



corvallis
MONTESSORI
school

Parent Handbook

2016-2017

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I. INTRODUCTION

Mission Statement

Corvallis Montessori School provides a safe, loving, and nurturing Montessori community for the children of the mid-Willamette Valley where they can learn and practice independence, compassion, respect of others, and a lifelong love of learning.

Organization

The Corvallis Montessori School operates as a non-profit 501c (3) corporation. The school has a Board of Trustees, comprised of community members, past parents, and current parents. The Board is responsible for the financial stability of the school.

AMI Recognition

CMS is recognized by AMI (Association Montessori International). As an recognized member of the AMI, we pledge to represent the Corvallis Montessori School truthfully and accurately to our parent community, our staff, and to the general public.

History and Philosophy of the school

The school is dedicated to the philosophy and principles of Dr. Maria Montessori, who lived from 1870 to 1952. She was one of the first female physicians in Italy. Her work in medicine and anthropology led her to observe young children's behavior. She concluded that the child learns best in a home-like setting, and that the learning environment should be filled with developmentally appropriate materials to provide experiences that contribute to the growth of self-motivated, independent learners. She established these revolutionary premises:

- That children should be respected as different from adults and as individuals who are different from one another.
- That the most important years for learning are from birth to six.
- That each child "creates" herself or himself through purposeful activity.

- That each child possesses unusual sensitivity and mental powers for absorbing and learning from his/her environment, which includes people as well as materials.
- In the early 1900's, the "Montessori Method" became very popular in Europe and, to a lesser degree, in the United States. There was resurgence in the United States in the late 1950's and there are now approximately 2,000 schools in this country and many thousands more around the world.
- The Corvallis Montessori School was founded in Corvallis in 1967 by a group of parents. By 1980 it had grown to three Primary classrooms. The school purchased our existing building (formerly a church) in 1994. Since then an elementary classroom and a toddler program has been added. The school is recognized as upholding the standards of the international Montessori association, AMI.
- The guiding principles that the school adheres to in its classroom and educational programs are:
 - All children are individual learners;
 - The classroom environment and its careful preparation are vital to the child's success in the classroom;
 - Mixed age-groupings enhance the child's learning experience by providing the opportunity for role-modeling and mentoring relationships;
 - Freedom of choice within clearly defined limits supports the development of the individual to his/her maximum potential;
 - Parent involvement enhances the sense of community in the school and supports the staff;
 - Professional development is essential to the continued vitality of engaged and inspiring teachers;
 - Service learning connects students to the world outside the classroom.

At CMS, we ignore the negative and accentuate the positive. We focus on respect for each other and the environment. The teachers respect each individual child as having

the capability to make good choices with direction from the teacher. The staff is trained through their Montessori training to help the child take responsibility for their actions. The prepared environment enables each student to be responsible for their actions in the classroom. Program personnel are expected to support their student's social and emotional needs by engaging in the following strategies for managing behavior and support learning:

- Ask open-ended questions and engage in frequent conversations with the children
- Supervise children by being in close physical proximity of sight and/or sound
- Engaging with the children in a variety of activities
- Using positive comments and encouragement
- Acknowledge and validate the children's emotions
- Focus interactions on children's activities and interests

Corvallis Montessori School strives to encourage the development of the whole child. Reading, writing and mathematics are all important. So, too, are Grace & Courtesy, social development, and care of the environment. We ask that everyone who enters our doors help support each other by showing respect, responsibility and resourcefulness. Please do not use your cell phone while accompanying children through the school, please do not allow children to run in the building. Please use 'inside' voices inside the building. Eating and drinking is done together at a table while seated. Please help model good manners for the children by refraining from carrying food and drink through the building.

II. ADMISSIONS POLICY

Admission to the TODDLER HOUSE: children must be at least 15 months old, be able to carry a tray while walking, and understand simple directions.

Admission to the PRIMARY PROGRAM: A child must be at least 2 years, 6 months of age upon entering the program. All children are expected to be toilet trained and have the ability to care for their own personal needs.

ADMISSION to the ELEMENTARY PROGRAM: All children must be at least 6 years of age upon entering the program.

Statement of Non-Discrimination

The Corvallis Montessori School admits students regardless of race, color, gender, religion, national or ethnic origin, to all rights, privileges, and activities made available to the students of the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender,

religion, national or ethnic origin, disability, or marital status in the administration of its educational policies, admission or hiring policies, and other school programs.

