

WELCOME to the Montessori School of Champaign-Urbana! We hope the experience your child has here will provide a good foundation and climate for understanding and appreciating the world as he/she encounters it now and, in the years, to come.

This handbook is designed to serve as your guide to the programs and policies of the school. Please keep it on hand for reference throughout the year.

THE SCHOOL

The Montessori School of Champaign-Urbana (the “School”) is owned and operated by the Montessori Society of Champaign-Urbana (the “Society”). The Society is a non-for-profit corporation composed primarily of the parents whose children are enrolled in the School. The Society is non-discriminatory in its membership, and the School is non-discriminatory in its enrollment and hiring practices.

The school uses the principles and philosophies developed by Dr. Maria Montessori, an Italian physician and educator. Special education services are not provided by the School, but arrangements can be made to work with a specialist or consultant provided by the parents.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Board of Directors is composed of at least ten volunteer members, and is the governing and policy-making body of the School. All but the Treasurer are elected by the Society from its membership. Board members serve three-year terms, with approximately one third of the members being elected each year.

The Head of School is hired by the Board of Directors and handles the day-to-day operations of the School. The Head of School is responsible for hiring assistant teachers, full day program teachers, and all support staff of the School. The Head of School, with the assistance of the Board of Directors, hires the Montessori Directresses.

BY-LAWS

Copies of the By-Laws of the Society are available upon request in the School office.

SERVICES, PURPOSED AND GOALS OF THE TODDLER PROGRAM

The names, addresses and telephone number of those persons legally responsible for the toddler program and of those persons having immediate responsibility for the daily conduct of the program are as follows:

Montessori School	1403 Regency Dr E, Savoy, IL	356-1818
Monica Huang	1403 Regency Dr E, Savoy, IL	356-1818
Kathy Ealy	1403 Regency Dr E, Savoy, IL	356-1818
Kasey Boeger	1403 Regency Dr E, Savoy, IL	356-1818
Heather Sears	1403 Regency Dr E, Savoy, IL	356-1818
Janna McDannald	1403 Regency Dr E, Savoy, IL	356-1818

The School **offers** a DCFS certified full day (7:30-5:30), extended day (8:30-2:30) and a morning (8:30-11:30) program for children ages 15 to 36 months, who are walking. **Early morning drop off to the toddler** room (7:30-8:30) is also available as an add on to the other program times. Each toddler class is composed of a maximum of 15 multi-age children (15-36mos) with a Montessori Directress and two assistants. DCFS ratio is 5 toddlers per 1 adult.

The **purpose/goals** of this program are to offer toddlers support for their need to develop independence, concentration, language, order and movement in a safe and loving prepared environment. The classroom provides real experiences and wonderful language opportunities for toddlers by using wood materials, real dishes and utensils and following the child's innate desire to experience the natural world around him. Caring for self, peers and the classroom environment is a part of the toddlers' daily life at the School. The School strives to create an environment that allows the freedom for the toddler to become independent and develop coordination and self-awareness. The toddlers will move into a preprimary classroom at the start of a new school year and after turning 3 years old.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DAILY PROGRAM

The children will come into the classroom and change into slippers (provided by parents) to ease the transition from home to school. Once handwashing is completed they are free to choose works (Montessori call all activities work as the children work to learn through play) off the shelves. Snack is available throughout the morning. Around 10:30 group time is offered, which includes music, movement and story. Outdoor play will follow until 11:25 when all the children return to the classroom. The morning children are dismissed and the extended and full day children prepare for lunch. Rest follows lunch with the extended day children dismissed at 2:30. Full day children will enjoy snack, outdoor play, music, stories and shelf works until dismissal at 5:30.

PARENT EDUCATION AND PARTICIPATION

All parents whose children are enrolled in the School are expected to become familiar with the Montessori Method by reading, visiting the School, attending open houses and attending at least one of the two parent education meetings held in the fall. A child will benefit more if the Montessori approach is carried beyond his/her hours at school. Parents of children in their first year at the School are expected to attend.

