

Montessori
Children's School
SAN LUIS OBISPO



The Montessori Children's School Handbook and Calendar

4200 South Higuera Street
San Luis Obispo, California
(805) 544-6691

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Welcome

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the Montessori Children's School! We have an exciting year to share with you and your family. We are honored that you have chosen our school to be a part of your family and we look forward to sharing this time with you.

Please take some time to read through this handbook/calendar to learn more about our program and our school policies. We invite your input at any time and encourage you to come to us with suggestions! We know it takes open, honest communication between our school and our families to create an environment that truly follows the nature of the child.

Sincerely,

Mary Kern

Mission Statement

The mission of the Montessori Children's School is to inspire a passion for excellence in all of the children and adults who are a part of its community, to nurture the curiosity, creativity and imagination born with us all and to awaken the human spirit of every child.

Our program rests on four Main Pillars:

- The cultivation within our students and staff of a passion for excellence in everything they do, both inside and outside the school.
- The development of a strongly held set of universal values, which include self-respect, respect for others, honesty, integrity, responsibility, empathy, compassion, kindness, peacefulness, a sense of concern for others, warmth and love of community.
- The development of a global perspective and sense of international understanding.
- Lifelong commitments to give something back through service to others who are in need.

Brief History

The Montessori Children's School was founded by Mary Kern in 1983 in San Luis Obispo. It was originally located at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church and moved to its present location in summer of 1991.

In the beginning the school had six children ages three through six. That first year the enrollment expanded to include a grand total of fifteen children! It began essentially as an experiment to see if San Luis Obispo needed another Montessori school and to see if the founder was suited for teaching and administering a Montessori environment. Twenty years later we can answer a resounding yes to both of those questions. The school is still guided by Mary and now enriches the lives of approximately eighty children three through twelve years of age.

We have two Primary classes. Our full-day class has thirty children ages three through six. This year we have also started a half-day class in response to many requests from the community. We also have a lower elementary class, for children age six through nine and an upper elementary class, for ages nine through twelve. Each of these classes has approximately 20 children enrolled and are generally filled by the younger children moving up from the previous class.

Our school has always grown naturally. Mary taught in and administered the school for six years until the birth of her first daughter. She then handed over the role of teaching to Judilyn Duba, who is still with us as our 1st through 3rd grade teacher today. The enrollment expanded to its maximum of 25 while still at the St. Stephen's location.

In the spring of 1991 the owners of an existing Montessori school in San Luis Obispo approached Mary to see if she was interested in purchasing their school. To make a long story short, she was and the two schools blended that summer, retaining some of the families from the old school, some from the new and some brand new to Montessori. The school accommodated children three through nine years of age. We added more teachers; kept the extended care time that already existed at the new location and we were on our way. Suzanne Gorter joined our teaching staff then and is still here as head teacher of our Primary class. Colleen Nushi was part of the previous school's staff and also continues with us as our Upper Elementary teacher. The Kern family added their second daughter to their family in the fall of 1992.

In Spring of 1997 we saw a real need to continue our school to encompass the Upper Elementary students aged nine through twelve years. We had a group of committed parents and children who were coming up from our lower elementary program.

We started the program in our extended care room with four students coming up from the lower elementary and seven students who were either here in our 3rd year program previously and had moved on the other schools for 4th and 5th and then wanted to return here for 5th and 6th, or were committed Montessori students who had finished their last year at a nearby Montessori school which only went to 3rd grade and wanted to continue their

Montessori education here. These eleven students and Colleen took off that fall of 1997.

By the end of that year it was clear that the Upper Elementary class was an integral part of our school that we could not live without. However, we definitely needed more space. We looked around our community, talked again and again with the San Luis Obispo planning department and after much deliberation decided we needed to purchase the building we were currently leasing and add on a classroom for those 4th through 6th students. We opened escrow the same day that Mary found out she was pregnant with her third child and were well on our way down the exciting trail of morning sickness and remodeling. We added a new classroom, a library, new offices, and turned the existing inside and outside rarely used spaces into beautiful, usable areas.

Today, we enjoy the many diverse aspects of our school from younger to older children, the stability of our teachers, the support of our parents and the drive to always improve what we do here. We strive to instill passion for learning and excellence in all we do and are proud of the community we have created.

