Restaurant on Highway 27. Parents would be notified via an email, as well as, a phone call.

## **NUTRITION POLICY**

A nutritious snack will be provided in the before care, morning and afternoon, for all Infant, Toddler, Preschool and Casa children. Elementary students can bring healthy snacks in their lunch and have them at their classroom snack table in the morning and afternoon. **No candies, carbonated drinks, chocolate or gum** are allowed in the school.

Elementary children, who are not enrolled in the hot lunch program, are to bring their own lunch and milk, juice or another nutritious beverage. Please ensure the lunch is packed with an ice pack so the food stays fresh. We try to encourage good eating habits and the inclusion of cakes and other sweets make it difficult for the child to concentrate on eating the nutritious foods first. It also causes rivalry among the children. **Please pack lunches in reusable containers whenever possible. We aim for a garbage-free lunch box!**

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, parents must order birthday snacks through the office to be made in our on-site kitchen. Due to allergies and nutrition guidelines, classrooms cannot accept outside food.

## **Lunch Snacks**

Classroom teachers check lunches daily to make sure they conform to our Nut Free and Nutrition Policies. The following is a list of acceptable prepackaged, nut free snacks that may make preparing lunches a little easier for parents:

- Betty Crocker Fruit Rollups
- Del Monte Fruit Cups, Fruit Gels and Rich and Creamy Pudding Cups
- Jello Puddings
- Hunt's Puddings
- Kellogg's Milkcrunch Bars, Nutrigrain Cereal Bars, Original Rice Krispie Squares, Special K Bars
- Nabisco/Christie Air Crisps, Animal Crackers, Arrowroot Cookies, Crispers, Fig Newtons, Original Ritz Crackers, Premium Plus Crackers
- Dare Bear Paw Cookies (oatmeal, apple, banana), Breaktime Cookies, Simple Pleasures Cookies, Maxi Fruits, Normandy Cookies, Breton Crackers, Vinta Crackers
- Melba Toast
- Hollandia Cookies
- Sun-Rype Fruit to Go Fruit Bars
- Peak Freans Family Digestive Cookies, Fruit Cremes, Nice Cookies, Shortbread Cookies
- Pepperidge Farm Goldfish Crackers
- Quaker Crispy Minis Rice Chips

The above list is a sample of safe, readily available snacks for your child's lunch. These snacks should comprise a very small portion of the lunch. All lunches should include a nutritious main course, fruit/vegetable and healthy drink (carbonated beverages are not acceptable). Teachers will be encouraging children to finish the main portion of their lunches before starting on treats. Unfinished portions of lunches will be returned to parents so that parents can monitor their child's eating habits. Unfortunately, we cannot return uneaten portions of lunches from the Kitchen.

## **COMMUNICATION POLICY**

### **Office Hours**

The school office is open each business day from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. If we happen to be unavailable when you call, please leave a message on our voicemail so that we can get back to you. If you wish to speak to the Principal (Sarah Enright) or Vice Principals (Christina Corsetti or Joanne Hastie), please make an appointment through the Admin Assistant (Nina Schembre).

### **School Communications**

All correspondence with parents will be through email and the website. Parents are required to complete an email information sheet (upon registering) and update the office of any changes to your email. Every Friday, the Administrative Assistant will send an email to the MCS community with all newsletters, forms, calendars, notices, updates, reminders, etc. Invoices and statements will be processed and delivered to your child's mailbox.

### **Parent-Teacher Meetings and Report Cards (Progress Reports)**

Parent-Teacher meetings are held three times during the school year for parent-teacher interviews. Appointments will be scheduled after school and in the evening. Parents are expected to attend all three scheduled parent-teacher interviews and be available to meet with the teachers, at mutually convenient times, should specific concerns arise. 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 or by contacting the teacher by email (see [Email Policy](#) below and [Contact List](#) on pages 3 & 4), as well as by speaking to the teacher directly at pick up time.

If you have any questions or any problems at all, please do not hesitate to call the Principal (Sarah Enright), Vice Principals (Christina Corsetti or Joanne Hastie) or Administrative Assistant (Nina Schembre). We would appreciate it if you do not tie up the teachers' time during class hours. Observation in the classroom is possible (and encouraged) between October through November and February through May.

Progress Reports will be sent home twice a year, in December and June. Parent-teacher interviews will be held in October, December, and April. The October interviews are intended for new parents to get a sense of how their child is adjusting to the classroom and for the parents and teachers to set goals for the year. The December conference is intended to inform parents of the progress thus far. Upper Elementary students are expected to attend all Parent-Teacher Conferences with their parents.

### **Email Policy**

Parents are welcome to contact the classroom teachers and specialist teachers through email to set-up appointments or to express general information that is not time sensitive. As the first priority of the teacher is to attend to the children, access to the computer is limited and we can only guarantee a response time of 2 business days. Therefore, if you email a teacher on Monday you can expect a response by the end of the day on Wednesday or if you email on Friday the response will be by the end of the day on Tuesday. Concerns or timely information should be transmitted through the front office or directly to the teacher via telephone or in person. Changes to pick-up routines should only be expressed through the office (e.g. Emergency contacts). Teachers will also use email to contact you to set-up a meeting, or for reminders such as interview days or special events. Please see email contact list under staff listing.