Parents are expected to spend time during the year volunteering for the School. Some opportunities include; making learning materials, caring for the building and grounds, providing refreshments for School functions, helping in the School office and library, and serving as a member of the School's Board of Directors. Please be sure to turn in your volunteer skills survey to indicate your preference concerning service to the School. As a non-profit, parent-operated school, we rely heavily on the participation and skills of parents.

Toddler Daily Schedule

- 7:30 Drop off to toddler room for children enrolled in early childcare. Shoes changed and hands washed. Shelf work begins.
- 8:25 Drop off time begins for children enrolled in morning or full-day programs. Shoes changed and hands washed. Shelf work begins.
- 10:30 Group time and prepare for outdoor play.
- 11:00 Outdoor play weather permitting.
- 11:25 Return inside and half day children go home. Prepare for lunch.
- 11:45 Lunch and prepare for nap.
- 12:15 Transition activities to nap. Rest and nap time.
- 2:15 Children in extended day program prepare to leave.
- 2:25 Dismissal for extended day children.
- 2:30 Snack.
- 3:00 Outdoor play, time to be determined as weather permits.

3:30 Return inside for shelf works and story/music.

5:15 Transition for home.

Toilet learning is ongoing throughout the day!

TUITION AGREEMENT

All parents are required to sign a tuition agreement. The agreement, which must be signed by either parents or the custodial parent and returned to the School office, obligates the parents to pay the tuition monthly in the amount specified. Parents are encouraged to read the agreement carefully and to ask questions regarding anything that is unclear before signing.

Please refer to your tuition agreement for your tuition rate. Payments are due the first of each month beginning in August. The School does not send statements or invoices for tuition. Payments not made by the tenth of each month will be subject to a \$25 late fee.

LATE CHARGES

There are late charges for children who are left at the School after the time their program ends. The charge is \$1 for each minute. In case of emergency, the office must be notified to avoid the late charges.

School opens at 7:30 a.m. and closes at 5:30 p.m., please respect our staff by making sure your child is picked up by 5:30 p.m. Late charges begin after 11:40 a.m., 2:35 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.

If a child remains at the school after closing, a staff member will attempt to reach all parties listed on the Emergency Care Form. If no one is available to retrieve the child, after 6:00 p.m., the police and/or Department of Children and Family Services will be contacted.

PLEASE KEEP YOUR EMERGENCY NUMBERS CURRENT!

ACCIDENTS AND MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

Minor accidents are handled by staff members using basic first aid techniques and written accident reports are given to parents at the end of the day. The School does not administer medications or ointments as first aid treatment.

If a child is involved in a major accident or medical emergency, every attempt will be made to contact parents. If such attempts fail, the child, with his/her school folder will be transported to a health care facility. The child will be accompanied by a staff member who will remain with the child until a parent or guardian arrives.

ADJUSTMENT TO SCHOOL

Adjustment is a gradual process. To help each child transition into a school environment parents and teachers will consider factors like the child's age and previous experience away from family. We recommend a consistent daily schedule throughout the year and on time arrival so that your child can participate in the beginning of class with classmates. This settling-in time promotes community spirit and provides for a more positive start to the day for your child and his/her classmates.

ALLERGIES AND ASTHMA

Parents are directed to fill out the emergency information form presented with other enrollment documents at the start of each new school year. This form must be returned to school prior to the first day of class. If allergies are life-threatening or severe, parents must fill out an Allergy Action Plan available in the main office. Due to peanut and nut allergies, do not bring any food to share that contains nuts or peanuts. Oily nut residue is easily spread from hand to hand, and around school surfaces such as lunch tables and educational materials. This policy is designed to minimize the risk of severe allergic reactions, to prepare faculty and staff to deal with allergy emergencies, and to minimize anxiety on the part of all students, faculty, and staff around the issue of food allergies. Specific measures include;

- a) No nuts or nut products are knowingly served by the school.
- b) Children are instructed not to share food.
- c) Hand washing before and after meals and snacks is part of the daily routine.
- d) Tables will be washed after snacks and meals. This is the teachers' responsibility in classrooms or any other schoolroom where food is eaten.
- e) Parents of children with life-threatening allergies must provide the school with a written medical treatment protocol for their child, as well as any medication prescribed by the doctor.

