
Scripps Montessori School

2026-2027 Parent Handbook

Educating Students Since 1973

Preschool and Kindergarten through 6th Grade



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Welcome from our Directors

Dear Parents,

We welcome you to our school and look forward to including your child in our Montessori family!

The Montessori classroom is a social community concerned with the total development of children in a relaxed atmosphere. Each child sets his own pace, follows her own interest, and is freed of criticism and competition. The Montessori School is uniquely able to assist the child as he struggles to attain his potential. Here, she is offered a carefully graded series of experiments, sensorial in their nature at first, that will greatly broaden her interest. At the child's level, he is introduced to geography, botany, music, foreign language, art and mathematics as part of his daily work. She is able to unlock the secrets of reading and come to an awareness of the function of mathematical processes. The children experience challenges that bring delight and develop positive attitudes towards learning that will sustain them throughout their lives.

We strongly encourage our parents to become better acquainted with Dr. Montessori's principles by reading some of the recommended books and websites included. Our goal for your child entails helping her to develop a positive attitude and confidence toward school that will serve as an excellent foundation for creative learning.

Sincerely,



Ciara Concepcion, Executive Director



Our Educational Philosophy

Doctor Maria Montessori was an Italian Physician and Educator. She was the first woman to receive a medical degree at the University of Rome in 1894. Born in 1870, set out to discover how the learning process develops. She developed her method of education over a 45-year-old period of directly observing and working with children. Her observations over many years, aided by her perceptive genius, brought about the innovations for which she is renowned. Her discoveries gave us a different view of the child; discovering the young child capable of demonstrating intellect inherent in her nature. She left an unparalleled gift to the child of today as a result of her life long study of the child's mind and its unique way of absorbent learning.



She revealed the child's sensitivity to his environment, from which he absorbs his perceptions and knowledge. She honored the individuality of the child. Each pupil must be given responsible freedom to meet the special needs of the environmental learning.

As success builds upon success, the child gains an inner discipline and the security of a strong self-image. Social interaction, guided by the "collective interests", with children both younger and older than himself, adds to his joy and growth.

She recognized that the only valid impulse to learning is the self-motivation of the child. The child moves himself toward learning. The directress prepares the environment, programs the activity, functions as a catalytic agent and exemplary, and offers the child stimulation and guidance; It is the child who learns and is motivated through the work itself to persist in his chosen task.

Dr. Montessori devoted her life to the education of children, and was honored and respected throughout the world at the time of her death in 1952. The basic principle of the Montessori Philosophy of education is that "every child carries within him potentialities of the MAN he can become". In order to develop his physical, intellectual and character powers to the fullest, he must have freedom – freedom to be achieved through order and self-discipline.

The world of the child is full of sights and sounds that at first appear chaotic. From this chaos, the child must gradually create order and learn to distinguish the impressions that assail his senses. Slowly but surely, he will gain mastery of himself and his environment. Dr. Montessori developed what she called the prepared environment, which already possesses a definite order and disposes the child to develop at his own speed, according to his own capacities. Providing positive direction, the Montessori directress and parents realize the importance of allowing the child to develop “in his own time”, not in a preconceived idea of the same.

“Montessori is not interested in accelerating mental growth but in helping each child to fulfill his potential. The way to facilitate the fastest possible attainment of this goal is to help the child follow his own inner time clock for development, for it is the child who must develop himself. No one person can do the development of another. The adult can only assist – and cheer from the sidelines. The adult acts as a catalyst, not as a creator, in the child’s development of himself.”

The method by which a child is taught in Montessori schools might well be called “structural learning”. Since the child has learned to work independently in the prepared environment, he is ready to enjoy the presence of other children without necessarily working directly with them. The Montessori directress thus is able to work with each child individually.

The structure of the Montessori learning and training involves the use of many materials with which the child may work independently. Dr. Montessori painstakingly and scientifically developed these materials over a 45-year-old period of work and observation.

A child by nature moves himself towards learning. To this effect, Dr. Montessori stated that any unnecessary help given to the child hinders him in growth. The teacher prepares the environment, observes and directs the activity, functions as a catalyst of the child and environment, and offers the work according to the readiness and need of each child.

If the Montessori child is free to learn, it is important he has acquired from experience both physical and mental order, the “inner discipline” which frees him. He becomes aware, not only of his freedom, but of his corresponding responsibility of himself and to others. This is the core of Dr. Montessori’s philosophy. The aim of Montessori is to develop the whole child. Intellectual, Physical and Social development are of equal value in the prepared environment. The teacher strives to encourage and guide the child and to help him realize a balanced, happy, aware personality that will enhance his life as an adult.

To learn more about Dr. Montessori’s methods:

Standing, E. M. (1957). Maria Montessori, her life and work. London: Harper Collins.

Montessori, M. (1967b). The Discovery of the Child. New York: Random House Publishing Group.

Montessori, M. (1966). The Secret of Childhood. New York: Random House Publishing Group.

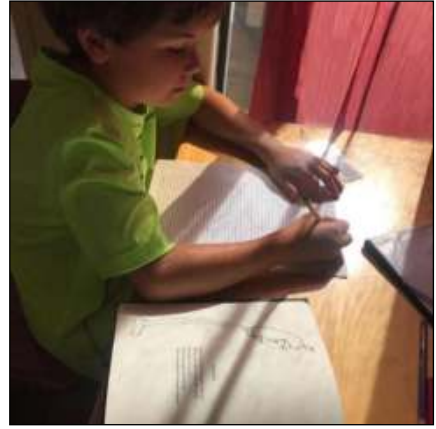


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2. Our Values and Goals

It is one of the primary goals of Scripps Montessori School to create a “home away from home” that will bring the child closer to her community and keep the child close to his family. The Montessori classroom is often referred to as a “prepared environment.” This means that our Montessori teachers anticipate what the child’s developmental needs are and prepared meaningful work for the child to engage. The materials in the room are child-sized and organized in a meaningful sequence for the child to locate and select. Our goal is for children to be able to independently direct their learning.

Supporting Your Child’s Development and Transition to School

The home is certainly the crucial environment for the child and it is probably the most difficult to prepare. Siblings, neighbors, phone calls, necessary errands, household duties and work demands all compete with the child’s demands for their parents’ attention. To try and duplicate a classroom situation would not only be dull or the child, but impossible for the adult. Too much “school” at home will cause the child to choose less taxing work at school because she will desire rest. As parents, what can we do?

At Scripps, we recommend:

1. Having your child’s clothes at her level to encourage independence in dressing herself. A low rod or placing folded clothes on shelves at the child’s eye level can support children in dressing themselves.
2. Encourage children to put away toys by placing toys on low shelves and/or in clear storage bins instead of throwing them into a large toy chest.
3. Integrate a child-sized table and chair set where your child can play and/or snack (if appropriate).
4. Encourage your child’s fine motor development by purchasing child appropriate scissors, paper, and drawing materials.
5. Encourage your child to care for your home environment by purchasing child-sized cooking and cleaning materials (i.e. dustpan / brush, broom, mop, kitchen utensils.) Make cloths, sponges, and paper towels accessible.
6. Do your best to anticipate your child’s needs. Plan ahead to her participation and to allow her to be as independent as practical.

First Days

The first days of school can be a great challenging the young child’s life. His adjustment to this new environment depends, in large part, upon the attitudes of his parents and their cooperation with the guides.

We recommend avoiding excessive discussions about school. The child should feel it will be a normal and natural part of his growth and an extension of his home life. If you are calm and positive in your approach, your child will sense this and feel that going to school is a good thing. At our school, we go by Just a few days before, teach your child the name of the guide. Here we use first names and remind your child, briefly, about what to expect (i.e.

“When you go to school, you will see Ms. _____, you will have some snack, you will play outside, you will have lunch, (you will take a rest), and then I will pick you up for home.”).

Our philosophy suggests that prolonged goodbyes are actually more difficult for the young child. Our experience suggests that parents who show a matter of fact attitude toward going to school provide their children with a sense of security. Elementary families should plan to arrive during the first drop off window (8:10-8:25am). Drop off begins promptly at 8:10 am. Primary and toddler families should plan to arrive during the second drop off window (8:25-8:45am). Drop off ends at 8:45am. Upon arrival, please remain in your car. Traffic flow has been set up to allow for a safe and expedient good bye. Pull up to the safety area and unlock / open the door. A teacher assistant will help your child out of the car. We request that your child's car seat be on the passenger side of the car. It can be difficult for parents to let a reluctant / crying child go to school. Please remember, children's anxiety over new situations is normal. It is very important that you permit the teacher to soothe and support reluctant children. A crying child rarely continues to cry for more than a few minutes.

Serving as a Model AMI School

In an effort to provide the highest level of education to our staff and support each child's optimal development, we work in collaboration with The Montessori Institute of San Diego Training Center faculty. Our partnership with the Training Center ensures that we remain firmly grounded in the work to implement Dr. Montessori's theory and practices while simultaneously evaluating our practices in light of contemporary cognitive and developmental research. AMI certified trainers provide feedback, education, and additional training and support on a regular basis for Scripps Montessori staff. In turn, our school serves as a training site for student teachers to observe developmental differences in children's interest, self-direction, and work and to practice offering presentations with Montessori materials and manage a Montessori classroom.

Statement of the Child's Rights

The State of California (CA Title 22, Regulation 101223) requires all childcare facilities to afford children these basic rights:

- To be accorded dignity in his/her personal relationships with staff.
- To receive safe, healthful and comfortable accommodations.
- To be free from corporal or unusual punishment, infliction of pain, humiliation, intimidation, ridicule, coercion, threat, mental abuse or other actions of a punitive nature including interference with functions of daily living such as eating, sleeping or toileting, or withholding of shelter, clothing, medication or aids to physical functioning.
- To be free to attend religious services or activities of his/her choice.
- Not to be locked in any room, building or center premises.
- Not to be placed in any restraining device.