### **P.D. DAYS/ SCHOOL HOLIDAY PROGRAMS/ SCHOOL CLOSURES**

The Infant, Toddler, Preschool and Casa programs are open all year, on every day but Statutory holidays. For the Elementary program, we have three scheduled days for Professional Development during the school year. This is a time for our teachers to attend staff development workshops arranged by the Administration at the Montessori Country School. Contact with other educators within the Montessori community and beyond is vital to the assessment and development of our own program. While we hesitate to inconvenience schedules of busy parents, our responsibility to the children and the school necessitates working days of this nature. Teachers are also required to do other professional development over the course of the year but a supply teacher will fill in on these occasions.

The school is closed for all statutory and civic holidays (Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Year's Day, Family Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, August Civic Holiday, Labour Day). During PD days, December Break and March Break, Elementary camps may be available. Notification for these camps will be sent to parents two week prior.

### **OFF-SITE and FIELD TRIPS**

Students under the age of 3 will have in-house field trips and will not leave the school campus. Children in Casa and Elementary will have both in-house and off-site trips. For each trip, parents will be given a permission form with the date, details of the trip, transportation and any other pertinent information. The permission forms must be signed and returned by the date noted on the form before the child would be permitted to attend the trip.

Occasionally, we require parent volunteers to accompany us on off-site field trips. Parents are required to have a Vulnerable Sector Check on file in the office (please see the Policy Regarding Vulnerable Sector Check). Also, parents and staff are to adhere to the Supervision Policy for Volunteers. Please note: volunteers will be supervised at all times and not left alone with the children.

### **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). For subsequent years, the volunteer must sign the declaration form. New Vulnerability Sector Checks are required every 5 years.

### **ILLNESS AND SCHOOL ABSENCES**

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, extension 21. Any parents who do not contact the school when their child is absent will be contacted by the school.

### **Medical Forms**

If you did not submit a Medical Form along with your initial Application, you need to do this before 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/her 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 lunchbox.** Also, please note that we are only able to administer medication that has been prescribed by a doctor.

## **Illness**

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.

Please keep a child who has a fresh cold, with a runny nose and/or 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.).

We will post alerts outside any classroom where children are currently ill with communicable disease or conditions (i.e. chicken pox, strep throat, head lice, etc.) so parents can keep an eye on their child for possible signs and symptoms. Please remember that in the case of many diseases, their contagious period is BEFORE there are any symptoms, so children will be exposed to potential diseases, despite the best efforts of parents and the school to monitor for illness and keep sick children at home.

## **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.

<b>Fever</b>	If present within the previous twenty-four hour period Auxiliary (oral) temperature: 100.4 F (38 C) or higher Especially if accompanied by other symptoms such as vomiting, sore throat, diarrhea, headache and stiff neck, or undiagnosed cough Children must be fever-free and without medication for 24 hours before re-entering the school
<b>Respiratory Symptoms</b>	Difficult or rapid breathing, or severe coughing High-pitched, croupy, or whooping sound after coughing Child unable to lie comfortably due to continuous cough
<b>Diarrhea</b>	Increased number of abnormally loose stools (i.e. liquid or semi-liquid) in the previous twenty-four hours Children must be diarrhea-free and without medication for 24 hours before re-entering the school
<b>Vomiting</b>	More than one episode of vomiting in 24 hour period Children must have not vomited and without medication for 24 hours before re-entering the school
<b>Eye-nose Drainage</b>	Thick mucus or pus draining from the eye or nose

<b>Sore Throat</b>	Sore throat, especially when fever or swollen glands in the neck are present						
<b>Itching</b>	Persistent itching (or scratching) of body or scalp						
<b>Skin Problems</b>	Skin rashes, undiagnosed or contagious Skin patches - crusty, yellow, dry or gummy areas of skin						
<b>Appearance/ Behaviour</b>	Child looks or acts differently: is unusually tired, pale, lacking appetite, tearful, irritable, feels general discomfort or just seems unwell						
<b>Unusual colour</b>	The symptoms can be found in hepatitis and should be evaluated by a physician: <table border="0" style="margin-left: 40px;"> <tr> <td>Eyes or skin</td> <td>Yellow (jaundice)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Stool</td> <td>Gray or white</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Urine</td> <td>Dark, tea-colored</td> </tr> </table>	Eyes or skin	Yellow (jaundice)	Stool	Gray or white	Urine	Dark, tea-colored
Eyes or skin	Yellow (jaundice)						
Stool	Gray or white						
Urine	Dark, tea-colored						
<b>Head Lice</b>	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 within 1 hour from time of call. If the parent cannot pick up, they should make arrangements for pick up by emergency contact on file.**

**Health Emergencies**

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. The Health Room, where sick children can lie down and rest, is located adjacent to the main office. 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 staff car or ambulance) to the nearest doctor (Dr. Yee) or hospital (Southlake in Newmarket, Etobicoke General or York Central in Richmond Hill) 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 are qualified to give first aid assistance for any minor incidents, including CPR and administration of an Epi-pen.