Parents of children with severe allergies are made aware of policies and protocols. A copy of our Allergy Action Plan is available in the front office. The Carle Food Allergy Education Program trains all staff to recognize and treat severe food allergies.

PERSONAL PROPERTY

Children should not bring toys, activities, games or other items to school without the permission of a teacher. Items may be brought for activities such as show and tell, birthdays, or other opportunities as approved by your child's Directress. The School is not responsible for lost, broken, or stolen items. All items brought to school (i.e. sunscreen, nap items, extra clothing, lunchboxes, etc.) should be clearly labeled with the child's first and last name or

initials. Lost items will be placed on the table by the front door. If they are not claimed they will be donated or discarded.

DROP OFF AND PICK UP PROCEDURES

The daily arrival of toddlers at the School shall be conducted in a way that protects each child's physical and emotional well-being. Parents can inform staff of the child's morning so far and will conduct a daily pre-admission screening to determine if the child has obvious symptoms of illness. If symptoms of illness are present, the child's inclusion or exclusion for the day shall be determined in accordance with DCFS.

Parents will sign the daily sign in/out sheet, help the child change into slippers and direct their child to wash hands.

Every child entering the School is capable of walking into the toddler class. Please respect this independence for your child which makes the separation process go more smoothly. Park your car on the street (not in the circle drive or in the staff parking lots). Wish your child goodbye cheerfully and briefly. If you show hesitation, then the child may feel that this isn't a safe or fun place and may feel anxious. We want school to be a wonderful experience for each child and you can help in many ways. If you arrive early for school in the morning, please park on the street and wait with your child. When it is pick up time, please park your car on the street and then walk your child back from her/his classroom.

When you drop your child off and pick them up, please sign your child in and out on the sheet in the classroom. This is a state mandated law. Children must always be walked into school by a parent or other authorized adult and be signed in. You must record the correct time and sign your full name at the start and end of their program. A child who appears to staff to show signs of illness may be excluded from class and will have to be taken home. We will not allow your child to go home with anyone who is not on your emergency form, so please do not send anyone to get your child who is not on this list. Anyone on your emergency list picking up your child must have their ID ready to show the Teacher every time. The time of arrival and departure with your signature next to each is required every day.

ALL CELL PHONE USE IS PROHIBITED IN A SCHOOL ZONE!

Due to state laws, all students are required to use a child safety seat.

VISITOR PARKING

Please park on the street when visiting the school. The curved driveway is a no parking area and must remain clear in case of an emergency.

SIGN-OUT SHEETS

Parents are required by law to sign-in and sign-out with full signature and time each day as they pick up their children.

PICK UP AUTHORIZATION

Children will only be released to a parent or guardian or those persons authorized in writing by the parent or guardian. Please complete the authorization form for those people who will be picking up your child on a regular basis. If you need to make special arrangements, please send a note or email to school that day stating the name of the person who will pick up your child. The school will request photo identification and that person must sign out your child on an authorized release form.

ATTENDANCE

Children are encouraged to attend class regularly so that they can obtain the full benefit of the Montessori method. When possible, the Directress should be notified if a family will be out of town or if a child will be absent for a long period of time. **Please notify the School office when your child is absent because of illness or other reasons.**

BIRTHDAYS AND SEASONAL CELEBRATIONS

The toddlers will celebrate these occasions peacefully! Parents usually provide nutritious snacks and beautiful napkins for the class on their child's birthday and seasonal celebrations. Candy, cake, cupcakes, brownies and other snacks with high sugar content will not be served. Invitations for parties at home are not distributed at school; you may request a class list by an email to the school secretary. The student directory will provide family contact information. Please do not send party favors, piñatas, balloons or treat bags to school. Please contact the Directress for safe treats to bring. The Montessori approach to celebrations reflects calmness and predictability.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Staff members are legally required by the State of Illinois to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the Department of Children and Family Services.

CHILDREN'S RECORDS

Personal information regarding students and their families is confidential and will only be released to other outside the School with written consent from the parents.