Student Enrollment Contract

No student will be considered enrolled until a signed Registration Contract has been returned to the school, accompanied by the security deposit. This deposit, in addition to the signed enrollment contract, assures your child's place in Corvallis Montessori School for the following year. The security deposit is non-refundable under any circumstances. The CMS Registration Contract that parents sign and submit is a binding commitment to compensate CMS in a timely fashion for the instruction we provide to your child(ren), according to the terms specified within the contract.

A copy of your registration contract is included in your back-to-school package.

Waiting List

If space is unavailable at the time of application, parents may have their child placed on our waiting list by completing an application form and paying the non-refundable application fee of \$100.00. Children will be offered enrollment on a first come, first served basis as space becomes available. Siblings of currently enrolled students get priority for openings.

Student Records

Information contained in a child's record shall be considered privileged and confidential. Parents have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. The Corvallis Montessori School will not distribute or release information to anyone not directly related to the child without written consent of the child's parent(s), according to the regulations under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). For additional information on FERPA please visit: <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/parents.html>

III. TUITION POLICY

The school's expenses are not diminished by a child's absence; therefore, CMS does not adjust tuition and/or aftercare fees for illnesses or voluntary absences including family vacations/travel.

Smart Tuition

CMS contracts with an outside party, Smart Tuition, to manage billing and offer online payment. Parents may deposit checks in the payment box located in the foyer of the school. Please do not leave checks or cash in the office. Payments may also be made online via your Smart Tuition account. A \$35 late fee is charged on tuition payments that are more than 1 day past due. The school will reconsider the enrollment of any student whose tuition is more than 60 days late. The school must meet its payroll, pay its bills, and try to operate in the black. There are not extra funds in the budget to defray late tuition payments. We cannot re-enroll any student who has a tuition balance due from a previous school year. All balances must be paid by June 31, the end of our fiscal year.

Returned Check Policy

There is a \$35.00 bank charge for checks returned to Corvallis Montessori School. A check may be redeposited at your request but if it is returned a second time, there will be an additional \$35.00 bank charge.

Trial Period

The first thirty (30) calendar days of a child's attendance at CMS will be a trial period. During that time, the teacher will observe the child and notify the parents if s/he is having difficulty adapting to the classroom environment. After attempts have been made to work with the child and parents, the Head of School reserves the right to ask that the child be withdrawn. In the rare situation that a child is asked to leave CMS during the trial period, the tuition refund will be pro-rated based on the number of days in attendance.

Early Withdrawal

Should you decide to withdraw your child during the school year, the official date of withdrawal, for financial considerations, will be based upon the school's receipt of 60 days written notification of the last day your child will attend CMS. You are responsible for tuition and registered daycare payments up to and including the month in which the withdrawal occurs.

Change in Registration

Any changes to program options or registered extended care hours require approval by the Head of School and are subject to availability. If you wish to make a change in program (e.g. from half day to full day or vice versa) or in the hours of registered extended care, you must submit a change request in writing (email to info@corvallismontessori.org is fine). Before requesting a program change, please speak with your child's teacher. Upon approval of the change, a Change in Registration form will be prepared. Your signature is required on this form before the change can take effect.

IV. ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURE

School Hours

Early morning care is available for Primary and Elementary students at an additional charge from 7:30 – 8:30. Parents who bring children in for early morning care must ensure that the early morning care teacher has greeted their child. You will need to sign your child in at drop off. Please do not drop children off at the front door.

The half-day program is in session from 8:30a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

The full day program is in session from 8:30a.m. – 3:00p.m.

Full day students have lunch from 11:30a.m. – 12:15p.m. and recess from 12:15p.m. – 1:00p.m. They return to class at 1:00p.m. for the afternoon work period.

Students who need to sleep or rest in the afternoon will eat lunch and attend recess with their class. They will then go to the nap room for a rest period from 1:00p.m. – 2:30p.m. If they do not fall asleep, they will return to their classroom after no more than 30 minutes. Children who sleep will be woken at 2:30 to return to their classroom for dismissal.

Children who remain at school after the 3:00p.m. dismissal will spend the afternoons in the care of the Cedar Room staff. Cedar aftercare is available until 5:30p.m. A late pick-up charge of \$1 per minute will apply for children picked up after 5:30p.m. After 5:40p.m. staff will attempt to contact the emergency contacts for pickup.