In addition, at Scripps Montessori School we uphold:

- Children have the right to develop their own unique personality.
- Children have the right to dignity and to be treated with respect.
- Children have the right to learn in a peaceful, harmonious environment.
- Children have the right to integrity and to be viewed as rationale in their problem solving.
- Children have the right to make 'mistakes 'and try again.
- Children have the right to experience freedom, including freedom from adult judgment, with limits and responsibilities.
- Children have the right to make sense of the limits and responsibilities they experience at home, in the classroom, and in their community.
- Children have the right to self-direct their learning, to cultivate their interests and expertise.

Statement of Parents' Rights

The State of California also requires all childcare facilities to afford parents these basic rights:

- Enter and inspect the child care center without advance notice whenever children are in care.
- File a complaint against the licensee with the licensing office and review the licensee's public file kept by the licensing office.
- Review, at the child care center, reports of licensing visits and substantiated complaints against the licensee made during the last three years.
- Complain to the licensing office and inspect the child care center without discrimination or retaliation against you or your child.
- Request in writing that a parent not be allowed to visit your child or take your child from the child care center, provided you have shown a certified copy of a court order.

-
- Receive from the licensee the name, address and telephone number of the local licensing office.
 - Be informed by the licensee, upon request, of the name and type of association to the child care center for any adult who has been granted a criminal record exemption, and that the name of the person may also be obtained by contacting the local licensing office.
 - Receive, from the licensee, the Caregiver Background Check Process form.

In addition, at Scripps Montessori we uphold:

- Parents have the right to dignity and to be treated with respect.
- Parents have the right to integrity and to be viewed as rationale in their parenting.
- Parents have the right to make 'mistakes 'and try again.
- Parents have the right to experience freedom, including freedom from teachers' judgment, with limits and responsibilities
- Parents have the right to be informed about what is happening in their child's classroom.
- Parents have the right to be informed of changes in the classroom routine.
- Parents have the right to observe their children's classroom.
- Parents have the right to request an oral update on their child's progress.

Statement of the Teacher's Rights

At Scripps Montessori, we ask you to please afford our teachers these rights:

- Teachers have the right to dignity and to be treated with respect.
- Teachers have the right to integrity and to be viewed as rational in their interactions with the children.
- Teachers have the right to make 'mistakes 'and try again.
- Teachers have the right to experience freedom, including freedom from parent and administrative judgment, with limits and responsibilities.
- Teachers have a right to protect their personal / family time.

3. School Directory

In the Montessori classroom, prepared adults serve as the links between the child and the outside social, natural, and cultural world. These adults help the child to identify the materials/resources she needs and helps her think through what she wants to learn. Prepared adults are ready to respond to the child by offering him the necessary tools to explore the world. Dr. Montessori called these prepared adults 'guides'. She believed the role of the guide was not to 'teach' the child about the world, but to guide them in developing the skills for self-discovery and self-directed learning. Thus, guides provide children with opportunities to develop increasing independence from family and school.

Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) guides all have the equivalent of masters level training in the areas of your child's developmental needs, developmentally appropriate curriculum, classroom management, and scientific observation methodology. At Scripps Montessori each classroom is staffed with an AMI certified guide and a one or two trained assistants. Some of our Primary classrooms offer a bilingual approach to educating children. That means that these classrooms are equipped with two AMI certified guides: one who speaks only in English and the other who speaks only in Spanish. These two guides work together to plan and deliver lessons across all areas of the classroom in a way that supports the child's development of both languages.

Executive Director: Ms. Ciara Concepcion

info@scrippsmontessori.com

Administrative Assistants: Ms. Arlett, Ms. Polly,

Instructional Staff:

Toddler Community Guides:

Sky Room: Ms. Ana, Ms. Noelle

Garden Room: Ms. Luisana, Ms. Carolina, Ms. Nayeli

Primary Community Guides:

Treehouse: Ms. Vanessa and Ms. Paola

Apple Orchard: Ms. Erika and Ms. Fernanda

Sun Room: Ms. Sandra and Ms. Tanya

Greenhouse: Ms. Ada

Lapis: Ms. Adriana



Elementary Community Guides:

Elementary: Mr. Gabriel and Ms. Daria

Floating Teachers: Ms. Ilis, Ms. Claudia and Ms. Mariana

4. Our School-Wide Policies

I. Policies Related to Program Enrollment

Admissions

The basic tenet of Montessori education is to expose the young, sensitive child to a carefully prepared environment. Therefore, children are encouraged to enroll as young as is practical. The usual entering age for our Toddler communities is 18 months. The usual entering age for our Primary communities is three years old. Prepared children who are two and a half years old and who are toilet trained may be admitted to the Primary community. The usual age for entering our Elementary community is six years old.

It is highly recommended that a child over four years of age be enrolled in the full day program so that they may receive the full social, emotional, and academic benefits of our program. Preference for full day openings will be given to children who continue to our elementary program.

Those children with emotional, intellectual or physical disabilities will be considered for admission on a case-by-case basis. Specific medical information will be required. Admission will depend on the ability of the child to benefit from the program. Children will not be admitted if they require one-on-one supervision. Careful consideration will be given to those children who may present a danger to other children in the program.

Enrollment Contracts and Forms

Scripps Montessori School is a private school dedicated to academic excellence in early childhood education. We follow, as much as possible, the San Diego Unified School District Calendar.

A \$400.00 non-refundable registration fee per family is due at the time the application is submitted. A non-refundable registration fee is due at the time the application is submitted. This fee is not applied to any part of the tuition. The class placement list is made up in the order to which applications and registration fees are received and at the discretion of the Administrator. To maintain the quality of the program and to remain within regulatory guidelines, it is necessary to limit the size of our sessions. Therefore, morning and afternoon class assignments will be left to the advisement of the Administrator. Your name will be placed on a waiting list when enrollment is filled.

Tuition Policy

Tuition fees are based on a 180-day school year. For convenience, payments have been prorated over a 10-month period. First and last months' tuition are due on the child's first day of school. Tuition payments are due on the first day of school each month.

Extended care is provided as an additional service of the school, not as its primary function. We also partner with teachers and outside organizations to offer a variety of after school enrichment programs (i.e. music, dance, cooking, athletics). These fees are not included in tuition. Parents will make payments directly to the teacher / organization offering the enrichment class.

Tuition Schedule 2026 – 2027

Registration Fee: (Non-Refundable)..... \$400.00

Elementary and Primary Communities:

Full Days (8:30am- 2:30pm / per month)..... \$1420.00

Half Days (8:30am-12:00am / per month).....\$1200.00

Extra Half Days \$36.00

Toddler Program ONLY: (18 months to 2 ½ years) 3,4,5 Day Programs

Full Day: Five Days -\$1660 / Four Days -\$1600 / Three Days/ \$1430

Half Day:(8:30–11:30 am)Five Days–\$1415/ Four Days – \$1370 /Three Days–\$1255

Extended Care (Available from 7:30am-6:00pm) Toddlers aftercare: 3:00 – 4:45

Before 8:30am and after 2:30pm (per hour)..... \$8.00

Annual Insurance Premium..... \$95.00

Monthly Security Fee:.....Per child \$25.00 per Family \$40.00

Our tuition is paid annually. Above is the monthly payment, tuition is a yearly one. Equal monthly payments are due by the 1st of the month. Payments are not affected by vacation days, closures, holidays etc.

Children who enroll during the school year will be billed at a daily rate of 85. dlls. for the remainder of the school year. In addition, children who withdraw mid-year will have their tuition changed to a daily rate and recalculated. Toddlers who enroll during the school year will be billed at a 95. dlls for the remainder of the school year as well as if withdrawal mid school year toddlers will be billed at a 95. dlls per day fee. If a family enrolls, but the child does not attend and the tuition payment is not received the child's space will be filled by the next child on the waiting list. Back tuition payment and repayment of the registration fee

would reinstate the enrollment provided there was sufficient space available. There is a \$40.00 late fee for payment received after the 6th of the month. Enrollment will not continue unless this fee is paid.

Early arrivals and late departures shall incur extended day charges. Delinquent accounts will be carried not more than 15 days beyond the due date before enrollment is terminated. Your child has space reserved for the school year. School expenses are not significantly diminished by a child's absence.

Regretfully, no tuition allowances can be made for a child not in attendance. One month written notice is expected for withdrawal. Refunds are made only upon business transfer. Students are accepted on a tentative basis, pending a determination of suitability of the program for the child and the ability to adjust to the group environment.

Enrollment of your child assumes compliance with and support of the policies stated in the Scripps Montessori School Handbook, as well as the tuition policies stated above.

Re-Enrollment

Each January marks the beginning of the re-enrollment process for the following school year. Current students receive priority, so if you are interested in continuing your child's education at Scripps Montessori School, it's important to complete the re-enrollment process according to the following schedule:

1. January: Enrollment Agreement is handed out. The new agreement lists the final date of the Re-Enrollment Period, tuition and payment schedules for both half day and full day options.
2. By the final day of Re-Enrollment Period, complete and return the Enrollment Agreement with a non-refundable re-enrollment fee and registration deposit. Form and registration deposit are necessary to secure child's place in Scripps Montessori programs.
3. After the due date has passed, Scripps Montessori begins accepting new families for the next school year and cannot assure previously enrolled child's place unless signed Enrollment Agreement and registration deposit has been returned to school.

Class Placement for Currently Enrolled Students Transitioning to a New Level

It is the responsibility of the Director in consultation with the Guides, to facilitate the process of placing students moving from one level to another. Many factors are taken into consideration in making this important decision, and the goal is to find a suitable fit for each child. The Guides will observe the children and the composition of the classes, looking closely at the dynamic of the children within each classroom community. Several meetings may be held focusing on placement, taking into account these observations and relevant input from all faculty members. Because class placement is based solely on the needs of each individual child and the composition of the existing class, as well as the need to balance the classes by age and gender, we cannot accept parent requests for placement in a particular class. A considerable amount of time is spent determining the best class placement for each child.