Fundraising

Our school holds an annual fall auction that raises money for scholarships and is also the only school activity that we have that is only for adults! Each family that would like to participate donates one item or service. These items range from donations provided by a local businesses to one of a kind services or experiences like homemade pies, window washing, car detailing, fishing trips, birthday parties, to larger items like overnight stays at hotels, vacation cabins or plane trips! This is a once a year *extravaganza* that you will not want to miss. Please let us know if you want to help with this event.

We also hold one or two rummage sales a year. The funds raised here help with supplementary classes we provide for the children like Spanish, art and music as well as help to send teachers to the National Montessori conference once a year

Policies and Procedures

1. Please read and become familiar with the information contained in the following pages. If there is something that you do not understand please seek clarification.
2. Children are enrolled in the Montessori Children's School after their name comes to the top of our waiting list and after the family has had sufficient time to determine they want to enroll at that time.
3. It is understood that the child's first month is on a non-refundable trial basis, giving the school sufficient time to determine that the child is making a comfortable transition into the school environment, as well as giving the child's family sufficient time to determine whether the school is becoming a positive and growth promoting extension of the child's home environment.
4. No discrimination will be made between applicants on the basis of gender, race, creed, national origin, or ability.
5. All children are accepted on a conditional basis. Parent(s) may be asked to withdraw their child if the school determines that the program is not meeting the child's needs, or that the child's presence is having an adverse effect on the program.
6. Representatives of the State of California Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing and Department of Health have the right to review all records of children enrolled in the school.
7. Tuition is due on or before the fifteenth day of the month (August through May).
8. Tuition is amortized over a ten-month school year. (Based on the number of school days.)
9. Tuition is not subject to adjustment because of illness, vacation, holidays or absence from school.

10. Parents are responsible for paying the tuition on time. Tuition payments are due as indicated on the admission agreement and will be considered late if not received on or before the fifteenth day of every month. There will be a late charge fee of \$5.00 per day if tuition is not paid by the 20th of each month. No more than ten days may lapse, after which your child's enrollment may be terminated.
11. When three children in the same family are enrolled in the school, there is a five- percent discount for the third child.
12. Fourteen days advance written notice is required to withdraw your child from our program, unless a child has to withdraw because of an unexpected family move, special circumstances approved by the school or because of dismissal by the school.
13. Please make checks payable to the Montessori Children's School, (or MCS) and place in the folder your child takes to and from school each day.

Schedule [\(online schedule\)](#)

There are four classes at the Montessori Children's School:
Primary full-day-(Stargazers) 3 to 6 year olds (preschool-kindergarten)
Primary half-day- (Trailblazers) 3 to 5 year olds (preschool)
Elementary-(Explorers) 6 to 9 year olds (1st-3rd grades)
Upper Elementary-(Philosophers) 9 to 12 year olds (4th-6th grades)

STARGAZERS & TRAILBLAZERS

Arrival: 8:30-8:45 everyday

Departure: Full day children depart: 2:30-2:45 Monday through Thursday;
1:30-1:45 on Fridays

Half-day children depart 11:45-12:00 each day

EXPLORERS

Arrival: 8:15-8:30 everyday

Departure: 2:45-3:00 Monday through
Thursday; 1:45-2:00 on Fridays

PHILOSOPHERS

Arrival: 8:15-8:30 everyday

Departure: 2:45-3:00 Monday through Thursday; 1:45-2:00 on Fridays

Arrival and Departure Procedures

We have carefully devised a schedule for arrival and departure to accommodate many families in our small parking lot. Arriving and departing at these times not only allows your child to have the consistency of the same routine everyday, but also allows these potentially hectic times to run more smoothly. You are invited to park your car and walk your child in or pick them up anytime. We suggest that you park on the same side of the street as the school to allow the "drive through" process to work smoothly. Please hold hands with your child when not inside the school grounds, as there are many vehicles at one time, coming and going. Each morning and afternoon there are teachers stationed at the gate to welcome your child to school or to walk them to the car in the afternoon. When you drive up, a teacher will help your child from the car and then you exit from the circular driveway. This process has worked well, especially for those who have other children in the car or those whose children have a hard time with the transition times; there is a clear arrangement of the transition. Primary Class children need to be signed in and out each day as required by law. Please be patient if you are in the drive through line behind these cars, as it takes a little longer to buckle them into their car seats and to have their parent sign in or out. Thank you for your patience and compliance with our small parking lot.