In order to assure a safe and secure campus, the front doors of the school will be unlocked only for arrival and dismissal. Doors will be unlocked as follows:

7:30 – 8:45a.m. Arrival

11:15 – 11:45 Half-day dismissal

1:00 – 1:30 Extended Half-day dismissal

2:45 – 3:15 Full-day dismissal

At all other times the front doors will remain locked. A doorbell is available to the right of the doors if you need access at other times of the day. Please don't hesitate to ring the bell and a staff member will greet you at the door.

Arrival

Parents may park and escort their child(ren) to the classroom, or may take advantage of our drop-off service (see Parking, below). Please bring your child to school between 8:20 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. Your child should enter the school on his/her own two feet. Please help your child practice Grace and Courtesy when entering the building by being courteous to the morning greeter, greeting them with a smile and a 'hello'. Please refrain from using cell phones and carrying coffee or food during the arrival process. Assisting your child with the transition to school should be your single focus during drop-off.

Your child's Guide will be waiting at the classroom door to greet your child as they enter the classroom.

Late Arrival

Punctuality is essential for your child's success in the classroom. It is often much more difficult for the child to transition into the group once others are actively engaged in activities. If you arrive after 8:30, please see the receptionist at the front desk. They will notify your child's teacher that you and your child are waiting in the lobby. Please wait in the lobby for your child's teacher to come invite your child back to their classroom.

Dismissal

The Primary children who leave at 11:30 a.m. will be dismissed individually from the classroom. Before leaving, children should always say good-bye to their teacher by looking at her/him and shaking hands. Please help your child to practice Grace & Courtesy by walking calmly while exiting through the foyer.

Full Day children will be dismissed from their classrooms at 3:00 p.m. each day. Before leaving, children should always say good-bye to their teacher by looking at her/him and shaking hands. Please help your child to practice Grace & Courtesy by walking calmly while exiting through the foyer.

Children who are signed up for aftercare will be escorted from their classroom to the Cedar Room by their Guide.

On those occasions when your child needs to be dismissed early, please send a note to school or leave a phone message including the date and time of dismissal.

NOTE: Only a child's parents and listed authorized persons may take a child from school. If you know in advance that it is necessary for someone else to take your child home, please bring in a signed note. Otherwise, you must notify the school as soon as possible prior to dismissal. Please understand that if no notice has been received, we will need to check with parents before dismissing the child. Unauthorized persons will not be allowed to take a child from school. Until we are familiar with parents and caregivers, we will ask for ID.

School Closures Due to Inclement Weather

In the event that school is closed due to inclement weather CMS will follow the public school closure schedule. Information will be posted on our website by 6:00a.m. and will be recorded on our outgoing school voicemail. You may receive automatic alerts on your computer by subscribing to Flash Alert. Subscribe at: flashalert.net/signup.html.

Attendance

Daily attendance logs are maintained by the teachers in each classroom. If your child will be absent from school, please notify the office as soon as possible. Consistent attendance and timely arrival are very important for your child's progress and social development in the classroom. Please try to plan trips and days off during vacation times. Instances involving consistent tardiness and extended absences (for reasons other than illness) will be brought to the attention of the Head of School. Keeping the child's best interest in mind, the Head of School may contact the parents to discuss the situation.

Parking

If you choose to come into the building for drop off or pick up, please park only in a designated parking space. Do not park in any No Parking zone. Please drive slowly when you enter the school grounds.

You may also utilize our morning drop-off service by entering the parking lot, pulling forward, and stopping your car directly in front of the school. Our morning greeter will help your child out of the car and accompany them to their classroom. If you are utilizing our drop-off service, please remain in the driver's seat of your vehicle.

V. COMMUNICATION

We encourage you to contact us whenever you have any questions or concerns. Our phone number is 541-753-2513. If you have questions or concerns about your child's progress or social interactions, please first discuss them with your child's Guide.

Messages

Messages can always be left at the school for your child's Guide and will be delivered to the teacher as soon as possible. Classroom assistants are not able to discuss your child's progress or any other assessments with parents.

Parent Newsletter

Our Parent Newsletter is sent to all parents via email.

Bulletin Board

The school message board is located in the foyer between the boys' and girls' bathrooms. Please check the board regularly for school announcements and other important information.