Late Fees

If payment is not received by the 6th of the month, a \$40.00 late fee will be assessed. If payment in full has not been made by the 15th of the month, the child may be removed from the school unless prior special arrangements have been approved. Tuition must be current before an enrollment fee is accepted for the following school year. Student records may not be released if an account is delinquent. There will be a \$30.00 service charge for all returned checks.

Enrollment in Before and After School Programs

We offer options for parents who need to extend care in the morning and after school. Before care is designed to help families who need a safe and engaging environment for their child before regular school hours. Enrollment in before care occurs through the school. The before care program is in keeping with the Montessori Philosophy of the school, providing opportunities for the children to explore and stay active under the guidance of trained staff.

Before Care will typically focus on reading, puzzles, building blocks, and board games in order to promote a smooth transition into the classroom. Before Care is offered Monday – Friday from 7:30-8:00 and is held in Apple Orchard. Parents are asked to sign children in upon arrival.

After Care offers children an additional opportunity to play outside (weather permitting), eat an additional snack and explore puzzles, board games, building blocks and stories. After care is offered Monday - Friday 3:00 - 6:00pm.

Additionally, outside vendors (i.e. Soccer Shots) or guides may offer their own, on campus enrichment courses. These courses may vary in day, length, and cost and will be announced during the school year.

Disciplinary Policies

Consistent with the State of California (Title 22, Regulation 101223.2) we do not use corporal punishment. Moreover, any form of discipline or punishment that violates a child's personal rights is not permitted.

A Montessori Perspective on 'Misbehavior': Dr. Montessori observed that children who appeared to be 'misbehaving' we're doing so because the demands of the environment or the expectations of the adult were beyond the capacity of the child. As such, there are different expectations of behavior for each Program at Scripps Montessori School. For example, using pushing or hitting to solve problems is more common in the Toddler environment where children are still learning to use their words. However, children in the Elementary Program are expected to refrain from these behaviors.

Discipline in a Montessori environment does not refer to the imposition of force by an authoritative figure. Rather, it refers to the balance of inner discipline and inner control developed by children engaged in meaningful activity. There are no punishments or rewards of any kind. Thus, it is important to remember that the school's response to a child's 'misbehavior' will take into consideration the child's level and what the expectations are for that age.

Discipline Policy: Scripps Montessori School strives to re-direct and correct unacceptable behavior in the classroom. However, there may be times when we ask for full parental cooperation in helping the child to find better alternatives to his/her behavior. Procedures for addressing severe or persistent behavioral challenges are as follows:

- When a child's behavior presents a significant harm to him/herself, the other children in the class, or the material or when a child's behavior a significant and persistent disruption to learning, Guides may send home 'Incident Reports' to alert parents to the frequency and severity of disruptive behavior.
- If the behavior is severe or persists beyond three incident reports, parents will be asked to come to the school to discuss the situation and find solutions together with the Guides. Parents or teachers may request to have additional support from

school staff during the meeting.

- If the behavior intensifies or persists, parents and Guides may meet with School Director to discuss whether additional resources/supports may be needed to help the child.
- Finally, if the behavior intensifies or persists, parents and Guides will meet with the School Director to discuss the extent to which Scripps Montessori is a good-fit for the child/family.

Expulsion Policy:

In the interest of creating a safe, non-threatening environment, possession of drugs, alcohol, or weapons at Scrips Montessori is grounds for immediate expulsion. Other grounds for expulsion include aggressive or violent behavior, or any behavior that distracts the student, or other students, from making progress. These behaviors will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Policies for Terminating Enrollment:

As stated earlier, upon the enrollment of a new student, both the school and parents reserve the right to terminate any enrollment contract within the first six weeks school without any monetary repercussions. The school reserves the right to terminate any enrollment contract between the parents and the school in cases where:

- a) The parents have not paid the tuition on the specified date.
- b) If there are severe or persistent disciplinary problems or disruptive behavior that cannot be resolved in accordance with our discipline policy.
- c) If the school program does not meet the parents 'needs or expectations.
- d) d) If the Executive Director/Interim Head of School considers that the school is pedagogically inappropriate for the child (if it is not the right place for the child).

Withdrawal of a Student from School: Parents who have decided to withdraw their child from Scripps must contact the Director who will advise them of the withdrawal procedure, including signing a formal withdrawal form. Before making this decision, it is strongly recommended that parents speak with their child's teacher and the Director.

II. Policies Related to the Health and Safety of Our Children

Medical Examinations

The State of California Community Care Licensing mandates that children may not be admitted to the school unless all forms, including the San Diego County Report of Health Examination for School Entry (Elementary) and the State of California Physician's Report (Toddler/Primary) are complete and on file in the School Office prior to the child's attendance. In order for us to be in compliance with licensing requirements, please be sure that all forms are turned in to the School Office before the first day of class in order for your child to attend the first day of school.

Immunizations

The State of California Community Care Licensing mandates immunizations for children entering school. A list of required immunizations for each age/grade level can be found at www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents. As of January, 2016 parents or guardians may no longer choose to opt out of state required vaccinations and we, as a state licensed facility may not accept children who do not have ALL state required vaccinations. For your child's protection, as of Sept 1, 2016, all teaching staff is also required to show proof of immunization against Measles and Pertussis. Children who have not met their immunization requirements may be excluded from attendance until such immunizations have been completed. (CA Title 22, Regulation 101220.1)

Infectious Diseases

The State of California Community Care Licensing mandates that a child with any of the following symptoms be isolated and the parent(s) notified and asked to remove the child from the school as soon as possible.

- Fever of 100.5° F
- Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool per day)
- Vomiting or Nausea
- Has unusual yellow or green drainage from nose or eyes
- Severe cough that disrupts normal activity
- Unusual yellow color to skin or eyes
- Skin or eye lesions or rashes that are severe, weeping, or pus-filled
- Stiff neck and headache with one or more of the symptoms listed above
- Difficult breathing or wheezing
- Complaints of severe pain
- Seems very tired and in need of bed rest (common flu symptoms)

If your child is not feeling well in the morning, please observe them closely before sending them to school and risking the health of other children and their guides. It is important to understand that we are required by the State law to send home any child who evidences signs of infection. If your child shows any symptoms of illness, we will contact you and ask you to pick up your child immediately (CA Title 22, Regulation 101.552-639). He or she must be isolated from the other children and will wait for you in the Office. If we are unable to contact you or you are not able to pick up your child on short notice, we will contact the person(s) listed on your child's Identification and Emergency Information form.

Children must be free from symptoms for 24 hours before returning to school. If your child develops any of these symptoms while at school, you will be called immediately. If a child has mild cold symptoms that do not impair his/her functioning, the child may remain in the classroom and the parent(s) notified when they pick up their child.

If your child is diagnosed with any communicable disease (chicken pox, whooping cough, fifth disease, pink eye, etc.) please report this at once to the office as well as your child's guide. A physician's note stating your child is no longer contagious may be required for children to return to school.

Notes on Lice

Because head lice can spread quickly from person to person, especially in group settings with young children, it is our School's policy that children with head lice be immediately picked up from school and treated. Home treatments can be effective if followed through

diligently; including combing the hair to remove all nits and treating the home. Because of the difficulty in removing lice, we ask that you wait 24 hours before your child returns to school to ensure all nits were removed. If children are found to repeatedly return to school with lice, the school may require a note from a professional service stating your child is free of lice before returning. Once your child has received professional treatment, and is free of lice, your child may return to school.

Administration of Medication

The State of California Health Department requires that we have a written directive from a doctor and a signed parental consent prior to administering medication of any kind (including aspirin, Tylenol, or homeopathic remedies). Therefore, when children require medication for allergies, asthma, or recovery from bacterial infections etc. parents must come into the Office to complete a Medication Administration form before we can give medication to your child. For the health and safety of the children (CA Title 22, Regulation 101226), all medication must come to school in its original container from the pharmacy, not in another container or plastic bag. All medication must be handed directly to another adult, not sent with the child in a lunchbox or backpack.

Please notify the school if and when your child is on medication of any kind.

All medications will be administered by a staff member to any child enrolled at Scripps Montessori must follow the procedures listed below:

- The first dose of any medicine must be given at home in case of allergic reactions.
- All medications must be brought to the office by the parent or carpool driver.
- Medication cannot be sent or kept in lunch boxes or backpacks.
- Prescription medications must be in the original container labeled with the child's name, physician's name, a date, and directions.
- The 'Medication Dispensing Form' must be completed. The school must administer the medicine according to the physician's directions on the prescription medication and label directions on non-prescription (over the counter) medication.
- The parent must provide an appropriate measuring spoon or dispenser.

For specific requirements for administering medications for chronic medical conditions, please see Appendix A. In order to safely serve children attending Scripps Montessori School with chronic medical conditions requiring routine administration of medication, we will work with parents to craft and file a Medical Emergency Plan (see below).

Accidents on Campus

Minor accidents occurring during school hours receive the prompt and careful attention of staff members. A Child Accident Report is completed and the parents are notified. In the

event of a more serious accident, the family is notified at once and arrangements are made for the child to be taken home or to their physician, or if deemed necessary, to an emergency care center. Parents are strongly urged to inform the school of any change of contact information during the school year.

Responding to Medical Emergencies

It is of utmost importance that parents inform the school of any food allergies the child has or may have in the Child's Preadmission Health History, Consent for Emergency Medical Treatment, and Physicians Report prior to the child's first day of school. We also encourage parents to keep an eye on any potential allergies and to communicate these with the school. In the case of an emergency, EMS (911) paramedics will be called and/or the child will be taken to the emergency room at Scripps Memorial Hospital or another facility per the Consent for Emergency Medical Treatment form.

