

## Dear Parents,

Welcome, or welcome back to the Center Montessori School – Primary classroom! I am looking forward to working with you and your child this school year and have included a few things to help us have a great start to our year:

### Calendar & Schedule

If you are new to our classroom, I hope that you will be able to attend our online New Parent Orientation on Wednesday, August 12, from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. through Zoom. A link will be sent to you as we approach the event. This is a chance to meet with me and my other fellow Primary teachers for an informative session regarding our procedures and specific classroom guidelines to better assist you and your child. Please also mark your calendars for your child's in person orientation days scheduled on Thursday, August 13 from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and Friday, August 14, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. These two days are only for children new to our classroom and I strongly recommend that your child attends this orientation before the first day of school as a way to facilitate his/her transition to the Montessori environment.

As we are all excited about starting the school year in person, I am confident that our parent/teacher partnership will rest on the trust and communication needed to help us navigate through this unprecedented times. A number of procedures are set in place to prevent virus spread and, as partners in educating your child, we will be working together at adhering to the school health guidelines communicated to you via the Parent Handbook.

Your child's daily schedule will usually follow this routine:

Arrival	8:20 am	Greetings, hand sanitizing, temperature checks, indoor shoes, handwashing
Group Time	8:30 am	Morning announcement or large group lesson
Work Cycle	8:30 am to 11:15 am	Indoor/ outdoor individual and small group lessons
Playground	11:20 am	
Lunch	12:00 pm	
Half Day Dismissal	12:30 pm	Nap for young children Story & quiet time for older children
Playground/Work Cycle	1:00 pm to 2:45 pm	Indoor/ outdoor individual and small group lessons
Dismissal	2:50 pm	Outdoor shoes switch and pickup
Aftercare	3:00 pm	*Tuesdays and Thursdays: Music lessons for entire class followed by P.E. for Kindergarteners

### Sharing & Flowers/Plants

Please note that we would like to minimize what your child brings to school to necessary items only. Toys, jewelry, and other "treasures" should be left at home. They tend to be distracting and loss or breakage of these items is upsetting to the children. Also at this particular time as a safety measure we are limiting what comes into our classroom from the outside environment. Your child will, however, have a turn to participate in "show and tell" on a scheduled Friday and a note will be sent to you ahead of time with more details.

Each week there will be an opportunity for a child to bring in fresh flowers to arrange for the classroom. I will be emailing you a signup sheet so you can pick the week for your flower delivery. Children are also invited to bring a potted plant as a way to care for the environment. If you would like for your child to participate, please assist him/her in bringing a hearty, low light, preferably indoor plant in a small pot that will fit on our shelves. This can be a great project for you and your child to do at home by personalizing the pot and decorating it prior to bringing the plant to school. We would appreciate it if you would write on an accompanying piece of paper the name of your child's plant along with its care instructions.

### **Birthdays**

Your child's birthday is a special day for all of us and as a class we will acknowledge this special occasion by performing a Celebration of Life for your child with his or her peers. We ask that you send us non-returnable photos of your child for each year of your child's life (including an infant one). In the past we have invited families to join their child's Celebration of Life ceremony. Given the situation with COVID-19, we are currently limiting access to campus as protection for our children and staff. Until we have re-opened our campus, we ask that you please send in or email a surprise message or wish you would like me to read to your child during the celebration. Please use U.S. mail to distribute birthday party invitations, gifts or thank-you notes to other children in class. You may request an updated address list from the office.

### **Weekly Communications & Transparent Classroom**

As we move towards paperless communications, making sure your most updated phone number is on file as well as sharing your correct e-mail address with us and checking it regularly is a must. If your child produces paperwork, artwork, etc. he or she will bring those home in an envelope on Fridays. We ask that these envelopes be returned empty to school the following Monday. If you wish to speak with me about your child's progress, I am usually available half an hour before school starts or after 3pm to answer any of your questions.

You will also be receiving instructions via email to set up a personal family account and access your child's progress page through Transparent Classroom. Transparent Classroom is an online program designed specifically for Montessori schools enabling you to only see work and photos of your child along with a description of a number of lessons your child has received and some ways on how you could extend on the learning at home using Montessori principles.

### **Clothes & Indoor Shoes**

Please send in a full set of change of clothes for your child in a large Ziploc bag with your child's name printed on it. We appreciate that you label all the items belonging to your child.