CLOTHING

We ask that you send your child to school dressed in comfortable, non-restrictive clothing. It is most important the children learn to remove their own clothing if needed. This leads to confidence and independence. We know how adorable children's clothes can be, but it is in the best interest of the child that they wear loose fitting, casual clothes. Please dress your child in pants with elastic waists (no jeans/pants with buttons or snaps), roomy shirts and, if

needed, short dresses (so the hem does not drag, get stepped on or fall in the toilet!). Please do not send your child in onesies or overalls as this inhibits their independence with toilet training. Short sleeved shirts are preferable in order to maximize your child's success with their work in the environment. We also ask that you send your child with appropriate shoes. In contemplating shoes for your child, please buy something that they can put on and remove on their own, preferably Velcro or slip-on shoes. We also ask that you purchase a pair of "Foam tread" slippers to stay in the classroom for the school year. These slippers allow for independence as the child is helping to remove their outdoor shoes and put on their slippers more than once a day. They also allow for a happy transitional time at the beginning of the school day because it offers a consistent routine they will become comfortable with!

Please bring two spare changes of clothing, (socks, pants/shorts and top) and a package of diapers/pull-ups. Your teacher will let you know when replacement items are needed. **Please label all clothes brought to school, including jackets, hats, mittens, boots, etc....**

TOLIET LEARNING

We are happy to offer our support in the toilet training process. We recognize that children are capable of amazing things at much younger ages than they get credit for, and toileting is one of them! Parents will supply diapers/pull-ups. The school offers a loving, natural environment for a child to learn to use the toilet all by themselves. Your child will have multiple role models as there are many others who are using the toilet with success each day. Once a child acclimates to their environment we recommend sending them to school in pull-ups. The teachers will consistently encourage and remind the child to use the toilet throughout the day. You'll be pleasantly surprised to find your child excitedly indicating when they need to use the toilet and learning how to pull down and up their pants. We want as much success and joy for your child in this development so we'll work closely with you throughout the process. Before you know it, your child will be using the toilet comfortably and will have such pride and joy in their accomplishment! For your information, we use the following terms when speaking to your child about this process: potty, poop, toilet, and bottom. Please be sure to follow suit so there isn't any confusion!

DISCIPLINE

"Freedom within limits" is the core of the philosophy regarding discipline in a Montessori environment. Montessori children enjoy considerable freedom of movement and choice; however, their freedom always exists within carefully defined limits on the range of their behavior. They are free to do anything appropriate within the ground rules of the school community, but they are redirected promptly and firmly if they cross over the line. Preparation of the environment and carefully defined ground rules are key to successful discipline. When a child oversteps these boundaries and redirection does not work, a serious discussion of the situation occurs between the teacher and the student. At this time age appropriate consequences

directly relating to the situation are laid out. Should the child continue to disobey, the consequences will be enforced. For example, if a four-year-old is painting on the wall instead of the easel and refuses to stop when asked, she/he would lose the privilege of using paints for the remainder of the day. If a child is endangering his or her safety or the safety of another person, an adult will intervene immediately and remove the child from the situation. Once the child/children are safe, the teacher can assess the situation and choose appropriate discipline measures. If the child's body is out of control and he or she is unable to respond to redirection, discussion, or consequences the teacher may choose to have the child sit quietly in a calm part of the classroom to regain self-control. When the child is able to return to work calmly he or she may do so, with permission from the teacher. This "time out" should never last more than a minute for a toddler. If the child is unable to respond to the redirection and the "time out" they may be asked to leave school for the day. The safety of our teachers and the other students in the classroom is a top priority of the school. A teacher or staff member only, may administer discipline in the school setting. Our approach to discipline is based on empowerment, mutual respect and trust. Physical punishment is prohibited. Withholding food, rest or sleep as a punishment is prohibited. Methods of discipline or interactions that frighten, demean or humiliate a child are prohibited.

FIELD TRIPS

As the children are quite young, we will not be going on field trips due to safety reasons.