Please be sure that you have completed the Identification and Emergency Information where you may specify the physician and dentist to be called in the event of an emergency.

If your child has a condition that could present life altering/threatening emergency, you will be asked to complete a Medical Emergency Plan. Conditions requiring a Medical Emergency Plan might include but are not limited to allergies (i.e. food, insects), seizures, and physical disability. A Medical Emergency Plan outlines how our staff will respond in the event of a medical emergency.

Responding to Natural Disasters

An Emergency Plan has been developed to provide a framework for the protection of students, staff, and school facilities, as well as to provide an appropriate response by school staff to a range of emergency and disaster situations. In the event of a widespread disaster, it is understood that available government resources will be overtaxed and may be unable to respond to all requests for assistance. Scripps Montessori endeavors to be self-sufficient for 24 hours. During a true emergency or disaster situation the telephone will be used only to report emergency conditions or to request emergency assistance. Cellular phone will be used if phone service is interrupted.

In order to prepare for natural disasters, we invite the children to practice three types of drills: fire, earthquake, shelter-in-place ('safety') drills. These drills are held regularly throughout the school year to ensure a calm, well-rehearsed response to an emergency. We practice earthquake and shelter in place drills once a year, and fire drills once a semester. All classes practice and execute the procedures for each drill. Classes practice gathering at a specified assembly point, roll is taken, and all children are accounted for. In the event of an ongoing / real emergency, parents will be notified by email and phone.

Emergency Forms / Comfort Packs: The State of California requires that prior to attending school, all children must have a 'Comfort Pack 'that includes their Identification and Emergency Contact Form and Consent for Emergency Medical Treatment Form. Emergency packs are gathered in the classroom along with the first aid kit. During drills and ongoing emergencies, Guides will transport comfort packs to the designated area. School administrators have supplies of fresh water for dissemination during emergencies.

School Closure in the Event of Emergency

Release of students may be advised by local law enforcement, or authorized by the Director whenever the conditions exist that warrant such action (e.g., fire, severe storms, earthquakes, highly contagious illnesses). Students must be picked up and signed out by a parent or an authorized representative of the parent listed on the Identification and Emergency Information form.

When the decision has been made to release students, parents will be notified through the Remind APP within minutes. If your contact information changes during the year, please let your child's Guides and the administrator know immediately.

Students who are not picked up will be kept at school or at a school-designated alternative shelter. In the event that we need to evacuate the premises parents will be notified immediately through the Remind App of our evacuation location.

Camera and Internet Safety

On a daily basis, your child's guide may take pictures and/or video of your child at work in the classroom. Our staff can use these photos with your permission on our website, on classroom blogs, and for educational purposes at the Training Center. Upon enrollment, you will be asked to sign a Parental Media Consent form. This form allows you to determine the level of photo sharing that you are comfortable with. Only Scripps Montessori staff will have permission to capture images of the children. Parents and SMS Training Center Students are not permitted to use cameras in the classroom for any reason.

Nutrition and Rest

The children's work at school is directly affected by the nutritional quality of their meals and the amount and quality of rest they experience at night. **Please note: our school is peanut and tree-nut free.**

Breakfast: Please provide your child with a nutritious breakfast each morning. A high-protein breakfast that includes a generous portion of meat, eggs, cheese, nuts, or beans is essential to the child's development, learning, and enjoyment at school. This is both the universal experience of the Guides as well as the findings of well-respected public health research studies. A child who has not had a high-protein breakfast is not ready to come to school.

Snack: A snack, prepared by the community is available for children in the Toddler and Primary Communities every morning. Elementary children are invited to bring their own nutritious snack from home and take snack during the morning work period.

Lunch: Mealtimes are relaxed times, rich with conversation and fellowship. Dr. Montessori observed that children enjoy preparing their lunches. In the evening we invite you to select with your child the food he/she will bring to school the next day. Please limit their selection to 3 or 4 items. This will help them to use their lunch time more wisely and avoid waste. Please send only as much food as your child will eat, and remember that all food sent to school should be of nutritional value. Lunches need to come ready to eat. If you would like your child to experience a hot meal from home, you can either send food warmed at home in insulated containers or Guides can warm food using a microwave.

At the end of lunch, leftover food will be re-wrapped and sent home to give you feedback as to your child's interest in lunch, the appropriate quantity to send, and to avoid waste. Please invite your child to participate in cleaning out the lunch container at home. This extends the Montessori classroom experience by allowing your child to make choices, assume responsibility, and develop independence.

We ask that you assist us in protecting our environment by consciously choosing packaging that is reusable and/or recyclable. Wax paper bags for sandwiches are better than plastic, food can be put in re-usable containers, and metal cans may be recycled. Please, no Styrofoam. Your child will feel the most independent when they can prepare and clean up after themselves. Check to make sure your child can open and close all packaging.

The following items should **NOT** be included in lunches: Please refrain from sending 'Lunchables', chocolate milk, juice boxes, popcorn, candy, gum, carbonated beverages, or food high in refined sugars and dyes (such as Jell-O or sprinkle yogurt). Pop-top or snack-

pack cans are discouraged due to the sharp-edged lids. During the day and at lunch the children will drink filtered water from their own cups. ¹

¹ **American Heart Association:**

http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/HealthyLiving/HealthyEating/SimpleCookingwithHeart/Meal-Planning-How-to-Pack-a-Healthy-School-Lunch_UCM_445184_Article.jsp#.V9x_02VjPzI

Eating Well: <http://www.eatingwell.com/recipes/18679/mealtimes/lunch/school/>

Hot Lunches for Purchase: In order to support our busy families, Lunches are prepared in house fresh every morning. A menu will be provided each Friday to return on Monday for the week ahead.

Cost is \$6 per lunch.

We also offer vegetarian and vegan options.

Vehicles on Campus

In order to facilitate a safe and efficient arrival, we ask that you drop your child off in our drop-off line every morning. We have two lines for drop off and pick up: one that serves Primary and Toddler programs and one that serves the Elementary programs (Please see the Traffic Map at the back of the Handbook). When you get to the front of the line, a staff member will approach your car, you will sign your child in on the prepared sign-in/out sheet, and a staff member will greet your child/ren, complete a health check, and assist them out of the car seat/car, invite them into school, and walk them to the classroom (Toddler only). **Please do not get out of the car during drop-off as this holds up the line.**

Car Seats: The State of California law (CA Health and Safety Code, Regulation 27360) requires children younger than 8 years of age to be restrained in an appropriate child safety seat in the back seat of the vehicle. Children over 8 must be in the rear seat with a seatbelt. Booster seats are recommended for children under 4 '9" as seat belts are not designed for children. Children must remain restrained while the car is in motion. The State of California mandates all Scripps Montessori staff report incidents of unrestrained children.

Traffic: For the safety of all children and adults, always follow the Traffic Safety Procedures listed below. Please communicate this information to anyone dropping off/picking up your child. Please always take the time to sign your child in and out using your legal signature, on one of the sign-in/sign-out sheets. The State of California licensing regulations require that Scripps Montessori staff do a morning health check for each child before accepting your signature.

Please review the Traffic Map and follow these Safety Procedures:

- The loading and unloading area is a **NO CELL PHONE ZONE** for the safety of children, parents and teachers.
- Please do not talk or text on your cell phone while your car is in motion or while your children are being loaded or unloaded from the car; for safety's sake, and in order to properly greet or send off your child, your full attention is required at that time. The loading and unloading area is a **NO CELL PHONE ZONE**.

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- When parking your car on campus near drop-off or pick up times, please leave the spaces adjacent to the school empty. This is the safe zone for Guides to assist children from their cars.

The State of California law requires children remain buckled while the car is in motion. For safety reasons, please have your child remain buckled and seated until your car is stopped in the loading and unloading areas.

Release of Child from School: Please alert individuals designated to pick up your child that they will be asked to show identification. The State of California licensing requirements requires that we can only release your child to individuals whose name appears on the Identification and Emergency Information.

Carpooling / Playdates: Scripps Montessori encourages all families to consider carpooling in an effort to reduce neighborhood traffic, protect the environment, shorten drop-off and pick-up times, and have all children and staff in class on time. If you do arrange a carpool with other parents, they should be listed on your child's Identification and Emergency Information form as "Persons Authorized to Take Child from the Facility." Please keep us informed of any additions or changes in carpooling arrangements. Please let your carpool driver know if there is a change in your child's regular schedule, so they know they're not responsible for your child that day.

Leaving Car Seats at School: In order to avoid losing or mixing up car seats, we ask that you clearly label car seats with your family's name should you need to leave it at school for any reason.

Playdates: We know it can be tempting to arrange playdates with another parent during the drop-off pick up time. However, our aim is to model safe behaviors for the children and to promote feelings of inclusion. We ask that, at drop off and pick-up, you focus on the task of safely dropping off and pick up your child. Please arrange playdates off campus and out of ear-shot of other children.

Playground Safety

We set limits with the children to ensure safe behaviors on the playground. These limits parallel the limits we have in our classroom:

- *We care for ourselves and others.* This translates into limits on how to dress appropriately to play, how to use the play structures safely, and how to interact with

other children. Our overarching principle is that children should play safely both physically, socially and emotionally.

- *We care for our environment and our community.* This translates into the limits for how to care for the play structures / apparatus; limits for how to interact with the green spaces / gardens, and limits surrounding the kind play permitted and the way we resolve conflicts.

- Our overarching principles are guided by Dr. Montessori's theory of Peace Education. We discourage aggressive or violent forms of play (i.e. gun play, sword fights, playing 'war'). And, we strive to help our children use conflict in play as a vehicle for resolving conflicts in society.

III. Policies Related to Instructional Time

Regular attendance is essential if children are to receive the full benefit of their Montessori education.