## **RULES FOR THE CHILDREN**

**The following rules are communicated (as appropriate) to the students by the staff. Support for these rules is expected from the parents:**

1. **Toys and Electronics:** 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.), jewelry and electronics.
3. **Candies, Chocolates, Carbonated Beverages and Gum:** Shall not be allowed 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 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 has a Uniform Policy for students from Casa to Middle School. Infants, Toddlers and Preschool should wear comfortable clothing that allows them the freedom to move and use the washroom with ease. “Dress Down Days” will occur once a month (see yearly School Calendar for dates) and dress even on these days shall adhere to appropriate standards, as stated below.

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

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

## **MCS STUDENT DRESS CODE POLICY**

Please find listed below the uniform items that are required for all MCS Casa, Elementary & Middle School students on a daily basis. No deviation from this dress code will be permitted without notification from the office, which may be scheduled on occasion. Dress Code must be adhered to on all field trips, unless otherwise indicated on field trip permission forms.

## **GIRLS**

### **Gym Uniform Items:**

#### **(Mandatory for Casa & Elementary)**

TOPS (all must be with logo):

One of:

- T-shirt
- Golf shirt (long or short sleeved)

And:

- Sweatshirt (hooded or zippered polo)

BOTTOMS (may be with or without logo):

One of (seasonally appropriate):

- Navy shorts
- Navy sweatpants
- Navy yoga pants
- Navy yoga capris

### **Formal School Uniform Items:**

**(Some items on list also on gym uniform list. All items below are optional for Casa, but Elementary students must wear these more formal items on non-P.E. days)**

TOPS (all must be with logo):

One of:

- White blouse (style varies according to size/age)
- Navy cardigan or vest or pullover or fitted jacket
- Golf shirt (long or short sleeve)
- Sweatshirt (zippered polo)
- Turtleneck
- Navy tunic (it is recommended that girls wear shorts under their tunic in warmer weather re: outdoor play on climbing equipment) \*\*\*Must be purchased from our uniform supplier with school logo on the front

BOTTOMS

One of:

- Casual cotton twill pant, flat front in navy or stone (light beige)
- Navy walking shorts
- Navy skort

FOOTWEAR (for P.E. class and classroom – indoor shoes to be kept at school)

- Running shoes (tie up or Velcro closure only, no flash shoes permitted)

## **BOYS:**

### **Gym Uniform Items:**

**(Mandatory for Casa & Elementary)**

TOPS (all must be with logo):

One of:

- T-shirt
- Golf shirt (long or short sleeved)

And:

- Sweatshirt (hooded or zippered polo)

BOTTOMS (may be with or without logo):

One of (seasonally appropriate):

- Navy shorts
- Navy sweatpants

### **Formal School Uniform Items:**

**(Some items on list also on gym uniform list. All items below are optional for Casa, but Elementary students must wear these more formal items on non-P.E. days)**

TOPS (all must be with logo)

One of:

- White Oxford shirt
- Navy cardigan or vest or pullover or fitted jacket

- Golf shirt (long or short sleeve)
- Sweatshirt (zippered polo)
- Turtleneck

#### BOTTOMS

One of:

- Casual cotton twill pant, flat front in navy or stone (light beige)
- Navy walking shorts

#### FOOTWEAR

- Running shoes (tie up or Velcro closure only, no flash shoes permitted)

**Special Note:** Elementary students may wear their gym uniforms all day on their gym days. Casa students may wear gym uniforms every day.

#### **Dress and Appearance Guidelines for Infant, Toddlers and Preschool and Dress Down Days**

- Shorts, skirts and dresses shall be modest and sufficient length (no more than 2” above the knee)
- Tops should cover shoulders and midriff. No tank tops, spaghetti straps or halter tops
- Pants should not be worn with the waistband below the hips
- Undergarments should not be visible
- No see-through or mesh clothing
- No clothing with written slogans or messages that may be construed to be offensive
- No gang related clothing, accessories or symbols
- Hats are not permitted inside the school
- Sensible footwear for classroom activities

#### **Consequences for Violations of the Student Dress Code and Appearance Policy**

Children who are not wearing the required uniform items daily will be given a reminder notice to take home to their parents. It will need to be signed by the parents and returned to the classroom teacher.

**Casa & Lower Elementary:** 3 such notices in one month will result in a meeting called between the teacher & the parent(s). A repeat will result in a meeting called between the Administration and the parent(s).

**Upper Elementary:** 3 such notices in one month will result in the student meeting with the Principal. A repeat will result in a meeting called between the Administration and the parent(s). Repeat infractions after such a meeting will result in a withdrawal of privileges, as deemed appropriate by the Principal, up to and including a one day in-school suspension.

All MCS students are expected to adhere to the MCS Uniform Policy.

### **THE ROLE OF THE PARENT ACTION COMMITTEE (PAC)**

The PAC is a group of MCS parents who work to make a difference at the school. The PAC volunteer during school events and has organized fundraisers at the school which have contributed to the growth of our music program and to the outdoor environments. All parents are automatically members of the PAC. We hope you join us in building a stronger parent community.