HEALTH CONCERNS

Illness

Sick children should not be brought to School. Please keep your child at home if he/she is feverish, coming down with an illness, or otherwise not feeling well. Your child should not come to School if her/his eyes are red and/or matted. Children with pink eye or conjunctivitis should be kept at home until 24 hours after an antibiotic is started.

If your child has been diagnosed as having a virus or other contagious illness, please keep her/him at home and call the School office immediately. **Children must be clear of fever (without fever reducing medicine) and illness for 24 hours before returning to School.** Children should remain at home for 24 hours after beginning antibiotics for bacterial infections. If your child is tested for suspected strep throat, please keep her/him at home until you are notified that the results are negative or until the child has been on antibiotics for 24 hours. Parents will be contacted to pick up sick children and will be expected to come immediately. Please make sure you have authorized persons to pick up your sick child if you cannot do so. Longer-term illness will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

Chicken Pox

Chicken pox is a highly-contagious airborne virus. Children are most contagious 1 to 2 days before the rash appears and may have mild symptoms like low grade fever, loss of appetite, fussiness, chills, and headaches. Children continue to be contagious while the blisters are erupting. Children must stay home until all the blisters have crusted over and no new blister have appeared within the last 24 hours.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, the chickenpox vaccine is only 70% to 90% effective in preventing chicken pox. If vaccinated children do get chicken pox, they generally have a much milder form of the disease. However, even vaccinated children with a mild case of chicken pox can still infect others and **must** remain home until the rash has fully crusted.

Lice

Children with cases of head lice and/or nits may not attend School until completing treatment. The School recommends Nix cream rinse; however, some strains of head lice are now resistant to the common treatments. Some pediatricians recommend saturating the hair with a mixture of mineral oil and vinegar, leaving it on for one hour, and then combing out the nits. Some treatments are prescriptions and can only be obtained through your physician. Proof of treatment must be provided when the child re-enters the School. Parents are expected to treat the home environment for lice and to comb dead lice/nits from their child's hair before the child returns to School. If you need help in identifying head lice, consult our office or your doctor.

Medication

If a child must take medication during the day, please fill out the appropriate form to authorize the staff to administer medication. These forms are kept in the office. All prescription medications must be in the original containers and must bear labels with the child's name, doctor's name, and directions for dosage. Non-prescription medication must be in the original containers and have labels with the child's name and directions for dosage. The School will not administer aspirin or aspirin substitutes unless a physician's prescription is on file. If your child requires an Epi-Pen for an allergy, please be sure your Pediatrician indicates as such on the Physician's report and bring two (2) Epi-Pens to the front office before the first day of school. Please bring all relevant paperwork from your doctor to be included.

Notice of contagious illness will be posted in the entry way and via email. No identifying information will be released, including classroom name. Please email the secretary if your child is diagnosed with strep, chicken pox or lice so we may post the notice immediately.

INSURANCE

The School carries a student accident insurance policy that provides coverage for students in the event of accidental injury while they are participating in or attending regularly scheduled School activities and during travel to and from regularly scheduled School activities.

MONTESSORI MATERIALS

The Montessori materials in the classrooms are designed to be attractive to the children. Please check your child's pockets and backpacks for School materials that your child might take home. Some of these items are one-of-a-kind objects and cannot be replaced. If a child has taken something home by mistake, please send it back to School with your child as soon as possible. The child will not be scolded or embarrassed for the mistake.

NUTRITIONAL SNACK

Snacks are provided in the morning and in the afternoon. 100% fruit juice and snack foods such as graham crackers and fresh fruit are provided. Parents may furnish simple nutritious snacks for the class at any time, if arrangements are made with the teacher. The morning snack is not a substitute for a good breakfast. Learning occurs best when children are not hungry, so please provide your child with an appropriate breakfast at home each day. Hot well-balanced lunches are provided for all the children in the full and extended day programs. Lunch menus are posted on the Toddler bulletin board and are available on the School's website.

The school will attempt to accommodate preparing food for children with special dietary needs (i.e. religious, allergies) on an individual basis based upon our ability to handle your child's special needs. In some cases, parents may be asked to supply some alternative foods for their child. These foods must be labeled with the child's name and the date that they are brought to School. In certain circumstances, we may be unable to meet your child's specific dietary needs.