Importance of On-Time Arrival and Morning Routine

Children are very sensitive to the order of the day. They need to have the opportunity to greet their teacher at the appropriate time and to say hello to their friends before becoming engaged in their activities.

Children who enter the classroom late miss the ritual of the morning greeting and may have to wait until the classroom teacher is available to greet them. This can leave them feeling lost and without a sense of order for how to begin the day. It can be difficult for them to settle in and orient themselves to a class already in progress. They often feel embarrassed and uncomfortable entering the class late. They may miss an important lesson or communication regarding the day's events and/or schedule. Finally, as children move into the elementary program, learning time lost can affect growth of math and language skills. Consistently arriving 10-15 minutes late means a child misses the equivalent of up to 45 "days" of one-hour lessons, for example, 180 day school year.

It is important for children, as they grow and develop in all areas of life, to develop the habit of punctuality (an important Grace & Courtesy lesson). If children are coming in late on a regular basis, parents will be asked to come in and meet in person with their child's teacher in order to discuss a plan for improving the situation and to better understand any challenges to overcome. Parents who consistently drop their child off late to school will be emailed and asked to attend a meeting.

Procedures for Late Arrival: We do understand that there are circumstances that may prevent your timeliness on any given day.

- Elementary children are considered tardy after 8:45am. Until 8:45am, Scripps Montessori staff will be available outside Elementary to receive your child. After 8:45am, please park your car and walk to the office. The administrative assistant will walk your child down to his/her Elementary classroom.
- Primary Children are considered tardy after 8:45am. Until 8:45am, Scripps Montessori Staff will be available to receive your child. After 8:45am, please park your car and walk your child into the office to sign them in. Office staff will notify your child's teachers that he/she has arrived. We ask that you please wait with your child

in the front office until one of the guides or the Administrative Assistant is available to greet and escort him/her to the classroom.

- Children that arrive to school after 10:00am without prior notice given to the office and/or without a doctor's note may not be allowed into school that day.

Importance of 3-Hour Work Period

Dr. Montessori observed that children do not 'work' in the same way that adults do. Adults' work is guided by the principles of efficiency and economy; we attempt to get as much work done as quickly as possible. Children however, often enjoy the process and experience of working. They enjoy experimenting, repeating, and sometimes pursuing tangents as they strive to fully understand the work they are doing. It can take them a while to 'find' work in the classroom that engages their interest and that promotes concentration. For all of these reasons, Dr. Montessori believed it was important to protect an extended period of the day to afford each child an opportunity to become engaged, explore, and complete work in the classroom. We ask for your support in protecting this gift of uninterrupted time by refraining from scheduling appointments during the morning work period. Please consult with your child's teacher if there is a need to schedule on-going support services such as speech and language therapy, tutoring, occupational therapy, etc.

Procedures for Early Pick Up: In the event of an unavoidable early departure, we ask that you call and notify the Office in advance. Please go to the School Office to sign out and pick up your child. Please wait in the office until your child can put away his/her work and be escorted by School staff from the classroom. Children may need time to disengage from the work they were doing. Please allow ample time for your child to transition from the classroom.

Absence due to Illness

The State of California Community Care Licensing mandates schools maintain an accurate record of absence and the cause of absence. **THEREFORE, YOU MUST NOTIFY THE SCHOOL IF YOUR CHILD IS GOING TO BE LATE OR ABSENT FOR ANY REASON.** If you know that your child will be absent on certain days (i.e. for family vacation), please notify the school in advance. If a child is absent three (3) consecutive days and the office has not been notified, a call will be made to determine the cause of the absence. * The guides will record the number of days missed and late arrivals; both will be acknowledged during the parent-teacher conferences.

If your child is sick, please call or email the Office before 8:15 a.m. so that we may inform the guides that your child will not be attending. Please provide the following information:

- Child's name
- Teacher
- Daytime phone number where you can be reached
- Date of absence
- Reason for absence

**Note: If your child is diagnosed with an infectious disease, it is essential that you notify the Office immediately. Please see the section on Notifications of Infectious Diseases for details.*

Vacations During School: We strongly discourage parents from scheduling vacations when school is in session. It is especially important that children attend both the first and last weeks of school because these are times for orientation and closure. For young children, extended or frequent absences are confusing and re-entry can be upsetting. Children miss out on valuable lessons and have to reorient themselves to the classroom. If you must leave for any reason, it is very important that you send in a written note. This allows the teacher to assist the child in completing any work in progress before leaving.

IV. School Policies Related to Communication

Grace and Courtesy in Communication

What do we mean by grace and courtesy? Grace and courtesy lessons in the Montessori programs are an essential aspect of the classroom communities. 'Graciousness' and 'courtesy' are natural expressions of a community, and when they are implemented and modeled by all members of the community, a harmonious environment is created that promotes the welfare of all.

Campus "Grace and Courtesy" suggests ways of interacting and communicating that not only help each of us to feel comfortable on campus, but also help us to model the behaviors that we foster in the classroom and in the general community. If it is brought to our attention that there is false and/or negative statements being made by any individual on any media platform, that individual may be approached and asked to leave the school.

The following list reflects a community built on caring, respect, and consideration of others. We greatly appreciate your desire to serve as positive role models and thank you for supporting the extensions of the lessons we teach in the classroom and our community.

To show grace and courtesy to all Scripps Montessori staff and families we ask you to:

- Please use a respectful tone of voice when speaking and writing to members of the community.
- Please speak softly in all areas where adults and children are working.
- Please model patience when waiting your turn in the carpool line or to speak with Scripps Montessori staff. Please wait until you are acknowledged. If you need prompt assistance and the person you need is busy, leave a note requesting immediate action.
- Please encourage respect by treating others respectfully:
- Please model respect for other's time by striving to be on time.
- Please communicate in a clear and timely manner.
- Please communicate requests for assistance in a patient, respectful manner.
- Please communicate dissatisfaction in a respectful way.
- Please follow direct lines of communication. When problem solving or seeking information, please speak to the person/s who can directly address your concerns, can supply the information that you need, and/or can offer support.
- If you have a conflict with someone in the Scripps Montessori community, please speak directly to the person with whom you are having a conflict, rather than discussing the problem with another person. Consider positive actions or possible resolutions.

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- If another person comes to you to complain about a conflict they are having with someone in the Scripps Montessori community, please help guide them back to the person they are having the problem. Intrigue and gossip can damage relationships in the community and can drain resources. If you feel it is necessary to become involved, consider role playing with them how to talk about the conflict and / or practice solving the problem. You could also offer to facilitate a conversation.
 - Please support our natural environment by modeling how we care for the environment by reducing, reusing, and recycling.

How Does Scripps Montessori Communicate with Parents?

The Scripps Montessori staff uses the Parent Handbook, the school calendar and website, parent conferences, and the Remind App as the primary means of communicating vital information to parents and guardians. School events, calendar changes, academic programs and reports, news about inclement weather, or events affecting all San Diego schools will be posted through the Remind APP and automatically sent to all subscribers.

- *Parent Handbook*: The Scripps Montessori Parent-Student Handbook is an important source of information for parents. Please refer to the Handbook anytime you have a question regarding policies and procedures. At this time, in an effort to become a green campus, you will receive an electronic copy of this handbook; a printed hard copy will always be available at the Office. SMS reserves the right to add/modify the Parent-Student Handbook as needed.
- *School Calendar and Website*: All school-level events, half-days, and holiday closures have been scheduled and are available on the calendar. Each week, our School Administrator will send out a “News and Reminders” through the Remind App. SMS reserves the right to add, reschedule or cancel events on the calendar.
- *Parent-Teacher Conferences*: We offer parent teacher conferences two times a year (October and May) in which parents are expected to attend. These are opportunities to discuss your child’s social, emotional, and intellectual development with the guides.

How Can Parents Communicate with Scripps Montessori Staff?

It is important that you keep your child’s teachers informed of any changes in the home situation that might affect your child. In the case of an emergency or crisis in your family, please contact the Office immediately. Please do not hesitate to advise us in how you would like the school to respond (i.e. what to disclose to your child, to whom we can release etc.). Your privacy, and that of your child, will be respected. You may also communicate non-urgent issues with your child’s teacher by sending a note, which may be hand delivered to the front desk or the a Guide at drop-off. The quality of a child’s experience at school can be affected by disruptions in their sleep or their routine as well as stressors in the family (i.e. changes at home, impending travel / visitors, conflict with siblings etc.). Please do not hesitate to send a

brief note to your child's teachers if you would like the teachers to be prepared to help your child respond / cope with stressors. Additionally, parents or guardians cannot walk into the classroom unannounced at any time to speak with a teacher.

Communicating with Scripps Teachers Through the Remind App: Teachers do not have the time to check their messages from Remind during the school day. Although messaging has become a valuable communication tool, it is important to remember that it is not always a completely secure and confidential method of communications. We are also concerned about maintaining privacy laws, especially as they relate to student records.

We will therefore ask that Scripps Montessori faculty and staff **not** send any student information via messaging unless we have a signed permission form from the parent/guardian. Messages will be sent via text message (or email addresses) that were entered on your enrollment forms. If your phone number or email address changes, you are required to fill out and sign an updated form before we can send information to the new contacts.

Communicating with Scripps Montessori Teachers Through Phone Calls: Teachers do not have the time to respond to phone messages during the school day. If you have an urgent need to contact the teacher during the day, please call the Office and your message will be relayed to the guides. Guides will respond by the end of the day.

How Do I Address Concerns about My Child's Educational Program?