## INFANT/TODDLER DEPARTMENT INFORMATION

### GENERAL DAILY SCHEDULE

WHAT	WHEN		WHERE
	Infant	Toddler	
Morning Extended	7:00 – 8:30 a.m.	7:00 – 9:00 a.m.	Outdoors or Gross motor room (#103)
Montessori Work Period	8:30 – 10:00 a.m.	9:00 – 10:15 a.m.	Classrooms: #101 – Infant #107 – Toddler A #303 – Toddler B
Morning Circle	10:00 – 10:15 a.m.	10:15 – 10:30 a.m.	In child’s classroom
Morning Snack Routine	10:15 – 10:30 a.m.	10:30 – 10:45 a.m.	In child’s classroom
Outdoor Play	10:30 – 11:30 a.m.	10:45 – 11:45 a.m.	Toddler playground (Gross motor room if indoor due to rain or excessive cold)
Lunch Routine	11:30 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.	11:45 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	In child’s classroom
Nap Time	12:15 - 2:30 p.m.	12:30 – 2:30 p.m.	In child’s classroom (length of nap depends on child – avg. time 2 hours)
Afternoon Snack Routine	2:30 – 3:00 p.m.	2:30 – 3:00 p.m.	In child’s classroom
Afternoon Circle (winter season, inclement days)/ Outdoor Play	3:30 – 4:30 p.m.	3:30 – 4:30 p.m.	Toddler playground or Gross Motor
Afternoon Extended	4:30 – 6:00 p.m.	4:30 – 6:00 p.m.	Gross motor room (#103) and/or outside (weather permitting)

NOTE: toileting and hand washing routines are part of snack, lunch and nap routines

### PREPARING YOUR CHILD

To make your child’s adjustment to school a happy time for both of you, you may find the following suggestions useful:

1. If your child has not been left away from home before, arrange to leave him at a friend or relative’s home for short periods of time before school starts.
2. When leaving child at school, a positive, confident attitude on the part of the parent is very important.
3. A quick hug & kiss goodbye is most beneficial to the success of your child’s day.
4. Please do not come into the room and linger as it gives your child the impression that you are staying with them. As a result, when you leave, the separation is much worse for your child.
5. Be confident that a staff member will call you if your child is unable to settle.

## **IN THE HOME**

The home is important for continuing the type of learning which the child has begun in the Montessori class. The child can continue his good working habits and enrichment can be provided at his own level of interest. Like the Montessori teacher, Montessori parents should respect the individual interests and aptitudes of their child and try to provide the best conditions for his development. By working alongside his mother or father, a child can absorb many useful skills and acquire hobbies of lifelong interest. Parents should take time to explain things to the child in simple terms and let him experiment and participate in daily activities and chores.

## **ADJUSTMENT PERIOD**

A positive, confident attitude on the part of the parent is very important when a child starts school. This can be a very difficult time for parents too, particularly if the child is upset. We have observed that for a parent to stay and watch their child only prolongs the anxiety and it is easier on the child to say a calm goodbye and leave. However, be sure your child understands you will be back to pick him up in a few hours. We will contact you if your child is upset and does not calm down within a reasonable time frame.

## **FULL DAY ATTENDANCE**

Infant and Toddler children who attend full day will have an afternoon nap, snack and an additional circle and/ or recess time.

## **CHANGES TO ENROLMENT**

Parents may wish to make changes to their child's enrolment during the year. If so, please ask the class teacher or at the office for a "Request for Change to Enrollment" form. Submit the completed form to the office and the Vice Principal will contact you about availability for the change you request. The Principal will make arrangements for changes to fees for you by providing a quote. You will receive written confirmation of the request indication whether it has been approved, denied or waitlisted.

## **CHILD PROFILE SHEETS**

A Child Profile Sheet is included in the Orientation Package. This form must be completed and handed to the child's teacher during the phase-in visits, prior to the child starting school. These forms allow the teachers to have full and current contact information, health information, relevant personal information such as eating habits, toileting routines, first language, etc. Teachers will ask for updated forms each term but please let the teacher or office staff know if there are any changes to the information between update requests.

## **CURRICULUM**

### **The Infant Program – Ages 12 to 18 months**

Children between 12 and 18 months are introduced to our school through the Infant program. This program acts as a bridge between the home and school environment. It is a warm and welcoming environment where teachers focus on physical and psychological development and help children to reach their full potential by fostering their growing independence. A 1:3 ratio is maintained, with the Head Teacher having Montessori Toddler qualifications and an assistant holding an ECE qualification.

Our teachers and assistants are patient, kind and caring individuals who will help your child develop a routine, guide social interaction, provide stimulating activities, monitor your child's developmental progress and care for all your child's needs. Gross motor and fine motor activities are part of the daily routine. We encourage children to choose their "work" and guide their own learning through exploration of the Montessori materials in the classroom. Age appropriate materials are provided to enhance the infant's language, cognitive and motor skill development with a focus on developing independence. Curriculum areas of Practical Life, Sensorial, Language Development and Gross Motor Development are described below. In Infant, the Language Development area concentrates on language acquisition (vocabulary).