Sign-In and Sign-Out Procedures

For Primary Classes and Extended Care Only

- The State of California requires signing your child in and out of the Montessori Children's School.
- Please put the time and your full signature (no initials please) in the appropriate box next to your child's name.

Illnesses

If a child has a bad cold with a runny nose or cough and comes to school, the chances of a large number of children contracting the cold are obviously greatly increased. The children move freely throughout the environment as well as share and handle many materials. Germs have the potential to spread quickly.

With your cooperation, we can establish a healthier environment for all the children if, when your child is sick, he/she can be cared for at home. Please note: If we feel that your child is really not feeling well, we will call you to pick him/her up.

If your child has had any symptoms of illness during the night, such as nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or fever, please keep him/her home until his/her temperature has returned to normal for 24 hours and the symptoms have gone. If your child is on antibiotics he/she must be on them for 24 hours before returning to school.

It is particularly important that you inform the school if your child has contacted any communicable diseases so we may pass that information on to the other parents.

If your child becomes ill at school, he/she will be isolated and you or an authorized person listed on the emergency form will be notified immediately in order to pick up your child.

Absent From School

Please notify the school when your child will be absent. Please schedule haircuts, doctor's appointments, lessons and vacations after school or during school vacation times.

Medication

As a school licensed by the state of California, we cannot dispense medication without a physician's permission, even Tylenol! When your child needs to take medication at school we have special forms for you to fill out

with all of the pertinent information. They are locked on top of the refrigerator in the kitchen.

Immunizations

Parents must present a record of their child's immunizations before he/she can attend the Montessori Children's School.

This is necessary to be in compliance with the Department of Health Services with the State of California.

Note: Representatives of the California State Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing have the right to review all records.

The California School Immunization Law requires that children be up-to-date on their immunizations (shots) to attend school or childcare. Disease like measles spread quickly, so children need to be protected before they enter. Most children need booster shots before starting Kindergarten. Look at your child's Immunization Record to make sure you have a complete date of each shot required. Your record will list shots by type of vaccine.

Note: Chickenpox (varicella) immunization is currently recommended for all children 12 months of age and older in childcare.

Exemptions:

The law allows parents/guardians to elect exemptions to immunization requirements based on their personal beliefs or for medical reasons. Please contact the office to obtain the exemption form.

Lunch

Lunch is a social time when good manners and polite conversation are encouraged. The children participate in setting the table, preparing for lunch and tidying up after lunch. Please try to send the healthiest lunches you can to school with your child! The rule of thumb is that if your child should only choose to eat one item, that any item he or she chooses will give him or her the nourishment they will need to have an alert afternoon.

Things that we love to see include: sandwiches, small containers of yogurt that the child can eat in one sitting without any leftover, fruit (again in manageable portions), carrot sticks, celery sticks, salads, crackers and cheese, peanut butter or cream cheese, tortillas with meat, cheese and or vegetables, rice cakes, pretzels, fish crackers cut up pieces of meat and cheese, dried fruits, jerky, nuts and trail mix without candy

Items that are best left at home include pudding, fruit roll-ups, prepackaged crackers and cheese, fruit roll-ups that are loaded with other things rather than 100% fruit, granola bars and chocolate covered granola bars which have added sugars and fats. Lunchables have negligible nutritional value and we ask that those do not come. We know that some days it is all you can do to send your child to school with lunch, but we would be most grateful if on most days prepackaged foods were not sent to school. Items that will be sent home, not be eaten at school include, donuts, candy, and soda.

In the Primary class portion size is so important! Please do not send full yogurts if you think your child may not be able to eat it all. We send home all that is not eaten so please take a look and send accordingly the next day. In the older classes, prepackaged foods, especially for snack in the 4th-6th, do not seem to give the children the nourishment they need for the day.

Snacks

Primary Classes

In our primary classes we provide snack in both the morning and the afternoon (for all day class). It consists of healthy foods with little to no sugar and includes at least two of the food groups. This is available to the children at their own will throughout work time. This also gives the children time to practice important practical life skills such as cutting, washing, and table manners.

Six-Nine and Nine-Twelve

In these classes we have found that is better for the children to bring a snack from home. We ask that the same guidelines we us for lunch are followed when choosing a snack for school. Keep it healthy and stay away from pre-packaged foods!