Parent Guidelines for Social Media

Blogs and other social media are powerful tools that open up communications between students, parents, and teachers. This kind of communication and collaboration can have a huge impact on CMS and its community. CMS requests that parents act responsibly and respectfully at all times, understanding that their conduct reflects on the school community.

It is the policy of the Corvallis Montessori School to limit the use of electronic devices (Television, Computers, and Handheld Devices). Classrooms for children under the age of six years are not equipped with any televisions and do not provide children access to any electronic devices. Adult caregivers do not use electronic media for personal use while in the classroom.

Elementary Classroom Notes

The children in the elementary classroom shall prepare their own parent notices to be sent home on a regular basis. These notes will include information pertaining specifically to the elementary class.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Conferences are scheduled twice per year and the dates are included on the school calendar.

Sign-up sheets will be posted at least two weeks in advance. There is no school on conference days, but day care will be available for the children while their parents are meeting with the teachers. During the conference, the teachers share information about the child's accomplishments, needs, and goals here at CMS, and answer questions as time allows. The fall conferences will be verbal conferences during, which your teacher will discuss your child's progress and goals for your child during the year. Parents will receive a written report of your child's progress during the year.

In the case of parents who are divorced or separated, it is our policy to ask both parents to meet with the teacher at the same time, which insures that the information shared is consistent. It is not mandatory for both parents to attend, but two individual conferences will not be scheduled.

Teachers or parents may request a meeting at any time they feel it is in the best interest of the child to do so. If you have concerns about your child's development please speak to your child's teacher.

Parent Workshops

Parent workshops (Parent Education Night) are scheduled for the first semester. The dates of the workshops are in the schools' calendar. Parents are expected to attend all workshops and may apply volunteer hours for these evenings. Each workshop will focus on a different area of the Montessori curriculum. The workshops are intended to give you a better understanding of what your child is doing in school and what you might be able to do at home to enrich your child's learning experience.

Grievances

It is our mission to do our very best for the children and families at CMS. If a problem does arise, our goal is to address it immediately, satisfactorily, and confidentially. To help us do this, we ask that all questions or concerns regarding your child be brought directly to his/her Head Teacher. If the teacher is unable to resolve the issue, or in cases where it seems warranted, please share your concerns with the Head of School. The Head of School will follow up in whatever way she deems appropriate, which may include a conference with parents, teachers, and the Head of School.

VI. HEALTH and SAFETY POLICIES

Individual Health Needs

Children with allergies, asthma, or other special needs with regard to their health are treated with the care they need. When offering children food at snack time or lunch time we offer children a gluten free, lactose free, and vegetarian option. Students with other requirements such as inhalers, or special medication, are given the medication under the direction of a trained staff person when necessary. All medications are kept out of reach of the children in a regulated temperature for each medication

Immunization

Vaccines are a safe and inexpensive way to provide long lasting protection against certain diseases that may cause permanent mental or physical damage to your child. Oregon State Law requires that no child may be permitted to be enrolled in or to attend school without a certificate of immunization for each disease or other acceptable evidence of required immunization or immunity against each disease. **All children must present an immunization record** signed by a physician, nurse or other person who gave the vaccine, unless the child is exempted.

Parents who decline immunization due to medical or religious/philosophical reasons must complete the required Immunization Exemption Portion of the Certificate of Immunization form.

Please be aware that, if one of the diseases for which immunization is required is identified in the school, we are required to exclude non-immunized children from school.

Illness and Infectious Disease

Please DO NOT send your child to school if they have had any of the following symptoms in the last 24 hours:

1. Fever (temperature above 100.5 degrees)
2. Persistent cough and/or sore throat
3. Any contagious or infectious disease of the skin, mouth or eyes or unidentified rash
4. Diarrhea
5. Vomiting
6. Inflammation and/or crusting of the eye.

If your child becomes ill while at school, we will telephone you immediately. If we are unable to reach you, we will contact a designated contact person to pick-up the child.

If your child has been diagnosed with a contagious illness such as strep throat, conjunctivitis, chickenpox, pertussis or impetigo, please let the school know as soon as possible so that we may make other parents aware of their child's potential exposure.

Please make sure your child has been symptom-free for 24 hours before returning to school after an illness.

Medication at School

Medications, both prescription and non-prescription, can only be administered with written, parental permission. If your child requires any medication (including anti-itch lotion, sunscreen etc.) to be administered at school, you must complete a Medication Administration Form located on the office desk. The medication and the release form should be given to the student's teacher with the medication guide.