### **The Toddler Program – Ages 18 to 30 months**

At around 18 months, your child is ready to be introduced to the Montessori Toddler program. This program has 4 main curriculum areas and includes toilet training. The class ratio is 1:5 and the Head Teachers have Montessori Toddler qualifications and one assistant holds an ECE diploma. The goals of the Toddler program are as follows:

1. Care of self (increased independence, including toilet training)
2. Care of the environment (putting materials where they belong, so everyone can always find them)
3. Development of hand-eye coordination
4. Development of vocabulary, language skills
5. Development of gross motor skills
6. Development of Grace and Courtesy
7. Development of independent work habits, including making independent work choices
8. Gradual separation from the primary caregiver

**Practical Life** exercises will help develop independence, increase concentration and help develop fine motor skills. The materials are attractive to the child and respond to their desire to master everyday skills such as opening and closing containers, manipulating locks & keys or nuts & bolts, buttoning and zippering, pouring, scooping, self-care and care for their indoor/outdoor environment.

**Sensorial** materials isolate specific sensory concepts, such as size, colour, shape, sound, texture, etc. Children learn the language associated with these concepts and learn how to make sense of their environment.

**Language** exercises at this level are mostly designed to enhance vocabulary. Children will learn to associate an object to its name and discover the difference between concrete and abstract. These activities will make it possible for the child to speak in a precise way and it will aid in growth and independence. As a child is seen to be ready, they would also begin work to prepare their hand for writing (early metal insets) and learn the phonetic sounds of the alphabet letters.

**Culture** exercises include the exploration of History, Geography and Science at an age appropriate level. In History the focus is on days, months and special events. In Geography we explore the Globe, Map of the World and animals of the world. In Science we do age appropriate experiments and learn about the 3 elements of the earth.

**Gross Motor** development is a daily component of the Toddler program. They will visit the Gross Motor room every day to play on specially designed equipment that helps develop coordination and muscle strength.

In addition to the Toddler curriculum, children will receive French instruction once a week, as well as weekly visits to the gym. Outdoor Education and School Visits also enrich their experience.

**Kindermusik Program for Infants and Toddlers**

All our Infant and Toddler children are automatically enrolled in the Kindermusik program called *ABC Music & Me*. Parents have online access to the Kindermusik Program so you can enjoy listening to the new songs your child is learning each month. Playing music in the car or at home will further encourage the development of your child's musical skill and appreciation.

## **PRESCHOOL and CASA DEPARTMENT INFORMATION**

### **EXTENDED HOURS**

MORNING EXTENDED 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. outside or in child's classroom

AFTERNOON EXTENDED 4:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. outside or in child's classroom  
5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. in Rm. 217

### **FULL DAY ATTENDANCE FOR PRESCHOOL AND CASA CHILDREN**

The full day program is available for parents who require full day care for their Preschool or Casa child. During this program, the Preschool and first year Casa children have a rest period for a minimum of ½ an hour. If during this time the child falls asleep, the child will be left to sleep for 1 hour. If the child is awake after the ½ hour rest period, he/she will be permitted to get up and resume work.

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 PRESCHOOL PROGRAM – AGES 2.5 to 4 YEARS**

#### **CASA PROGRAM – AGES 3 TO 6 YEARS**

In the Preschool and Casa classes, the teacher-student ratio is 1:8 and the Head Teacher holds an AMI or MACTE Accredited (AMS/MTC/TMI/etc.) Montessori Teaching Diploma. There are one or two assistant teacher, depending on the number of children in the classroom. If there are two assistant teacher, one of them will be trained as an RECE or a Montessori Casa diploma. In the Casa classroom, children are a mix of 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 Preschool and 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 Specialist subjects. Other Specialist subjects for Preschool and Casa students are French and Physical Education. Children are also visited by the Librarian once a week. 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, Field Trips and a variety of School Visits. We employ a program called **The Virtues Project** to enhance character development and Grace & Courtesy.

<b>General Preschool and Casa Program Daily Schedule</b>		
<b>WHEN</b>	<b>WHAT</b>	<b>WHERE</b>
7:00 – 8:00 a.m.	Morning Extended and drop-off	Outdoors or classroom
8:00 – 11:30 a.m.	Morning Work Period AM Snack, as desired (Within this work cycle, children attend Phys. Ed., French, Music and Library specialist classes. Teachers have posted schedules on hallway bulletin boards.)	Classrooms
11:30 am – 12:30 am	Recess	Casa playground
12:30 pm – 1:00 p.m.	Lunch	Classroom
1:00 p.m.	Half day children to be picked up	Classroom
1:00 – 3:15 p.m.	Afternoon Work Period PM Snack, as desired (3 <sup>rd</sup> year students attend an extra ½ hour session of French instruction once a week)	Classroom
3:15 – 3:30 p.m.	Circle	Casa classrooms
3:30 – 4:30 p.m.	Recess	Casa playground
4:30 – 6:00 p.m.	Extended	Playground and classroom Rm. 217 (from 5-6 p.m.)
<b>Preschool and 1<sup>st</sup> year Casa Program Daily Schedule</b>		
1:00 – 2:15 p.m.	Nap	Preschool - classroom 1 <sup>st</sup> year Casa – Gym or Library
2:15 – 3:30 p.m.	Afternoon Work Period PM Snack, as desired	Classroom
3:30 – 4:30 p.m.	Outdoor Play	Casa Playground
4:30 – 6:00 p.m.	Extended	Playground or classroom Rm. 217 (from 5-6 p.m.)