If at any time you have a question or concern about any aspect of your child's activity at school. Please follow the steps below, in order:

- Step 1: *Meet with Your Child's Guides.* Scripps Montessori encourages open and direct communication between faculty and parents. The teacher works closely with your child and is the most qualified person to answer your concerns directly. Please schedule a meeting immediately if there is a problem – don't wait. Contact the school office to schedule your meeting. It is important for all concerned that you meet with the teacher right away to work together toward a solution.
- Step 2: *Meet with the Guide and the Director.* If you and the Guides do not arrive at an acceptable solution, either party may request a meeting with one of the Guides and the Director. All parties will then work together to attempt to resolve the situation. Observation by the parents may be required as part of this process.

How Do I get Answers to My Questions? Here are some suggestions for resolving your general questions about Scripps Montessori:

Practical Information:

- Refer to policies in the SMS Parent-Student Handbook
- Refer to our chart for “*Whom Should I Contact?*” (p. 78)
- Call the office if you are still not sure

Pedagogical Questions:

- Attend our Journey to Discovery and other Parent Education sessions
- Attend Parent-Teacher Conferences
- Schedule an appointment with your child’s guides
- Observe your child at work in the environment
- Purchase or borrow recommended books, articles, and videos about Montessori education

How Can I Communicate with Other Parents?

Use of Classroom Directories: The classroom directories contain the names, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses of the members of our Scripps community. This information is provided to you as a convenience, so that you may freely communicate with other members of the community. Use of this list, in whole or in part, for any purpose other than personal, non-business communications, is strictly prohibited without specific written approval from the Director. Please contact the office staff for the latest copy of your child’s class directory.

Non School Functions: To avoid hurt feelings, distribution of presents, party invitations, or forms for any celebration will only be permitted at school if all the children from your child’s classroom are invited. In the event they are not, please mail and/or distribute such items from home. Our staff is very busy providing excellence in education to your children and we ask that you leave such items in the office for distribution.

V. School Policies Related to Parent Responsibilities and Involvement

You are our partner in your child’s education. Whenever you have a concern about your child’s development or school experience, please share it with the Guide. The Guide works directly with your child each day and can offer valuable insights and suggestions. The Guide can also respond immediately by giving any extra attention your child may need at certain

moments. Your child is a unique person and is best served when you share your concerns on an individual basis and in a timely manner. Children reveal and discover different aspects of themselves at home and at school. As collaborators with the parents, we can all work together to understand and respect these precious revelations. As a partner in your child's education, we believe parents share the responsibility to 1) become informed about Dr. Montessori's theory and 2) to model safe and healthy behaviors on campus and at home.

How can I Become Informed about Dr. Montessori's Theory?: We depend on you to inform yourself about Montessori Philosophy. By doing so, you will better understand your child's experience at school, you will benefit more from Parent Conferences, and you will be able to offer your child greater consistency at home. The bridge between the home and school is very important for your child.

Review of Calendar: Over the summer, the SMS staff works to plan education and outreach events throughout the academic term. These events are noted on the school calendar. We strive to offer childcare options so that parents may be free to attend. We strongly encourage you to add these events to your personal calendar. Additionally, our Director sends out a weekly message reminders for upcoming events. These bulletins are the best way to stay attuned to what is happening in the larger community. Scripps Montessori reserves the right to change or modify the calendar as needed.

Parent Conferences: Communication between parents and faculty is essential in the development of the child, so your attendance at Parent-Teacher conferences are encouraged twice a year. Specific conference dates have been set aside during the fall and spring; as indicated on the school calendar. Conferences serve to keep us all informed as to the child's progress at school and at home, so we request both parents attend. Please make every effort to keep your conference appointment, arriving on time, and respect when your time has ended. Teachers have difficulty scheduling additional conferences outside of the specified time periods due to other school and family commitments and responsibilities; they may not be able to reschedule with you if you miss your time.

Parent Education: Parents are encouraged to understand and support the Montessori teaching methods and philosophy, thus all parents (one parent per family at least) are encouraged to attend informational meetings and events. The variety of informational and hands-on learning opportunities throughout the school year are designed to provide information for parenting, community development, and better understanding of Montessori principles and procedures.

Back to School Night: New and returning students are invited to an Back to School Night the second week of school. Your participation in this event as returning families is greatly encouraged and mandatory for new families.

Attend Parent Observation Week: Parents are expected to observe their child at least once a year. One of the best ways for parents to find out how their children are progressing in the classroom is to observe them as they work. In order to support you in this process, we have scheduled classroom observations before the Spring Parent Conferences. Before observing inside of the classroom, your child's teacher will send you an email with important information on the process of observation. Please read this email prior to your visit.

Educational Resources: A child's most fundamental and earliest education is from their parents—Montessori's theories and applications in child development are meant to help parents assist their child. Many Montessori books may be borrowed from the school's lending library located in the School Office (please ask the Office how to check out a book), the public library or purchased from Amazon.

How Can I Model Healthy & Safe Behaviors on Campus and at Home?

As our partners in your child's education, your child will follow your lead when it comes to safety, nutrition, rest, and relationships with others.

Being Safe Around Cars on Campus

Because we do not have a large parking lot, we ask that you drop your child off in our drop-off line every morning. When you get to the front of the line a staff member will greet your child/children, complete a health check, and assist them out of the car seat/car, invite them into school, and walk them to the classroom (Toddler only). **Please do not** get out of the car during drop-off as this holds up the line. The staff can only attend to 4-5 cars at a time. Please teach your children how to be safe in the car and when walking near cars. Please keep your goodbyes cheerful and brief. Your child can sense any hesitation or anxiety you may have and we want to ensure that they have the best experience possible each and every day – this starts at home, with you. Your patience and encouragement of this process and your child's independence is greatly appreciated.

Please Review Traffic Map and Follow Safety Procedures:

- The loading and unloading area is a NO CELL PHONE ZONE for the safety of children, parents and teachers.

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- Please do not talk or text on your cell phone while your car is in motion or while your children are being loaded or unloaded from the car; for safety's sake, and in order to properly greet or send off your child, your full attention is required at that time. The loading and unloading area is a NO CELL PHONE ZONE.
 - When parking your car, please leave the four spaces directly in front of the SMS building free.
 - The State of California law requires children remain buckled in their seat while the car is in motion. For safety reasons, please have your child remain seated until your car is stopped in the loading and unloading area.
 - Please turn off your engine whenever you are waiting in the car line.
 - Please remain in your car during drop-off and get out of your car during pick-up so that you may buckle your child into the car seat/booster, as SMS staff may not buckle children into their car seats. PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE YOUR CAR UNATTENDED IN THE DROP OFF AREA AT ANY TIME.

Suggestions to Facilitate a Smoother Pick-Up and Drop-Off Process: We try to load and unload children as quickly and efficiently as possible. The following suggestions will help us to facilitate a smooth and efficient pick-up and drop-off process.

We are aware of the modern “conveniences” of in-car TV/DVD players. We strongly encourage you to discontinue use of these devices on the way to school since they take away from a valuable opportunity to talk with your children or to let older children read and use less passive home learning challenges on tablets. In case you choose to continue using video on the way to school, we ask that the device be turned off upon entering the premises. It can be a hurdle to getting your children out of the car in a timely fashion and we want their minds to be ready to learn upon arrival, rather than distracted by whatever movie or television show they were just watching.

At drop off please remain seated in your car and allow a member of staff unload your child from the car.

To keep the car line moving as quickly as possible, we ask you to keep in mind that pick-up and drop-off are not the times to communicate with staff members. Please make sure that grandparents, or other caregivers who drive your children to and from school are fully informed of these procedures. To prevent any accidents, please do not attempt to pass another car in the line.

Model Healthy Behaviors at Bedtime and Mealtimes

Read the labels of the foods you buy, and avoid sugar, corn syrup, artificial sweeteners or coloring, artificial flavoring, and other additives. Most nutritionists believe that these substances interfere with the child's ability to learn and ability to have acceptable behavior. Such things as Pop-Tarts, sweet rolls, and pre-sweetened cereals may be convenient, but not only are they very poor foods, they may be hazardous to your child's emotional, mental, and physical growth. Good nutrition directly affects a child's health, concentration, and behavior. It is suggested by one of our Guides to read "Sugar Blues", by William Duffy, published by Warner Books.

Invite your child to participate in meal preparation in general and specifically in preparing their lunchtime meal. Engage him/her in discussions about nutrition. What does it mean to have healthy proteins, grains, and a variety of fruits and vegetables in their lunch? Encourage him/her to be a 'food explorer' when it comes to new foods; noting the flavors and textures of everything you eat.

Healthy Lunch Box Options: Teaching your children the importance of good eating habits while they are very young will benefit them for the rest of their lives. It is very important to practice these food habits in the home for the sake of consistency and for your child's well-being.

- *Proteins:* Meat, fish, chicken, boiled egg, yogurt, cheese, beans and rice, tofu, and seeds.
- *Grains:* Whole grain bread, tortillas, or crackers.
- *Vegetables:* A slice or wedge of one or two different fresh vegetables, raw or cooked, such as carrot, celery, cucumber, lettuce, or avocado.
- *Plain yogurt* with no added sugar or other additives but fresh fruit is the best yogurt to be included in a school lunch.
- *Fruits:* One or two different fruits in small portions: banana, apple, orange, grapes. Grapes and cherry tomatoes must be cut in half in the Children's House.
- *Drinks:* In each of the communities we offer water with snack and lunch.

Please do not confuse quantity with quality. Send only as much food as your child will eat. For example: half a sandwich, half a banana, wedge of vegetable.

Please do not send "fast food," candy, cupcakes, cookies, potato chips, carbonated drinks, fruit rolls ("fruit leather"), pudding, Jell-O, snack packs, or gum. These will be returned home unopened.

Invitation to Volunteer

In general, Montessori believed the function of school was to support children in learning to separate both physically and emotionally from their parents as they constructed an interdependent sense of self.

Scripps Montessori relies on parent volunteers for school events, field trips, fundraising, community building, and to help us expand the educational opportunities available to our students. Scripps Montessori appreciates parent's help in creating materials for the classrooms under the teacher's guidance.