All medication, prescription and non-prescription, must be in its original container with the child's name clearly labeled on the outside. CMS cannot be responsible for administering the initial dose of any medication. The first dose of a newly prescribed medication must be given at home. Records indicating when medication was administered are kept on file, according to procedures required by Department of Education and DHS.

It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that medicine is up to date. According to school policy, expired medicine, including an epipen, cannot be administered.

Fire drills

Fire drills will occur once per month during the school year. At the beginning of the year, the fire drills will be announced. Later in the year, the drills may or may not be announced, so as to prepare for an actual emergency. In the case of an actual fire or emergency, each classroom will evacuate the building according to the evacuation diagram posted at the exit of each room. The evacuation diagram in each room includes a designated meeting area outside of the building. At this designated area, roll call will be taken to ensure all students and staff have exited the building safely. The administrative assistant shall take the current parent contact list and have a cell phone available during all evacuation procedures and drills.

Medical Emergencies

All teachers and support staff have been trained in CPR and First Aid. A first-aid kit is kept in the main office, out of reach of children. Parents are notified immediately, by telephone, of emergencies. In the event a parent cannot be reached, the emergency contact person(s) will be called. In serious emergency situations, where medical attention is required, we will call 911 to have the child will be transported to the nearest hospital via ambulance. If a parent is unavailable, a teacher or other staff member will accompany the child in the ambulance. The parent(s) will be responsible for payment of any medical and/or ambulance expenses incurred as a result of the emergency.

Emergency Contact Information

All parents must provide the school with the names and phone numbers of two people who can be contacted in the case of an emergency. Every attempt will be made to reach parents first; then this backup list will be used. It is important that the contact people agree to be listed and be available to come to the school in the event of an emergency, accident, or illness. Please keep the school updated on any changes to your address,

Integrated Pest Management

Although Corvallis Montessori School works conscientiously to control insects, rodents, and weeds at our school through proper food storage, cleaning, and maintenance, pesticide use may occasionally be necessary to control a pest problem. When that happens, the school will use the lowest risk products available, applied in accordance with the Oregon Pesticides in Schools Regulation (CMR 01-026 Chapter 27).

In the event that a pesticide application is deemed necessary, parents, legal guardians, and school staff will be notified in writing at least five days **before** the planned application. Notices will also be posted on the entryway door, on the bulletin board, and on the school grounds if the application is outside the building. Notices will remain posted for 48 hours after the application.

In compliance with the Oregon Board of Pesticides Control, the school will also keep records of prior pesticide applications and information about the pesticides used. You may review these records as well as a copy of the Pesticides in Schools regulation.

Sun-screen and Insect Repellant

Children have an outdoor recess period after lunch. On those days when the sun is a potential hazard, please apply sun-screen at home before sending your child to school. We will reapply sun-screen to children in the aftercare program for afternoon recess (4:00p.m.).

Child Abuse and Neglect

As a childcare facility, CMS is a mandated reporter of suspected instances of child abuse, including physical, sexual and/or emotional abuse and neglect. CMS staff is required by the Oregon Department of Health and Human Services (22 M.R.S.A, 8402-A, section XXII.A) to report any incidents which might endanger the physical or emotional well-being of the child. This includes transporting a child in a vehicle while intoxicated or impaired. Under CCD guidelines, this is a reportable offense.

VII. CLASSROOM and PLAYGROUND MANAGEMENT

Classroom Ground Rules

In the Montessori environment there are certain ground rules designed to protect the good of the community as well as the individual child. They are meant to reinforce respect for others, for the classroom materials and furnishings, and for the class as a whole. At the beginning of the school year, the children in the Elementary class work to develop a list of ground rules specifically for their classroom. The following list is not

comprehensive, but includes our fundamental guidelines that help the Primary children learn how to work in their classroom, and how to function as part of a school community. In Our Classrooms:

- We walk.
- We speak softly.
- We push in our chairs.
- We use a mat for working on the floor.
- We finish our work.
- We put work back where we find it.
- We clean up after snack.
- We say *please* and *thank you*.
- We raise our hand if we have something to say when sitting in a group.
- We look and listen when someone is talking to us. We keep our hands on our own bodies.
- We let others concentrate on their work.
- We share our friends.
- We know that every person is special and important. We treat others the way we like to be treated.

Playground Ground Rules

In order to maintain a safe environment and a positive atmosphere in school and on the playground, we ask that the children follow some basic ground rules. Parents are asked to reinforce these guidelines with the children at all times while playing on school property.