Sharing

Each of the four classrooms at the Montessori Children's School has a different way of allowing the children to share items from home. Please check with your child's teacher to see how this is facilitated in her classroom. In general, please use these guidelines:

- Children may bring to school anything from the natural world, (flower, leaf, rock, mineral, shell, seed, plant etc.) that they wish.
- Animals (insects, spiders, frogs, lizards, tadpoles etc.) are welcome if they come in a safe, secure, unbreakable, humane container. Please try to make sure your child realizes that the animal needs to be returned to its natural habitat after a day's visit at school! Small pets may also visit in safe, secure leashes or crates. Please let us know ahead if you will be sharing a live animal.
- Often children enjoy bringing photographs of themselves and family members or of places they have visited.
- Books are a popular item for sharing at school. Children at ages of 3 to 6 easily absorb whatever they find in their environment. Montessori theory says what is absorbed actually forms the mind and intelligence. For this reason we ask for factual books with real photographs or stories that are realistic.

Birthdays

As a tradition in Montessori schools around the world, we celebrate each child's birthday with a walk or celebration in the classroom. Each classroom has a little different ceremony but all are designed to honor the birthday child and appreciate his or her uniqueness in the world. Some families like to contribute a snack to celebrate these momentous occasions. We would love to have a small, healthy delicious snack for the children. A "please send" and "leave at home" list are provided to give ideas of things that are appropriate. We welcome other suggestions to the lists. Some families choose to donate a book to our school library instead and we welcome those with open arms.

Please ask your child's teacher if you need a recommendation on a book we would like. Thank you all for your continued generosity.

If you wish to have a birthday party for your child outside of school we would be happy to give you the addresses and/or phone numbers of your child's friends. Because of the possibility of hurt feelings please do not distribute birthday party invitations at school.

Birthday Snack List- Please Send:

- Fruit kabobs
- Muffins
- 100% fruit juice popsicles
- Tofutti cuties (they are small and even those with milk allergies can have them)
- Breads
- Fruit tarts
- Cheese and crackers
- Small pizza squares
- Veggies and Dip
- Cut up fruit with toothpick umbrellas

Separation

Separation is a process we go through all of our lives. Though often challenging and exciting, this growth towards independence can be painful and scary, especially for young children. Parents and teachers working together, showing children that they can trust and believe in one another offers a foundation of support when the world suddenly seems a new and different place.

Independence is one of our goals, but if your child is having second thoughts about being away from you, you are welcome to stay for awhile to help your child get settled and then say "good-bye". Just remember that sometimes staying only makes it more difficult for your child as well as for yourself. Never leave without letting your child know that you are doing so. If your child is attached to something special to comfort him/her we put it in his or her cubby or designate a special place for him/her to have it. Each case will be handled individually.

Clothing

Children should wear clothes appropriate for school and easily laundered if soiled. The best clothing for school is comfortable, sturdy and washable, with fasteners the child can handle by him or herself if possible. Tennis shoes or other closed in non-slip shoes seem to work better than cowboy boots, slippers or slick sandals. We also have noticed the effects that different types of clothing can have on some children. Of most concern to us, are the aggressive types of play that Batman, Terminator and some other super-hero clothing can bring out. Mermaid, Snow White and some others seem to make play outside difficult as some children are included if they have similar clothing on while others are left out if they do not. So while we know that some of these may be very appropriate at home they seem to cause some exclusive behavior here at school. We ask that if at all possible the children refrain from wearing these types of clothing at school. Please use your own judgment and let us know if you have any questions. (Lunch boxes with these characters have not been an issue and are welcome.) We find that children tend to draw on their bodies when they have tattoos. Please remove tattoos before attending school. A complete change of clothes for young children can be kept at school. Please label all pieces with the child's name.

Lost and Found

Misplaced items will be placed in the lost and found box kept in the hall outside the office.

Communication

The more accurately informed we are about your child the better we can care for him or her. To help us:

- Please read all signs, notes posted and letters that come home.
- Please check your child's plastic folder that goes home and comes back daily.
- Please write down messages for us. (*Verbal messages are often forgotten in the activity of each day!*)

Feel free to call the school to talk to your child's teacher or administrator about any concerns you may have. We will return your call at our earliest convenience.

Newsletter

Our newsletter is our main vehicle to keep you informed on what is happening at the school. It comes out as needed, about once every two months. Contributions to our newsletter are always welcome.

