

*Montessori School of Calgary  
Primary Programme*

*Parent Information Manual*

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The Montessori primary classroom offers a carefully prepared environment designed to meet the developmental needs and abilities of a group of children ranging in age from approximately three to six years. Within this framework, each child becomes a member a community of children and adults where he or she learns to choose activities, perfect skills, and pursue individual interests.

The Montessori-trained classroom teacher ensures that the classroom is appealing and inviting to the children, to draw the children into contact with the specially designed Montessori tools for learning, and to carefully observe the children at work. She watches as the children spontaneously pursuing their individual interests without interference or the fear of being corrected or rushed, and notes the growth of each one's personality.

The three to six year span represents a unique period in the child's life during which particular interests are awakened and stimulated by the teacher's lessons. It is critical to the child's progress that parents appreciate this fact and allow their child to complete the three year programme. The School and its teaching staff is wholly committed to guiding each child's growth during these three important years.

During the first year, the children work primarily with the practical life and the basic sensorial materials. They develop an interest in and respect for Montessori materials, learn to work in an orderly fashion, realize personal achievements and begin to cooperate with others. Emphasis is placed on independence, self-confidence, self-motivation, self-discipline and, of course, in the joy of learning through their own efforts as well as working with others.

During the second year, the children's work habits, social awareness and emotional stability build on earlier development. They explore the advanced sensorial materials and learn to make connections between classroom discoveries and the world beyond the classroom. The children begin to learn phonetics and may compose words using the letters of the moveable alphabet. Some children may read, though this usually occurs later during the third year. In mathematics, they progress through the concepts of numbers from 1-10 to the decimal system including addition and subtraction. They receive more geography, biology and zoology, music and art lessons.

The third year is marked by an intense interest in the arts, sciences, mathematics and language work. Children enjoy doing addition, subtraction, multiplication and division problems and often explode into reading everything from one word labels to books. They show an ability to accept responsibility, cooperate with peers, be dependent of the adult and further develop leadership qualities. The "seasoned" five year olds spontaneously care for the classroom environment and demonstrate concern and compassion for others. This is the happiest year in the Montessori primary programme. The children mature socially and emotionally and acquire the basic skills to begin elementary research in science, zoology, biology and geography.

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## *Admission Procedure*

Parents interested sending a child to the Primary class at the Montessori School of Calgary must first attend an orientation meeting. At this time the Montessori philosophy and School procedures are explained and the classrooms are open for viewing.

When completed application and medical forms, together with the registration fee (non-refundable but creditable toward tuition), are received by the School, parents are notified that either the child has been accepted or that his name has been placed on the waiting list. Preference is given to siblings of children currently attending or who have previously attended our School as well as to new applicants who will be between age 2 1/2 and 3 1/2 years of age on September 1st.

A home interview is conducted by the School Administrator to ensure the child's readiness and for the programme.

Prior to July 15<sup>th</sup> and as outlined in the tuition policy below, payment of the full year's tuition by post-dated cheques is required.

A home visit is made by one of the child's teachers before he or she begins School.

## *Registration Criteria and Procedures*

1. The child must be between 2 1/2 and 3 1/2 years of age to start school.
2. The child must be completely toilet trained.
3. The application and medical forms must be completed and returned to the school along with the \$250.00 application fee.
4. The home interview conducted by a staff member forms part of the admissions procedure.
5. Until mid February, children attending the Primary programme at the Montessori School and their siblings have first priority for available spaces for the upcoming school year. Thereafter, children are accepted on a first come, first served basis.
6. The children may stay in the Primary programme until they are eligible for grade one. Children who have completed the Primary programme are given priority over outside applicants when applying to the Montessori School of Calgary's elementary programme.

## *School Tuition Policy*

Tuitions are set in the Winter Term for the following school year. A Tuition Schedule is delivered to all parents of children currently attending the School prior to the re-registration deadline. A Fee Schedule is also made available to all parents making a new application to the School.

Tuitions must be received at the School mailing address on or before July 15<sup>th</sup> for the forthcoming academic year. They are payable by means of three post-dated cheques

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dated July 15<sup>th</sup>, January 1st and April 1st. There is a penalty charged for overdue accounts and returned cheques.

As operating costs for the school year such as materials, salaries and rent are fixed, there is no reduction in fees for days when a child may be absent. Tuitions will, however, be pro-rated for children entering after October 15th or for those children who have to withdraw for medical or relocation reasons. Tuitions are non-refundable.

### *Health and Safety*

A completed medical form must accompany the application before a child is accepted into the School. Parents are required to inform the School in writing of any changes in the child's medical condition or of any medications or treatment the child is receiving. Medical forms must be up-dated every six months.