On the Playground we DO:

- Walk straight into and away from swings, not crossing behind or in front of them.
Swing in a sitting position
- Slide in a sitting position, one at a time
- Go up the ladders and down the slides
- Watch out for each other
- Stay within sight of the teachers
- Say goodbye and shake hands with the teacher before leaving

On the Playground we DO NOT:

- Twist the swings
- Jump off the swings
- Leave without saying goodbye to the teacher

Behavior Management

It is our experience that children who are productively engaged in the classroom have fewer problem behaviors. When issues do arise we strive to protect a child's self-image by using age-appropriate positive communication strategies and techniques. The safety of all children and teachers is the priority of CMS and we expect all children to show respect for other people and their property.

- Firm reminders (not loud, never unkind) are sometimes needed.
- When appropriate, students are asked to explore alternatives to their behavior and to think about the effects of this behavior on others. This helps them to develop a sense of responsibility for their actions and to develop consideration for others.
- Problems with behavior are handled by the classroom teachers, with the support of administrative staff, if necessary.
- When a situation warrants, parents are notified and may be asked to pick up their child.
- We rely on parents to follow up at home to support the child's success in the classroom.

Adult-Child Interaction

CMS Staff are trained to respond to children's needs in such a way as to support their learning, language and concept development. Following the guidelines of the AMI, all staff are encouraged to provide positive feedback on children's ideas, comments and work while keeping the focus on the child rather than drawing attention to the opinion of the adult. We avoid using the phrase "good job", which shifts the focus to the adult's opinion and away from the accomplishment of the child. In the Toddler and Primary programs, where children are at a sensitive period for language development, staff engage children enthusiastically, talk about what they are observing, and invite children to talk about what they are engaged in. Guides provide lessons to individuals and groups using scaffolding to help children understand concepts, answer questions, and complete activities. The use of the three-part lesson provides repetition and extension as it moves the interaction between the child and the adult through the learning stages of naming (an object or concept) by the adult, identifying a named object or concept by the child, and finally the naming of the object or concept by the child.

Referral Services

Within 30 days of enrollment parents are given the ASQ (Ages & Stages Questionnaire) for use in assessing the development of the student. The completed questionnaire is reviewed by the child's teacher, who will meet with parents regarding any areas of concern that are indicated by the ASQ. Referrals to social, mental health, education, and medical services may occasionally be needed by children at CMS. The referral may

come at the request of parents and/or the child's teacher. A conference between the child's parents and Head Teacher will determine the best course of action.

Children under the age of 5 will be referred to Early Intervention in Corvallis for services. After age 5, children will be referred to the Corvallis School District, 509j. Prior to any referral, parents will be asked to meet with their child's teacher, the Head of School, and sign a permission form to move forward.

If you have any concerns about your child's development or would like more information on available services, please speak to your child's Guide.

The Corvallis Montessori School provides accommodations as outlined in the IFSP or IEP and collaborates with health care professionals and service providers to support those students who require special services and accommodations to meet their health care needs and education goals.

Clothing, shoes, toys and jewelry

Simple, loose, easy to manage clothing is best for the younger children. Since outdoor play is an important part of the curriculum for children, all should dress accordingly during the winter months. The children need to wear suitable clothes for the season and suitable shoes for playing outdoors. Shoes with heels and pointed toes prevent children from running around and climbing and are, therefore, not recommended for school. Shoes should have a closed toe. All personal items must be labeled.

Each child should bring a pair of plain slippers or slip-on sneakers, marked with their name, to wear in school. These are to be left in the child's cubby. Younger children should wear shoes that they can easily put on and remove by themselves. Winter boots should be large enough for the child to put on by him/herself without difficulty.

No toys, purses, blankets or non-appropriate jewelry items may be brought to school as they distract the children from their work. Educational items for geography, history, nature study, etc. are welcome.

We strive to create an atmosphere at CMS that is commercial free and non-violent. You can assist us by avoiding the purchase of backpacks, clothing, and lunch boxes that feature media messages or characters, especially ones that encourage aggression.

Lost and Found

Unlabeled personal belongings that are found on school property will be placed in the Lost and Found basket located in the lower level outside the adult restrooms. If your child is missing an item, please check the Lost & Found bin. The items in the bin will be cleaned out at the end of the year and donated to a local charity.