Parent Night

A special parent orientation meeting will be held at the beginning of the school year. We ask that each parent continuing or new to the Montessori Children's School attends. The Parent Handbook as well as other important information will be handed out and discussed. An overview of our Montessori program will be presented and it is in the best interest of your child to attend. Understanding your child's daily experiences will strengthen our parent/child/teacher relationships here.

Parent Meetings

Parent meetings are held throughout the school year. These meetings are held to help parents understand the Montessori philosophy and to provide information on parenting techniques and other relevant topics. We welcome suggestions of topics and speakers and strongly encourage all parents to attend.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Informal conferences can be arranged and may be held at anytime. If at any time, you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact the Teacher.

Formal conferences are held twice a year. These give parents and staff an opportunity to discuss the child's social, physical, emotional and cognitive development. Both parents are encouraged to attend.

Parent Participation

Parents are invited to participate in our program in a variety of ways. They are invited to help in the classroom on a regular basis or to come in and share a special interest or skill. We also welcome parents to share family cultural traditions throughout the year. In the Primary classrooms children sometimes have a difficult time-sharing their parent(s) with other children. So participation in these classrooms involves helping with copying, filing, cutting and preparing materials.

In the 6-9 year old classroom parent participation can be utilized almost everyday. Parents can sign up to come in and read with individual children. This wonderful service allows the children to be heard while reading out loud and at the same time gives them that one on one experience with a listening adult who is there just for them.

In both the 6-9 year old and 9-12 year old classes' parents are continually needed for driving on field trips. We attend many of the YOPAC (Youth Outreach for the Performing Arts Center) presentations at Cal Poly. The parent's automobile insurance covers the riders in the car. We also go on other field trips in these classrooms as well as visit homeless shelters and retirement homes for our 9-12 year old community service. We appreciate all the drivers we can get for these excursions.

Work Days

Parents are encouraged to participate in workdays throughout the year to help improve the school environment.

Observations

All parents are encouraged to visit your child's classroom throughout the year. Your visits are welcomed. In order for your observations to be as beneficial as possible, we have found the following guidelines helpful.

When to come: You are always welcome at any time, but by arranging it ahead of time you are assured of having the day you request. Mornings are best to observe the educational programs in progress.

How to Observe: An observation chair will be provided so you can view all the activities. We request that you remain seated so that the children are able to continue with their activities.

How Long? The length of stay is up to you. However, most observers find that 20 to 30 minutes are quite fulfilling.

Having parents come in for lunchtime is a popular activity here. Please call ahead to let us know you will be here. It is a good way to get to know your child's classmates.

Our Teachers

Our teachers are hired because they have deep-seated belief in the philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori. Some of the teachers have Montessori Diplomas, some are in the process of taking courses and all have some information on Montessori and have chosen this life's work because they believe that each child is born special and unique and deserves an environment prepared to help them realize their full potential.

Our head teachers are veteran Montessorians who have devoted most of their adult lives to the study of child development and learning and who believe wholly in what they do.

We are fortunate to have a very low turn-over of teachers which has led to a consistent, cohesive environment. We are able to change and build on our classrooms because we are comfortable here. We are constantly striving to refine our school and continue to participate in conferences, retreats and in-services to define and re-define who we are and what we want for the families who are in our community.

Homework

At the Montessori Children's School we strongly believe in the importance of play and down time, for all of us! Studies have shown that our most creative ideas and plans occur during those times our minds are not engaged in busy work. We encourage families to enjoy nature and each other and to schedule this time into their calendars, if needed. At the same time, we also know that good study habits need to be developed early and in small steps so that we can learn to cultivate the abilities to put our creative thoughts and plans into action.

To this end, we begin simple thought provoking homework in the second half of the kindergarten year. This usually involves some sort of family reading or project meant to have families set-aside time to be together without other distractions and to begin some critical thinking. The elementary classes have weekly homework designed to begin to establish time management and prioritizing at home, while at the same time refining skills that can only be acquired by memorization such as math facts or spelling words. Our primary goal in assigning homework is to help the children begin to prioritize their time. If they have soccer, music and tutoring classes after school they will need to find the time to do this homework, hopefully refining the time each year, so they have a balanced week. Parents can help by valuing the work brought home to do, assisting but not doing the work for their child and mostly by providing a quiet, clutter free space to think.