It is important to understand the State of California licensing requires a negative TB test and an updated Immunization Record to be on file for any parent who volunteers regularly inside of the classroom. Parent volunteers are welcome for special classroom events throughout the year and children greatly enjoy listening to adults explain their work and/or sharing their talents. Please communicate with your child's guide if you would like to share your talent with the classroom.

Participate in Fundraising

Scripps Montessori is a 501(c)(3) non-profit educational institution governed by a Board of Trustees. Like most independent schools, SMS has two main sources of income: tuition and voluntary charitable contributions. All charitable contributions go towards bridging the gap between annual operating expenses and tuition. Expenses center around program excellence and enhancement, capital improvements to our facilities, staff training and development, and need-based scholarships for families.

Annual Performance: The Scripps Montessori Annual Performance is a fun day where parents get to mingle with each other, teachers, and staff. It raises unrestricted funds for the school through:

- 1) Donations, sponsorship, and contributions
- 2) Silent Auction
- 3) Event ticket sales
- 4) Classroom Artwork

Families may be approached about sponsorships and auction donations beginning in the fall and all involvement is greatly appreciated!

Gift 'In Kind': Many families at SMS are invited to give gifts 'in kind'. These may include professional services such as printing or items such as computers or desks. Please call the Office before making such a gift, and we will discuss the tax implications with you. Families are encouraged to offer their time to help with

classroom deep cleaning or to assist with material making / laminating. Please contact your child's Guides if you are interested in offering your time 'in kind' throughout the year.

Amazon Smile: AmazonSmile is a website operated by Amazon with the same products, prices, and shopping features as Amazon.com. The only difference is that when you shop on the SMS AmazonSmile site, the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products to the charitable organization of your choice.

Restaurant Fundraisers / Book Fairs: Occasionally SMS staff or parent volunteers may organize fundraisers in which portions of your purchase (i.e. meal / books) are donated back to the school. These events not only provide a way for the school to indirectly raise funds for materials but can also provide opportunities for families to connect.

Many families have approached the school with great ideas of how to fundraise while building a sense of community at Scripps Montessori School. Families are invited to contact the Office regarding other fundraising ideas for SMS, as they must be approved by the Director.

5. Characteristics of an Authentic Montessori Program



Early childhood education, as has come to be accepted today, developed from what Maria Montessori discovered over a hundred years ago: that children under six have extraordinary, often untapped mental capacity. They possess a once in a lifetime ability to absorb knowledge from their surroundings just by living. This “absorbent mind” is at its peak receptivity during the first six years of age when the personality is established. At the core of all Montessori programs is an emphasis on the role of education in promoting a child’s ability to acquire self-discipline and channel her desire to engage in meaningful work.

Developmentally Appropriate Learning Environments

Dr. Maria Montessori also observed that as children grow they experience a series of transformations, what she called developmental “planes”. These transformations relate to qualitative differences in the child’s physical, intellectual, social, emotional, and spiritual development. For each of our Programs, the implementation of the Montessori principles change in scope and manner to embrace the child’s changing characteristics, needs, and interests at each plane of development.

Concentration, Individual Pace, and the Three-Hour Work Period

Dr. Montessori observed early on in her work, that even the youngest child is oriented towards doing meaningful work. She built her educational program around preparing an environment that would invite and engage children in choosing work and that would protect their concentration. The experience of concentration, to be entirely engaged in an activity, is extremely important for the child. Even brief experiences of concentration for a young child lays the foundation for concentration in adulthood. So, our environment and our interactions aim to protect children from interruptions in their work. One way this is accomplished is by providing an uninterrupted three-hour work period in the Primary and Elementary classrooms and an uninterrupted two- hour work period in the Toddler classroom. This extended work period ensures children have time to observe a full lesson, conceptually plan how they will approach the task, experiment with materials and enjoy the process of learning, and (if interested) to create a product they are satisfied with.

Developing Self-Discipline

Discipline in a Montessori environment does not refer to the imposition of force by an authority figure. Rather, it refers to the balance of inner discipline and inner control developed by children engaged in meaningful activity. There are no punishments or rewards of any kind. Specific methods of redirecting behavior consistent with the Montessori philosophy are:

- Prevention of unacceptable behavior by alertness and redirection activities.
- Reasoning, explanation, and problem solving through encouragement to verbalize their feelings and their concerns.
- Creating logical consequences of actions through the limits in the environment.

Understanding 'Misbehavior'

Dr. Montessori believed that children, in their natural state, were inherently curious little scientists oriented towards adapting to and transforming their world. She observed that children who appeared to be 'misbehaving' were doing so because the demands of the environment or the expectations of the adult were beyond the capacity of the child. Children who did not have the knowledge and skills to participate in their community might respond to this frustration by crying, withdrawing or acting out. She believed adults could learn a lot about a child by seeking to understand the source of their misbehavior and educating the child about the purpose of norms/limits, and building their capacity to participate fully in their community.

The educational programs offered at Scripps Montessori are comprised of a Toddler program, a Primary program, and an Elementary program. These programs span the first two planes of development as identified by Dr. Montessori from birth to 12 years and respond to the unique developmental needs. The Toddler and Primary levels are designed to prepare the young child for our Elementary level. The Elementary level prepares the child for the third plane of development (12-18 years). In the following sections, we describe the unique characteristics of each program.

Overarching Goals

Authentic Montessori programs are carefully orchestrated to educate the whole child, enabling each child to reach their full potential intellectually, socially, emotionally, spiritually and physically. Each year at SMS builds on lessons learned in previous years. As children progress from Toddler to Primary to Elementary, their growth is exponential. Your child receives the full benefit of the Montessori education when they complete the full program through the sixth grade.

Benefits of a complete Montessori education include:

- A love of learning
- A solid educational foundation
- Independence
- Self-motivation and self-discipline
- Leadership and responsibility
- Compassion, consideration, and courtesy
- Creative and critical thinking



If you have any questions about the completion of Scripps Montessori Program, or would like to discuss this program further, please call the School Office to schedule a meeting with the Director.

6. Our Toddler Communities



“Early childhood education is the key to the betterment of society.”

– Maria Montessori

We have two toddler communities that support the development of the two-year old child. The toddler communities at Scripps Montessori School are designed to allow children to grow and develop at their own pace. The environments allow the children the opportunity to explore their world in a safe, loving and nurturing environment. In addition to language and sensorial exercises, the toddler communities provide the skills to become independent and self-sufficient in our ever changing world through our practice life curriculum. Through these exercises, the children develop their fine and gross motor skills, self-control, and the grace and courtesy to learn to interact with one another.

Program Description and Objectives

The Toddler program is comprised of children between 18 months and 3 years of age. There is a 6:1 child-teacher ratio with no more than 18 children in the environment. The goal of this program is to provide the young child with a learning experience away from home and parents, to foster independence and a healthy self- image, and to develop a positive attitude toward learning. The Toddler program is often an introduction to the Montessori Method for both the parent and the child. The environment is designed to support the young child in psychologically separating from their parents. Young children learn to feel safe away from their parents in the presence of loving guides, consistent routines, and interesting work. The Toddler program allows the young child to enjoy a Montessori experience in a small group setting. The children have an opportunity to explore and experiment in an environment that has been carefully prepared to meet the unique needs of this age. The environment is designed to support the toddler in learning how to care for himself specifically with regard to separating from parents, using the toilet, and feeding self. The environment supports the process for toilet learning with a secondary goal to master using the toilet independently. Guides work with children on learning how to be aware of the need to use the toilet, and will prompt children proactively to support success. In the Toddler environment there is always a

guide available in the bathroom to support the young child in learning how to dress and undress and use the toilet.

As the children work together in the classroom, they are gently guided in a manner that enhances their innate sense of independence, order, and love of learning. Social skills are developed, as the children become active members of a loving community through real, purposeful experiences. In addition, students are introduced to Spanish as a second language. Toddler children will tentatively transition into the Primary program by their third birthday. The Toddler program lays the foundation for the Primary program.

Daily Schedule in the Toddler Communities

8:15am to 8:45am	Drop-off
8:15am to 10:15am	Classroom Work Period (snack offered)
10:15am to 10:40am	Outdoor Play Time
10:40am to 11:00am	Music & Preparation for Lunch
11:00am to 11:30am	Lunch & Preparation for Dismissal
11:30am to 11:45am	Half-day Dismissal (in classroom)
11:45am to 12:10pm	Outdoor Play Time
12:10pm to 2:10pm	Nap Time
2:20pm to 2:45pm	Full-Day Dismissal

Between 8:15-8:45am staff members will be available to accompany your child from the car to the gate. Please follow all safety procedures for drop off and pick up in the School Policies and Procedure. We strongly encourage parents to avoid allowing their children to watch programs on I-Pads / TV / or cell phones in the car. It can be difficult for young children to disengage from these programs when it is time to come to school. Similarly, small toys (like cars, dolls) and comfort objects like pacifiers can also be difficult to separate from. Upon arrival, Toddlers will be escorted by Scripps Montessori staff to his/her room where a Guide will greet them.

Each day, Toddlers should bring their lunch box, water bottle and a backpack to school. Each morning, Guides check the backpacks for requested supplies and any notes from home. At the end of the day Guides will send home soiled clothing and requests for supplies (i.e. clean clothing, diapers, wipes).

Essence of the Work Period

The overarching goals of the Toddler program are to provide a trusting environment where young children can learn to separate from their parents, begin to develop a sense of independence by developing their capacity to care for themselves and their environment, develop their ability to communicate their interests and needs, and work on controlling and

coordinating both their gross and fine motor movements. During the two-hour work period, Toddlers will be offered individualized lessons to improve their movement, communication, and expression through developmental materials, art and music.