Morning Snack

Families are asked to sign up for two weeks during the year to provide groceries for the class's morning snack (food and drink). The sign-up sheets will be located outside your child's classroom. Your child's teacher will give you a list of groceries needed for the following week on Friday. We encourage parents to provide the children with organic foods. As a way of assisting parents with the expense incurred in providing organic foods, the First Alternative Co-Op next door offers CMS a 15% discount on food for the snack week. Your teacher will give you the discount card with the shopping list.

CMS does not allow frosting, candy, and other foods with excessive sugar content. Having snack is an important and enjoyable part of the children's daily routine. We promote good nutrition by providing them with wholesome choices while they are at school.

Baking is an important part of the practical life activities in all classrooms. The children are shown how to bake a one or two new recipes every few weeks until they have a selection of items, which they may prepare. An older student will always work with a younger student to help the younger children prepare for baking independently when they are older.

Lunch

Families have the option of sending a sack lunch with their student each day or signing up for the hot lunch program. Hot lunches will be provided by Fresh 'n Local, who delivers healthy, organic, well-balanced lunches to students who have signed up for that month. Students eat lunch in their classrooms with the Guide. Lunch is a social experience and an opportunity to learn about nutrition and refine table manners. It is also a time to enjoy pleasant conversation and good food. Each classroom reflects the individual guide's approach to lunch procedures. However, as a school, we share common attitudes and expectations about lunches. We help the children become consciously aware of flavors and textures of their food. This expands their vocabularies as well as their eating pleasure. We may discuss the sources of the foods we eat. If it comes from a plant, we discuss the part of the plant we are eating: stem, leaf, fruit, or root. Other discussions may cover the way the food product is made, where or how it grows, its nutritional value or group, etc.

Lunch is set up with place mats, glass plates, and cloth napkins. The children enjoy learning to prepare for, serve, and clear away after a meal. They learn to wait for everyone to be ready before beginning to eat. The children are helped to peel and pour

for themselves. They also learn to offer help to one another and to request, accept, and decline help as needed.

Each child is encouraged to eat only as much as his/her hunger requires, although generous time is provided. If your child has brought lunch from home, when s/he is finished eating, s/he wraps uneaten food and returns it to his/her bag or box. Cores, pits, and peelings are put in the compost bucket. We send home all leftover food so that you and your child can determine from it the amount appropriate for the following day. Continue decreasing portions of any food left over each day. When no food comes home, you will know for the present time that you have determined the proper amount. Of course, there will always be fluctuations. If for days your child continues to bring home an empty lunchbox, ask if s/he would prefer a slightly larger lunch, or try sending a little something extra. Continue to increase the size of the lunch until some leftovers come home; then cut back just a bit.

Children who stay for lunch need to have a nutritional lunch. Please do not send candy or gum to school. We do not have room to refrigerate lunch boxes. Ice packs work well to keep food cool. Remember to label your child's lunchbox and any containers used for lunch. Children should be able to open their containers independently.

Milk Program

At the beginning of school year, you may pay for milk to go with your child's lunch, which will ensure that the drink has been refrigerated, and will eliminate any thermos spills or breaking bottles. The school purchases organic, whole milk for students.

Special Activities

Field trips are an important part of each child's learning experience. They can also be a very special time for you and your child. A list of field trips and dates will be provided at the beginning of the school year in order for parent volunteers to plan in advance. We rely on parent volunteers to make these field trips possible. Each family is encouraged to participate in at least one field trip per year.

If you plan to drive on a field trip, please sign up or let your child's teacher know. Please do not make your own arrangements to drive with friends. The teachers will assign children to vehicles. Parents not driving on a field trip will need to leave their child's car seat at school on the morning of a trip. Reminders shall be posted the day prior to a scheduled trip.

CMS teachers and staff are not allowed to transport students in their personal vehicles.

Volunteer Drivers

Any parent who volunteers as a field trip driver is required to complete the Volunteer Driver Form. In order to ensure a safe and fun experience for all, please make sure to adhere to the following guidelines:

- **All children less than 40 lbs. are required to have a car seat, regardless of their age.**
- All children less than 80 lbs. are required to have a booster seat.
- If a child is less than 4'9" tall, it is highly recommended that they ride in a booster seat, regardless of age or weight.
- All children less than 12 years of age and weighing less than 100 lbs. are required to ride in the rear seat of a vehicle.
- No child shall be placed in the front seat of a vehicle with an air bag.
- The vehicle must have adequate seat belts for each child.
- Drivers must drive directly to and from the field trip with no stops in between.
- Siblings of field trip participants generally may not attend field trips. Please speak to your child's teacher about exceptions.
- Drivers must refrain from using cell phones while transporting children except in an emergency.