Who is in Charge?

Parents need to know exactly where to go to get information or voice concerns. Here is a reference to guide you:

- Matters related to; child's progress, classroom procedures, or other classroom matters go to the classroom teacher.
- Matters related to; early arrival or late afternoon extended care, go to the extended care teachers.
- Matters related to; school policies or procedures, pedagogical issues, admissions, parent education, finances, facilities, legal matters, transportation, fundraising, student records, observations, registration,

public relations, billing, accounts or charges in tuition go to the administrator.

Conflict Resolution Procedures

Our grievance or conflict resolution procedure entails a tier process that begins with the person directly concerned, then moves to the head of the school. When problems arise, resolution should follow these steps:

1. If you have a question regarding your child, ask his or her teacher. Teachers are your first resource to answer your questions and resolve your difficulties.
2. If resolution cannot be reached in the above step, please set up an appointment regarding your situation with the teacher and the administrator.

We desire to do the very best for your child. When we handle areas of concern quickly and with care, we achieve our mutual goals for your child without disruption.

International Day

International Day is celebrated by Montessori schools around the world. We celebrate this here on the last day of school before the Winter Holidays. All of us dress up in clothing from our heritage (or a heritage we would like to be from!). We have an international potluck, sing and enjoy some local international entertainment.

Discipline Policy

The word "discipline" is derived from "disciple" which means, "to follow". Therefore, the purpose of disciplining is to model and teach the child acceptable ways to handle various situations. Even a very young child can understand the cause and effect of his/her actions.

A. We at the Montessori Children's School recognize the dignity and worth of every human being within the School. We want the children to develop a

positive self-image and respect for themselves, others and the environment. We believe that by treating the children with fairness and respect, they will react in kind.

B. Adults in the classroom model a positive, caring attitude. When problems arise with one or more children, the adult will encourage the child or children to talk about it and find solutions peacefully. If one child hurts another, the first child will be momentarily removed from the situation, while the adults check to see that the hurt child is all right. Then the adult will return to the first child and discuss the problem(s) and look for a more appropriate solution. We find that young children may not have the words to express their feelings, and this frustration is what leads to conflict. We often model for a child how to express his or her feelings verbally.

C. The goal of discipline is to help a child change his/her behavior from negative to positive. Redirection is used to redirect their activity in order to help a child with this process.

D. If a child repeatedly does not respond to discipline used at school, the parent will be contacted and asked to come in for a conference. Parents and school will devise a consistent discipline plan for use at home and in school. A time-line will be set at this conference, after which, parents and school will meet again to review the child's progress. It will then be evaluated if the school is an appropriate placement for the child.

E. The philosophy of the School is based on love and respect. We believe that the adults must be models of the behavior they wish to elicit from the children and others, and must show respect for the child and others at all times. Therefore, any abuse of the child, and/or others, verbal, psychological, or physical is prohibited. It is the policy of our staff never to use or threaten to use any physical punishment. Verbal abuse is never permitted.

Confidential Information

The school's policy is to protect the privacy of our students and staff. We therefore do not release anyone's address and/or phone number without his or her permission. We encourage you to use the class rosters for any

communication between families. Thank you for your understanding and support.

Accident Procedure

In case of a Minor Accident:

A staff member will tend to a child. Appropriate first aid will be administered when needed (soap and water and/or an ice pack), and the injury will be reported to the person who picks up the child.

In case of a Serious Accident we will:

Notify the parent or person responsible for the child.

Notify the physician listed on the Emergency Form and follow his/her recommendation.

For serious injuries the administrator and/or responsible teacher will call 911. (Parents will be expected to assume responsibility for any expenses incurred.)

If the child needs to go to the hospital and the parents cannot be reached, he/she will be transported to French Hospital in San Luis Obispo, A staff member will accompany the child to the hospital and take his/her file folder with them in case emergency care is needed.

Disaster Policy

In the event of a natural disaster or other community emergency, (toxic spill, nuclear emergency), the children and staff of the Montessori Children's School will remain at school. Parents are asked to pick up their children when possible; otherwise the children will remain at school with the staff.