### **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!

## **ELEMENTARY DEPARTMENT INFORMATION**

### **HOURS AND DAILY ROUTINES**

#### **MORNING EXTENDED**

**7:00 – 8:30 a.m.** Outdoors or Room 217

Children arriving before 8:30 a.m. must use our Extended Hours program. Please do not leave your child unattended. We need you to drop off your child at the Extended room and vacate the parking lot before our drop-off starts at 8:30 a.m.

#### **MORNING DROP OFF**

**8:30 – 9:00 a.m.**

It is mandatory that Elementary students use the drop off system. It is an important part of helping students develop a sense of independence, responsibility and confidence.

#### **WORK CYCLES**

**9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

**1:15 – 3:30 p.m.**

It is important that students arrive to school on time. Lateness interrupts the work cycle and lessons that are being given. It also impacts negatively on specialty classes and affects the child, creating apprehension regarding what has been missed.

#### **LUNCH & RECESS**

**12:00 – 1:00 p.m.**

Students eat in their respective classrooms and then proceed to the Elementary outdoor playground. Please refer to the Nutrition and Lunch Snack sections when preparing your child's lunch bag.

#### **SNACKS**

MCS does not provide snack for Elementary students. Students are welcome to have a snack from their lunch bags throughout the work cycles. Each class has an individual snack table where the students can sit quietly and have a small nutritious snack. Students attending the extended program should bring an additional snack to be eaten from 3:45 – 4:00 p.m., prior to starting the extended program.

#### **WATER**

Students are asked to bring water bottles into the classroom during work cycles and store them on the shelving near the snack table. Each class has a water cooler for refilling water bottles.

#### **DISMISSAL**

**3:45 – 4:00 p.m.**

Please refer to Dismissal Routines section for specific details.

PLEASE NOTE: If you would like to pick your child up early, it is mandatory that you check in with the office so that your child's teacher will be notified. Please do not proceed directly to your child's classroom. This can be disruptive while classes are still in session.

## **AFTER SCHOOL EXTENDED**

- 3:45 – 6:00 p.m.** Lower Elementary and Upper Elementary
- MCS Field 4:00 until 5:30 p.m. (or Library if inclement weather)
  - Room 217 until 6:00 p.m.

MCS offers an after school Extended program for a fee. The Elementary Extended program is held in a separate room from the Casa students but, as numbers decline over the evening, the 2 groups may be combined after 5:30 p.m. The Elementary program will be used for outdoor play, quiet indoor games and independent play.

## **PREPARING YOUR CHILD: HOMEWORK**

At MCS we do not assign daily, traditionally structured homework. We believe in preparing the students to organize their time, both at home and at school. We encourage the students to set goals and find ways to be successful. These skills will help them in their future years and prepare them for life. Time Management can be considered an Elementary Practical Life skill!

We have created a Homework Policy that is designed to expand on topics and skills that students are pursuing in class. Throughout the school year, the students will be given meaningful and interesting assignments. Term projects invite parents and children to research, explore and observe together.

## **ELEMENTARY PROGRAM HOMEWORK POLICY**

At The Montessori Country School we believe that a small amount of homework is important for children. It helps teach them responsibility and it helps them to prepare for future years in school. It also encourages students to become independent learners, to carry out assignment unsupervised and set their own learning targets. Homework is given at the discretion of the teachers, as is appropriate to the needs of the individual child.

Assigned homework should be meaningful, interesting and expand on or reinforce topics being studied in class.

Homework assignments will be given on Mondays and are due back on Fridays. All homework is to be kept in Homework Folder and returned neatly in same folder. All completed work is to be returned on due date to the teacher.

### **Exceptions to this policy are as follows:**

- A larger project requiring more than one week to complete has been assigned
- The teacher determines that a child needs a great deal of assistance in a particular area and in this case the teacher will communicate the specific concerns and time extension given
- Any other exception with permission from the teacher, Vice Principal or Principal (e.g. illness, vacation, out of school event)

We believe that the children along with their parents should develop a regular homework schedule. It is understood that the homework should be completed at a realistic pace over the course of the week. Parents should continue to assist students by supporting a regular homework schedule, checking assignments, and being a study partner when the student requests. The following is a guideline of expectations for each level per weekday.

### **Homework Regulations by Level**

Level One: 10 minutes

Levels Two and Three: 10 – 20 minutes

Levels Four and Five: 30 – 45 minutes

Level Six: 45 – 60 minutes

Students who routinely spend in excess of the time suggested on homework should see the teacher to seek further assistance.