Birthdays

The Montessori celebration of a child's birthday consists of a special ceremony and the sharing of stories and photographs remembering each year of the child's life. A tradition we like to encourage is that of the birthday child presenting a book to the CMS library in honor of his/her birthday. Books should be inscribed with the child's name, the date, and the child's age.

If you would like to provide a birthday snack on your child's birthday, please discuss with your child's Guide to minimize any exclusion due to dietary needs and allergies. For children with summer birthdays, parents should contact the teacher to arrange a special birthday celebration at some other point during the year. The half-year point works well.

VIII. PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parent Participation Program

CMS families are expected to contribute 20 hours of volunteer time to the school during the academic year. The school counts on the support of parents for activities such as organizing the Annual Auction, driving on field trips, listening to readers, washing blankets, weeding the gardens, helping with building maintenance, etc. Hours contributed should be recorded in the Parent Participation Program binder, which is located on the counter in the lobby. Please log your hours each time you help at school. Parents who would rather donate money to the school can opt-out of the volunteer hours by contributing \$400 for the academic year.

Emerging Readers Program

If you can volunteer an hour or two per week on a regular basis to listen to the children read, please sign up on the volunteer list posted outside your child's classroom. Those who can volunteer on occasion may schedule a date with the teacher as the opportunity arises. Parent participation in this reading enrichment program contributes significantly to the children's progress. In the primary classes, children who are reading will bring photocopies of books home to read with their parents. Please ensure that these photocopies are returned promptly so others may use them.

Annual Auction

Each spring, CMS holds its Annual Auction, which is the major fundraising event of the year. Through the efforts of our parent volunteer auction committee, we receive many wonderful donations from local businesses as well as CMS staff and families. It is also a wonderful opportunity to socialize with other parents and have an enjoyable evening out. The proceeds from the auction are essential to covering the gap between tuition revenue and the cost of education so that we can keep tuition as low as possible for all families. A percentage of these proceeds also go into the tuition assistance program. Our goal is 100% participation from CMS families.

Fall and Spring Clean-up Days

Two Saturday mornings during the year are designated for school clean-up. Some chores that parents can assist with during clean-up days are: removing/installing window screens, cleaning out ceiling vents, preparing/cleaning out the gardens, mulching, washing windows, storing outside equipment for winter and other seasonal tasks.

Classroom Observations

Parents are encouraged to observe a class in session (either their child's or another). Appointments may be made through the office. Observations begin in October.

School Social Events

During the school year we have occasional social events for CMS families, as well as receptions following our concerts. These events are fun for parents and children, and provide an opportunity for CMS families to socialize with each other and the teachers. Parents are asked to contribute food and drinks for these occasions. Please see school calendar for dates of social events.

Community Gathering

Each Friday morning, all children (except Toddler House children) assemble in the commons from 8:30 a.m. - 8:45 a.m. to demonstrate their many talents. Children sign up during the week in a binder in the Commons indicating a song, poem, or instrument that they would like to sing, recite, or play. All parents are invited to join us for this occasion.

Holiday Celebrations

During the year we recognize a variety of holidays. Although we are a non-denominational school, we do explain the reason why these holidays are celebrated and talk about their cultural significance. We encourage parents to come to the classroom to share their cultural traditions and special customs associated with these and other holidays. Please contact your child's Guide if you would like to participate in this way.

Community Service

Throughout the school year, we strive to assist those in need, both within our local community and on a more global basis. Some efforts in the past have included penny drives for disaster relief, UNICEF drives at Halloween, supporting the Corvallis Food Bank collecting food items for our local food pantry, and more. Additional suggestions for service projects are always welcome and can be made to your child's teacher or the Head of School.

CMS Parent Library

CMS has a growing collection of books, magazines and videos available for parents to borrow on a variety of topics, including Montessori materials, parenting, and child development. These are available on the shelves in the lobby and on our lower level,

near the adult restrooms. Books may be borrowed on the honor system – please return them as soon as you are done with them so others might also learn from them.

We wish everyone a happy and productive school year!

Rev August 2016

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