For the health, safety and consideration of all children at School, any child who is not well and is unable to fully participate in regular school activities must remain at home. Parents will be contacted to collect a child who becomes ill during class. The teachers are not permitted to administer medication to any child. The School is equipped with a first aid kit and staff members hold certificates in first aid.

Fire drills are conducted monthly.

Children must never, under any circumstances, be dropped off to play in the school yard or playground.

Parents, nannies or others who bring children to the playground before school or who allow after school play outside must stay in the playground to supervise.

### *Arrival and Dismissal*

The morning classes run from 8:45 until 11:45 the full day class from 8:45 until 3:45. Children may enter the school building at 8:30.

### *Parent Day*

To assist parents in their understanding of and appreciation for the Montessori Primary Programme a Parent Education Day is held each autumn. Children do not attend School that day so that their parents may freely explore the classroom environment, learn about the materials and speak with the teachers. We encourage all parents to attend the Parent Day each year as there are new materials to discover in all the classrooms and occasionally new staff members to meet.

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## *Observation Days*

Observers at the Montessori School of Calgary are welcome. In an effort to minimize class disruptions, it is necessary to schedule observation times.

An appointment is necessary to observe a class. The School encourages at least one parent per family to view a class each year and additional observation times, if desired, are possible.

In order to make the most of the classroom observation, we ask that consideration for the whole group be kept in mind. Visitors remain seated on the sidelines and avoid walking about the room, handling materials and talking to the children or other teachers. Observers with comments or questions are invited to telephone the staff or administrator after hours. Children often behave differently when observers are present and it is always advisable to ask the staff if what was observed represented typical behaviour, work selection and socialization.

Children should not be performing for the parents who are watching the class but rather carrying on with normal activities. Because free choice of work is encouraged, visitors must refrain from suggesting activities to the children. Spontaneous activity reveals their true interests and personality growth.

## *Parent Teacher Conferences*

The Parent-Teacher Conferences are scheduled twice per year; once in the first term and again in the final term. Notices are sent home well in advance of the conference dates. Children remain at home during the Conference.

As a courtesy to other parents and to the teacher, timeliness for appointments is important. If necessary, arrangements can be made for further discussion through the School Administrator.

At any time during the school year, parents wishing to meet with the Teachers may do so by contacting the School Administrator. The School staff may request an additional conference with parents.

Occasionally, a teacher may be able to schedule a noon hour conference time to accommodate working parents. Once again children should remain at home or with another parent and cannot, for safety and security reasons, be left in the playground with the "lunch children".

## *Report Cards*

Written report cards are prepared for release to parents only for those children who have completed the three year Primary programme. Children leaving the School prior to

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completion will not normally receive a written report. Children transferring to another Montessori school will receive a report upon request from the new school.

Notes made in preparation for parent-teacher conferences are for the use of the School only and are not released to parents.

### *Snack Regulations*

On birthdays and other special days some children enjoy bringing treats from home to share with the others. Due to the number of children who suffer from allergies and due to our concern for a healthy diet we only permit fruit or vegetable platters as snacks. Sweet treats or food containing peanuts or peanut products are not allowed at School.

### *Objects Brought From Home*

Children do not bring toys to School and "show and tell" is not a part of a Montessori class. Toys can be lost or broken and this would be distressing for a child.

Security objects, such as blankets and stuffed animals, remain at home or in the car and do not come to School.

Objects from the world of nature which inspire discussion about different cultures and countries are welcome.

### *Equipment List*

Children are required to have the correct indoor and outdoor clothing for School.

1. Change of clothing, labelled with child's name.
2. Soft-soled indoor shoes, labelled
3. Outdoor wear for children who remain at School all day is to include full rain gear (hat, pants, jacket, boots) and full winter gear (coat, hat, mitts, boots and pants), labelled.
4. For those children who remain during lunch, a lunch kit, labelled on the outside.

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## Recommended Reading

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|--------------------------|--|
| Montessori, Dr. Maria    | <i>The Absorbent Mind</i><br><i>Education for a New World</i><br><i>The Discovery of the Child</i><br><i>The Formation of Man</i><br><i>The Montessori Method</i><br><i>The Secret of Childhood</i><br><i>To Educate the Human Potential</i> |
| Lillard, Paula           | <i>Montessori, A Modern Approach</i><br><i>Montessori Today</i>  |
| Standing, E.M.           | <i>Maria Montessori - Her Life and Work</i>  |
| Montanaro,<br>Sylvana Q. | Dr. <i>Understanding the Human Being</i>   |

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