### **Examples of homework assignments may include:**

#### **Music**

- Daily practice on instrument

#### **Math**

- Math fact practice and memorization in preparation for in class challenge
- Assigned pages from workbooks being used in class\*
- Any corrections from workbook or follow up work from class

#### **Language**

- Assigned pages from Communicating Skills workbook from the unit being taught in class\*
- Any corrections from workbook or follow up work from class

#### **Reading**

- Daily reading from books assigned by teacher
- A novel study/book report per term
- Students are expected to routinely engage in recreational reading

#### **Spelling**

- Study assigned spelling list for weekly dictation
- Complete spelling activities and corrections

#### **Handwriting**

- Practice proper handwriting skills in assigned notebook

#### **Culture**

- A specific project on a chosen subject may be assigned and a separate note will be attached outlining expectations and due dates

**\*Please Note:** The students are not to go beyond pages that have been taught and assigned by the teacher.

## **IN THE HOME: WHAT YOU CAN DO HELP YOUR CHILD**

- The home is important for continuing the type of learning which the child has begun in the Montessori class. The child can continue his good working habits and enrichment can be provided at his own level of interest.
- Like the Montessori teacher, Montessori parents should respect the individual interests and aptitudes of their child and try to provide the best conditions for his development. By working alongside his mother or father, a child can absorb many useful skills and acquire hobbies of lifelong interest.
- Parents should take time to explain things to the child in simple terms and let him experiment and participate in daily activities and chores.
- Help your child to be independent and responsible when preparing belongings for the next day.
- Set a common area in the home where items can be placed so that they are readily accessible.
- Create a work space at home that limits distractions.
- Ask your child to think ahead and set a schedule on how to prepare for upcoming due dates.
- Parents are expected to help reinforce the responsibility of the children for completing assignments by the due date.
- Talk to your child about his/her experiences at school.
- If your child is spending an excessive amount of time doing work at home, it is important to contact your child's teacher.
- Experience a variety of projects with your child, not only the ones assigned in class. The following list offers some suggestions. They are from an article written by Tim Seldin, President of the International Montessori Council.
  - ❖ Perform an act of charity or extraordinary kindness.
  - ❖ Plan and prepare dinner for your family with little or no help from your folks.
  - ❖ Plan and prepare a dinner for your family typical of what the ancient Greeks might have eaten.
  - ❖ Read together books that touch the soul and fire the imagination.
  - ❖ Go to a boatyard and learn what you can about different kinds of boats, their purpose, cost, advantages and disadvantages.
  - ❖ Buy some stock and follow its course over time. Pretend that you have a thousand dollars to invest, ten thousand, a million.
  - ❖ Build a square model of the floor plan of your house out of cardboard, one floor at a time. Be as careful and exact as you can.
  - ❖ Prepare a list of all the things that you would like to do with your life: career, cities to visit, mountains to climb, things you want to learn, etc.
  - ❖ Teach your dog a new trick.

- ❖ Build a model of the Parthenon, an aqueduct, or some other historical structure.
- ❖ Plant a garden, tree, some bulbs around your house.
- ❖ Write a play and perform it with some friends for your class.
- ❖ Make puppets with your folks, build a puppet theater and put on a performance. Learn about magic and master a new trick.
- ❖ Build a bridge out of popsicle sticks held together with carpenter's glue that will span a three-foot chasm and support several bricks.
- ❖ Interview your grandparents about their childhood. Write a biography or share what you learn.
- ❖ Using one of the better books on children's science projects, select an experiment or project, carry it out, and prepare a report that documents what you did.
- ❖ Select a city somewhere in the world where you have never traveled. Find out everything that you can.
- ❖ Learn something new and teach it to someone in your class.
- ❖ Meet a real artist and visit his/her studio.
- ❖ Make your own set of constructive triangles, golden beads, or some other familiar Montessori material.
- ❖ Using 1 cm as a unit, build out of clay, wood, or cardboard pieces to make up units, tens, hundreds, thousands, ten thousands, hundred thousands, millions, up to one billion.

## **ADJUSTMENT PERIOD**

If your child is new to MCS or to the Elementary program, please note the following:

- A positive, confident attitude on the part of the parent is very important when a child starts school. This can be a very difficult time for parents too, particularly if the child is upset.
- We have observed that for a parent to stay and watch their child only prolongs the anxiety and it is easier on the child to say a calm goodbye and leave. However, be sure your child understands you will be back to pick him up at the end of the school day.
- We will contact you if your child is upset and does not calm down within a reasonable time frame.

The drop-off system starts right at the beginning of the school year and we request that you start using it as soon as possible. The staff receiving the children will comfort them if they are upset.

## **STUDENT PROFILE SHEETS**

At the beginning of the school year, you will fill out a Student Profile Sheet for each of your children. This form helps us to be aware of and better understand any important details, such as allergies, likes and dislikes, etc. Please note that it is the parents' responsibility to fill out another form throughout the school year should anything change. Copies will be offered at Parent-Teacher Interviews as a reminder to keep these updated.