GUIDELINES FOR SNACK/TREATS

All treats brought into the School must be store-bought. A list of safe food, complete with brand names, is located at the back of this booklet. Please check with the toddler Directress for suggestions.

NOTE: We do not accept brownies, cupcakes, frosted cookies, cakes, candy, or other overly sweet treats.

Because the School avoids serving foods that contain nuts, please do not send snack that contain nuts or foods that were processed in a facility that processed nuts.

OBSERVATION

Parents are always welcome in the primary school. Viewing windows in each classroom afford parents the opportunity to see their child at work and at play throughout the day.

OUTDOOR PLAY

We encourage outdoor play as a part of the daily routine. If, for any reason, your child should **not** go outside, you may pick your child up early. The toddlers will enjoy the outdoors when the temperatures are between 25 and 95 degrees Fahrenheit.

PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION

Teachers are not available to discuss in detail your child's day at arrival or dismissal time as that time is needed to say hello and goodbye to the children. If you need to speak with your teacher you may call the office to leave a message for the teacher to call you back, send a note into school with your child asking the teacher to call you. Each teacher has an email address, first initial of first name, last name@montessorischoolofcu.org. Open and ongoing communication with all our families is of the utmost importance to us.

Flyers, monthly class notes and newsletters are emailed on a regular basis to keep parents informed of current and upcoming events in the School and classroom. Board of Directors meetings are held monthly and are open to all families. Parents are welcome to call or email the office with questions or concerns. Parents may email their child's Directness with questions or concerns.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Each child is provided with a hook in the classroom for items that go home (wet, etc....) as well as a cubby for extra clothes and a hook for coats. Please label every personal belonging with child's name.

RESTING/NAPPING

If your child naps at school she/he will need a small cot blanket labeled with their name. If your child likes to sleep with a small stuffed animal or uses a pacifier at nap time, feel free to send this to School.

SAFETY

In accordance with DCFS, the School practices a fire evacuation every month, one shelter-in-place weather drill a month, and one law enforcement drill. Each building has a monitored alarm that requires visitors to enter a code or buzz for admittance. The alarm system at the School provides a direct link to local emergency services. Installed panic buttons immediately alert police personnel; any indication of fire initiates the building alarm system and provides direct notification to the Savoy Fire Department. The Savoy Fire Department inspects the buildings and observes a practice fire drill each October. In the event of an actual emergency, the students will be moved to the elementary building or if necessary to The Windsor of Savoy located at 401 Burwash Avenue.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS

School closing will be announced on TV stations WCIA (CBS), WICD (ABC) and WAND (NBC). Each of these stations also has a website with local school closings clearly listed. An effort will be made to announce the closure through the school answering machine, the website and school email. We will strive to make this decision between 6:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m.

If it should be necessary to close the School during the day, the announcement will be made through TV stations, email and website. Please be sure the School office has your correct contact information, as well as backup contact information for pick-up. During severe weather warnings, please pick up your child as soon as possible.

POLICY FOR NON-DISCRIMINATION IN REGARD TO RELIGION

Montessori School of Champaign-Urbana has no affiliation with any religious orientation or organizations.

POLICY FOR ADMISSION AND ENROLLMENT

It is the policy of the School to admit students without regard to race, culture, color, creed, national and ethnic origin, sex, sexual orientation, religion or disability. When the parent or legal guardian of a child identifies that a child has special needs, the Directress and the parent or legal guardian will meet to review the child's care requirements. The School does not discriminate on the basis of special needs. The program accepts children with special needs as long as a safe, supportive environment can be provided for the child. IN staff hiring and student enrollment we encourage diversity.

TRIAL PERIOD

All children are enrolled in the School on a trial basis to determine compatibility of the child and the program. The trial period lasts eight weeks from the date the child starts at the School. The School will notify parents in a timely manner of concerns of the Directresses, staff, and administration regarding the child's adjustment, behavior, or progress in a particular classroom or program. The school will work with the family to attempt to resolve problems before a decision to terminate the child's enrollment is made.