Please note; even in an emergency we cannot release your child to anyone who is not on your alternate pick up form, on file at school. Please be sure to update this form as needed and put any possible person on it that you may send in an emergency. It is suggested that you place other parents at the school on this list, who live in different geographic location in the city, should some roads be blocked to your area. It is also suggested that you give the school the name and phone number of a relative or friend who lives out of the area, should a disaster happen here and we can not get in touch with you. Our city has, as a first step in the emergency process, an "alert"

status. This would be broadcast over the media. Public schools here do not evacuate nor have the children go home at this level. However, because we do not have access to buses, and because we are a small school, if an "alert" status were declared, we ask parents to come and pick their children up from school. Any parents who have not picked up their children within one half hour of the alert will be phoned by school staff to come and pick up their child. We realize that this is not routinely done at this level of alert, but we feel more comfortable having children at home even at this time.

In the event of a mandatory evacuation of the school, our policy is to stay at school for twenty minutes, then load the children in staff members and parents cars and transport them to the Children's House Montessori School in Atascadero at 3025 Monterey Road, phone number 466-5068. The owner is Korey Dudley, this is our relocation point.

Field Trips

The primary classes do not anticipate going on any field trips. Three to six year old children gain the most from people or experiences coming to school where the children are comfortable in their own environment.

The lower and upper elementary classes take several field trips during the year and need support from parents as drivers for these trips.

Camping Trips

The Upper Elementary class plans and executes 2 camping trips per year. The first trip is an overnight stay to a near by camp at the beginning of the year. This trip is a great way for the class to become a cohesive community of learners that will spend the rest of the year delving into the sometimes complex relationships that form beginning adolescence. Setting up and taking down tents, preparing and cleaning up meals, games and hikes are all a part of this time.

Our end of the year camping trip is a 3 night, 4 day trip where we travel a little further away and enjoy all the things involved in the first trip for a little longer time. These trips are critical times for the children to move on in their independence and to learn to trust in themselves and each other.

Laundry

Each week we have about two loads of laundry from school. These are items such as tablecloths, dusting cloths, dishtowels, etc. We ask for a few generous volunteers to take this laundry home on Fridays and return it to school on Monday mornings. It is the seemingly little things in life that make such a difference! Please let us know if you can help.

Mysterious Objects??

Many of our materials consist of small attractive objects that are appealing to children. If you find any "mysterious objects" in your child's possession, please return them to school. It could be Madagascar or Rhode Island!

Scholastic Book Orders

Scholastic books are available to you and your child at a discount price. Not only does your child benefit but also the Montessori Children's School receives points to use toward obtaining books for FREE! So browse through the book orders. Please note the deadline posted on each order form.

After School Arrangements - Car Pools

Please make after school arrangements with your child while at home. It is often confusing and sometimes excluding for the children to make plans and want to call home during the school day. If the children request this we will ask them to talk to you when they get home and make the plans for another day. We encourage carpooling.

Authorized Pick Ups

Please make sure the person picking up your child is authorized to do so, in writing. You may come in to the office anytime to revise the authorization form in your child's registration folder and add or subtract authorized names.

Failure to Pick Up Your Child

Failure to pick up your child during the regular times is disconcerting to him/her. Please leave a message on our phone if you have an emergency and

will be late. We will attempt to contact you or another person on the authorized list to come and pick him or her up. A late charge of \$5.00 for the first 15 minutes or fraction thereof and \$1.00 per minute thereafter will be charged.

Extended Care

Extended care is available from 7:30am to 5:30pm. We ask that you sign up in advance for days in which your child needs care. If you only need care on occasional days check with the extended care teachers at least two days in advance to make sure there is room for your child. The cost is \$3.00 dollars per hour. It is important that you sign in, in the morning and out in the afternoon so we know how much to bill you. In the afternoons a snack is provided.

After School Classes

In the past we have provided some extracurricular classes for children after school, such as art, knitting and chess. Look for information in your child's folder for more information and to sign up.

Summer Program

Each year our school provides a summer program for the students currently enrolled and those new students who will be coming in the Fall. Every summer the program is different, ranging from 2 weeks to 8 weeks. We have had "theme weeks" such as a week of cooking, sports, quilting etc., as well as half-day sessions designed for the children to stay in contact with the school and continue the work they like to do. We put out our summer schedule in April so that families may plan accordingly.

Resource Materials

We have many books and publications available for parent use in our library. Please utilize these resources, in topics ranging from infancy through adolescence. A check out box is available in the library.