## **CURRICULUM**

### **The Elementary Program – Ages 6 to 12 years**

At this level, children become intellectual thinkers. Academic standards are high and, while children are still progressing at their own pace, there are clearly defined expectations for each level. The Ministry of Education guidelines are used as a minimum for achievement but our own curriculum is defined in the 3-year age groupings that are integral to the Montessori philosophy. Specific components of the Ministry curriculum may not be covered in the same year, but rather over the 3 years of each level. As such, parents are encouraged to commit to the full 3 years when entering their child into both Lower and Upper Elementary.

A solid understanding of each concept is first ensured through concrete experiences with the hands-on materials. The children then move on to work with more abstracted materials for these concepts, eventually leading to solid conceptual understanding. The Montessori materials are supplemented with the use of carefully selected workbooks, textbooks, reading and spelling programs and computer software. The result is a broad, integrated and comprehensive curriculum which gives the children an academic advantage and prepares them extremely well for the experiences they will encounter when moving on to other schools.

While there is a strong expectation to complete an appropriate amount of class work responsibly and thoroughly, the emphasis is still on the total development of the child. Children have the opportunity for self-expression to pursue their own interests and develop new ones through a rich and varied curriculum.

Most lessons are given to small groups or individuals so that diverse needs, interests and ability levels are easily accommodated. At the same time, daily evaluation and extensive record keeping on the child's progress enables the teacher to assess when a child is ready to move on to the next level of challenge. Thus, there is no limit to the child's accomplishments.

The 1:20 ratio ensures that all students receive the individual attention they require. The classroom teacher holds an undergraduate degree and a TMI/AMI/MACTE accredited Montessori Teaching Diploma. Specialist teachers provide instruction in French (Lower Elementary 2 hours/week, Upper Elementary 2.5 hours/week), Physical Education (3 hours/week), Music (1 hour/week), Art (1 hour/week) and Library (1 hour/week).

The educational program is designed to maximize each student's academic success while, at the same time, teaching the student effective study and research skills and to adapt and learn from mistakes. The children learn to make responsible choices for themselves and discover how to

contribute positively to the world and those around them. Their morals and values are nurtured, in part by **The Virtues Project**, with an emphasis on self-discipline and responsibility. The classroom community allows for the strengthening and refinement of social interactions as children learn to consider their own actions, to resolve their own conflicts peacefully and to use the group process for planning and problem solving.

### **Language**

As children develop their skills in the areas of writing, speaking, reading, literature, grammar, vocabulary, spelling, handwriting, media communications and critical thinking, there are abundant opportunities for self-expression, discussion, dramatization and creative writing. Indeed, language permeates the curriculum in all areas.

### **Mathematics**

Children use an exceptional set of concrete materials and other resources to develop skills in the areas of numeration, place value, the four operations, squaring and cubing, fractions, measurement, time and currency, decimals, algebra, multiples and factors, exponents, percentages, patterning, graphing, data analysis, probability, problem solving and geometry. The materials allow the children to explore patterns and discover rules, gaining a clear understanding of each concept.

### **Cultural Subjects**

Opportunities abound for the study of the Universe, the Earth, Mankind, Natural History and the Arts. The framework for these studies lies in the Story of Life and the Time Line of Life, which represent a panorama of Earth's history. Emphasis is placed on relating science and technology to each other and to the world outside the school.

**Geography** covers the physical characteristics of Earth's different regions and explorations of the social and economic aspects of the world's countries and peoples.

**History** moves from an understanding of time and personal history to a study of early man and great civilizations. Topics of study include The Story of the Universe, the History of Canada and Forms of Government.

**Biology** offers an overview of botanical and zoological classification and the study of how plants and animals meet their needs. Microscopic investigations enhance the understanding of the diversity of living things. Each class has its own raised bed garden to plant and tend.

**Physical Sciences** provide opportunities for logical thinking, hypothesizing and discovering scientific principals as children perform experiments in energy (light, magnetism, electricity and machines) and matter (chemistry). Famous scientists, inventors and scientific instruments are also explored.

**Astronomy** is richly represented in the Montessori curriculum, from studies of the Solar System, to Creation Myths from around the world.

**Visual Arts** encourage imagination and creativity while developing skills through the use of various media for picture making, drawing, sculpture and crafts. Art history and appreciation form the basis for the program.

**Drama** offers opportunities for self-expression and imagination through in-class activities.

**Social and Environmental Issues** are given due consideration through analysis of current events and with our ongoing recycling and composting programs. First-hand experience with nature study in our country setting enhances the study of ecology, conservation and pollution.

### **French**

The children attend in small groups with a qualified French teacher. Using workbooks and textbooks, both oral and written French follow a well-defined curriculum for each level.

### **Physical Education**

Physical fitness, self-image, various skills, cooperation, teamwork and good sportsmanship are promoted through instruction with a Physical Education teacher. In addition to gymnastics, skating, team sports and health education the children participate in track and field events and intramural sports.

**Music** provides the opportunity to learn to read, compose and play music, develop pitch, rhythm and beat and study various composers. Children also develop their vocal skills and instrumental music is introduced in Level 3.

### **Leadership and Community Service**

As students mature they are afforded more opportunities for leadership roles and participate in various community service and outreach experiences.

If you would like to see a copy of the detailed curricula, it is available in the office. Please book an appointment with the Principal if you would like to view it.