Additionally, please send a clean pair of labeled indoor shoes for your child to keep at school. These shoes need to be rubber-soled, closed-toed and contain the entirety of your child's foot for stability and safety (no slippers and no open back). There are many comfortable slip-on shoes to choose from on the market, and you may choose to look into [Native Phoenix](#), [Plimsoll](#), [Toms](#) or [Keds](#). Your child will change into the indoor shoes prior to entering the classroom daily and switch back to the outside shoes for playground and dismissal.

In the Primary classroom, younger children's ability at using the restroom independently should not be hindered by tight clothing or those that are hard to manage; please make sure that your child's clothes are easy for him/her to put on and take off. Children are expected to be wearing underwear (not pull-ups or diapers) and please let us know if they need more reminders to use the restroom, as we will be happy to help with that.

## **Lunch, Snack & Water Bottles**

Our goal is for your child to eat a filling, nutritious lunch in a peaceful, relaxing atmosphere. Please include a cloth placemat and napkin as well as any utensils your child may need, plus a small ice pack to help keep the food fresh. Please label these items with your child's name. We encourage packing high protein foods, and fresh fruit and vegetables rather than prepackaged and processed. Please pack lunch items in reusable containers that your child can easily open, including drink containers that do not leak or squirt when opened. We ask that you avoid Go-gurt and fruit roll-ups as they are very messy and encourage children to play with their food. Candy, chocolates, nuts/peanuts and soda are not allowed.

In addition to including a full lunch meal in your child's lunchbox, we ask that you add a daily snack for your child to eat when hungry during the work cycle. It is preferred that your child's snack is packed separately from their meal and contained in a specifically labeled container or re-usable bag. Please practice with your child opening and closing the lunchbox and any other containers prior to their coming to school to facilitate your child's independence.

We want your child to stay well hydrated throughout their time with us at school and since our indoor water serving station is closed, we ask that you make sure to provide your child with a good quality and properly labeled water bottle (preferably not plastic disposable ones) that can easily be used by your child. We have a hands-free filtered cold water station on the Primary playground and will help your child refill his or her bottle whenever needed.

## **Medication & Sunscreen**

If your child needs any type of medication during the school day, please contact the office as there is an authorization form for you to sign and complete before medication can be given. When a child is taking medication at home, please let us know as some medications can alter a child's day and we want to ensure the day is smooth.

We kindly ask that you apply sunscreen on your child prior to dropping him/her off at school and send you child with a hat to wear when playing outside.

## **Family Photo & Parent Questionnaire**

Upon starting school, we will be working on a special art project that necessitates your help in providing me with a "family" photo. You can email me the photo directly or send a 6x4 print with your child's belongings by the first day of school.

Your child is special and no one knows him or her better than you! As a way to better serve you this year, I would like to get your perspective on your child's growth so far and get to know more about your child (even if he/she is a returning student). I have attached to this letter a questionnaire to help you share with me the things your child loves, dislikes and laughs at. Please feel free to add any information you see pertinent to sharing with me. Do not hesitate to reach out via phone or email if you have any questions or thoughts for me. Again, welcome to the Center. I am looking forward to our days with you, your child, and your family.

Sincerely,

Betty Camacho

[bcamacho@centermontessori.org](mailto:bcamacho@centermontessori.org)

(941) 753-4987

## Primary Parent Questionnaire

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Filled by:  Mom  Dad  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear New and Returning Primary Families,

Welcome to the Primary 3 class! I hope that you had a good summer. Now that school is about to start, I would appreciate you taking the time to fill out this questionnaire to help me better know your child and meet your needs. Please return this to me as soon as possible or by the first day of school.

Thanks for your cooperation.

Betty

1. What is your preferred way of communicating with me or the school? (mark all that apply)  
 Phone  Notes sent home  e-mail  Zoom meetings
  
2. What is the primary language spoken at home? What other languages (if any) are spoken?
  
3. How much time will your child spend in the care of others this school year? Who are they? (grandparents, family friends, sitters, etc.)
  
4. Does your child have any siblings? Please list their names & ages.
  
5. Does your child have any pets at home?  Yes  No  
If yes, what kind and name? \_\_\_\_\_
  
6. Are there any family situations that we should know about (i.e., recent move, new baby, divorce, separation, remarriage, death of a family member, etc?)

7. Please list your child's latest interests or likes?
  
8. Please describe your child's dislikes or fears?
  
9. What will your child's routine be after school?
  
10. What makes your child laugh?
  
11. Please describe how much and what kind of reading is done at home with your child? What are his/her favorite books?
  
12. What are your hopes, expectations and learning goals for your child this year?
  
13. At CMS we are concerned with the well-being of the whole child – academically, socially, physically and emotionally. Is there any other information you would like to share with me about your child and/or your family? Please include it on the back of this sheet. Thanks!