Toilet Learning

Dr. Montessori observed that, in general, the sensitive period for toilet learning is between 12-18 months. During this time, we strive to begin the child's toilet education. The goal of toilet education is for your child to learn to use the toilet independently. This process requires both physical and psychological readiness. These signs not only involve longer periods of dryness and physical independence with taking pants on and off, but also that a child showing signs of awareness that she has to (or has already) urinate(d). Lastly, Montessori teachers look for signs that a child is becoming interested in toilet learning. When your child appears ready to begin toilet learning, our general process involves: preparing the home environment for the child to use that toilet, purchasing clothes that support toilet learning, initiating invitations to use the toilet at common elimination times (waking, eating, departing/returning home), using appropriate terms for parts of the body, toilet, and bodily waste, and teaching your child how to wash hands after. Parents will be notified when signs of readiness have been apparent in the classroom and urged to support this process at home. We ask that parents work closely in partnership with the school in this important process.

Clothing and Changes of Clothing

Children work and play actively; therefore we ask that all children comply with our basic rules of school attire.

Dressing for Independence: Please choose clothing that is appropriate for your child's ability to put on and take off. Consider what they can easily pull up and down to use the toilet.

- The children should wear clothing that they can manage entirely by themselves, including all fastenings. Elastic-waist, cuff-less pants that can be easily pulled up work well.
- Since a lot of activities takes place on the floor and the children paint, wash, and explore in the outdoor environment, they should be dressed in comfortable, washable, non- restrictive casual clothing. Please, no formal shoes or clothing as they restrict your child's choice of activities, independence, and movement.

Dressing for Safety: The children will be playing outdoors and so please send them to school in comfortable shoes that fit securely, offer good traction, cover their toes, and allow them to run, climb etc. Crocs, flip flops or open-toed sandals are not allowed, as they can cause the children to trip and do not protect the foot from injury. We are asking you to please send a pair of "inside shoes" that will be kept in the classroom. Indoor shoes should allow for independence, movement, and comfort.

- Shoes need to fit securely on the feet to avoid slippage and tripping accidents. Please do not send your child in sandals, flip flops, crocs, natives, Uggs/boots or back-less shoes. Children need shoes that aid them in independence and that are adjustable to their foot in order to best support their development.
- Please do not send your child to school in shoes that will present a distraction (i.e. shoes that light up or make noise, party shoes/heelies, cowboy boots).
- Toddlers are encouraged to wear shoes with Velcro fasteners that are easily managed without adult assistance.
- Jewelry is not permitted in the classroom or on the playground. Necklaces, bracelets, and rings can present a safety challenge if they get caught or are tightened around neck, wrist, and fingers. Oversized headbands are discouraged.
- Soft elastic hairbands are permitted, so long as they remain in your child's hair. Children who remove elastic hairbands will be invited to place them in their cubby. It is also important to remember that jewelry/headbands can be a distraction for your child and his/her classmates.

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- Children should be dressed according to weather conditions. Because the weather can change significantly during the course of the day, we recommend layered clothing.
 - On rainy days or when the ground is wet, children may wear boots, raincoats, and hats. However, if you send your child to school in boots, please be sure also send your child shoes to be worn indoors.
 - For the safety of the children, umbrellas are not allowed at school.
 - Your child is welcome to wear a hat to school provided that it has a purpose based on the weather.

Non-Character Policy: In keeping with the Montessori Philosophy, which focuses on the real world, developing the true personality of the child, and promoting the growth of the imagination (vs. fantasy) we discourage books, clothing and paraphernalia with commercial characters (e.g., Pokémon, Barbie, etc.) or superheroes (e.g., Batman or Ninja Turtles) in the classrooms/learning environments. This includes underpants, shoes, socks, shirts, jackets, lunch boxes, and backpacks. Key chains, whistles, and other character toys attached to a backpack can be an unnecessary distraction. While we admire the imagination that goes into creating these characters, our work at school is the work of understanding the real world. Once your child understands the real world, there will be plenty of time for fantasy. In early childhood, we want to give your children the tools and mental space to develop their own imagination.

Changing Clothes: Please send your child to school with 4 changes of clothes (shirt, pants, underwear and socks). Each item of clothing should be clearly labeled with you child's first and last name. These clothes will be stored in a cubby that your child can access. Whenever your child's clothing has become wet, for any reason, he/she will be offered clean, dry clothes to change into from their classroom's supply. Wet and or soiled clothes will be sent home at the end of the day with a request for you to send back a replacement. We are not responsible for unmarked clothing.

If your child requires a change of clothes and does not have any available in their cubby, they may be offered a set of garments from the classroom's reserves. Because the school provides these clothes, they must be laundered and returned to school immediately in order to keep our supply adequately filled. Please check your child's backpack each night (i.e. for soiled clothing) and send back replacement clothing as needed.

Donations of out-grown pants, shirts, socks, and underwear are greatly appreciated by the Toddler and Primary classrooms.

Personal Belongings: Children enjoy bringing things to share (e.g., books, shells, an interesting leaf, rock, picture, insect) with the classroom. Items of educational value are always welcomed. It is important for children to understand and be ready to 'share' what they bring with the class. Sharing may involve passing it around during our group time and/or displaying it on a tray for children to observe. If your child has something to share, please label the item or its container so that it can be safely returned to you.

It is perfectly normal for children to have difficulty separating from loved toys from home. Please do not allow your child to bring toys or jewelry to school. Let your child know that if he/she leaves his/her special toy in the car, it will be safe until he/she returns from school.

Lost and Found

All items left at school that are not marked are put in the Lost and Found located in the School Office. Please check the Lost and Found if you are missing any articles of clothing because we will periodically donate all lost or unmarked items to a charitable organization.

Snack

Snack is an integral part of the day in a Montessori Toddler Classroom. We ask your family to contribute to our community by providing the class with a nutritious and interesting snack for one week at a time on a rotating basis with the other families in our class. A list will be provided by the Guide. Each family's participation allows us to provide a variety of nutritious snacks for your child and his/her classmates. Allowing your child to accompany you to the store to purchase the snack supplies will help enhance his/her sense of responsibility. By providing snack, your child is contributing to an important class activity. Please be mindful that the Guides rely on your timely delivery of the snack.

In the Montessori Toddler Classroom, the children prepare the snack. In addition to preparing fruits and vegetables to share, toddlers participate in daily baking activities with their Guides (i.e. bread, biscuits, muffins, granola, pizza).

The environment is designed for children to participate in preparing snack and taking turns to eat snack (two at a time). They practice serving themselves and cleaning.

Playground Principles and Policies

Dr. Montessori wanted to give the young child the opportunity to experience freedom within limits. She prepared an environment for the children to feel free. On the playground, in addition to the structures/materials we offer for play, we prepare the environment by

separating the age groups during play time (infants, toddlers, primary, elementary). We then afford children the freedom to play the way they want to play during “free play” time.

- We observe for unsafe behaviors and transform them into teachable moments on the playground.
- We observe for behaviors we may not see in the classroom and transform them into teachable moments in the classroom.

Lunch

In the Toddler community, children may take turns working in pairs with the assistance of the guide to prepare the table for lunch. This involves arranging the tables and setting placemats, plates, glasses, silverware and napkins. Guides work with children to learn how to independently prepare their plate, feed themselves, and clean up. Please be thoughtful about the containers you send for lunch. Smaller containers with twist or snap or pull lids offer the young child opportunities to practice opening and closing as well as provide for the child to become independent in eating their lunch. We ask that you please follow the school’s nutrition policy and work with your child to pack a low fat, low sugar, and a high protein lunch. Guides also introduce the concept of table manners (waiting for everyone to be seated, using utensils to eat).

- Some foods, such as dried nuts, hot dogs and popcorn represent choking hazards and cannot be served at school. We also cannot serve children under the age of 5 years old whole grapes, olives or grape tomatoes – even if they are packed in their lunch. If your child is under the age of 5 years old, we ask you to please cut their grapes (and any cherry/grape tomatoes) in half before sending them.

Full Day Option with Nap

The State of California requires that all children be given an opportunity to nap or rest without distraction. A quiet environment will be provided for families who need an extended day for their Toddler. We will provide a mat for your child to rest. We ask that you send a small (crib-sized) sheet and blanket. Please make certain it has your child’s name on it. All bedding will be sent home on Fridays to be washed and must be returned by the following Monday. Children are not required to sleep. However, Toddlers must demonstrate the ability to rest quietly for the nap period. If the napping environment is not a good fit for your child (i.e. he/she excessively cries or disturbs other children), the Guide will work with the parents to determine if napping at school is a good fit for your child. For their own benefit and that of the other children, we may re-assign him/her to a half-day schedule.

Nap Room Policies and Practices for Toddlers: Toddlers enrolled for a Full-day are invited to sleep in a community of no more than 10 children. Children prepare for nap

by using the toilet/changing clothes after lunch. Children are invited to rest on a cot with a sheet in a quiet room. To help children adapt to the environment and to learn to put themselves to sleep, parents are encouraged to send them with a blanket to snuggle, if necessary Guides play soft music to help children calm down, and guides may rub their back gently. In general, we discourage sending additional comfort objects (i.e. stuffed animals/'lovies') as children can become distressed if these items don't return home/don't come to school. If your child needs an additional comfort object, we recommend rotating different objects on a weekly basis.

It can take a young child several weeks to adapt to the nap room. During that time, he/she may not sleep much at school and come home tired and irritable. We ask for your patience and support during the transition. Most children adapt by about two-weeks. We expect toddlers in the nap room to sleep or rest quietly for the entire period. If, after two weeks, your child does not seem to be adapting to napping in a community, we may schedule a conference to discuss the extent to which your child is ready for a Full-day with napping.

Birthday Celebrations

Children like to share this special day with their classmates. Birthday celebrations allow each child the joy of sharing some of life's more exciting and meaningful moments. Guides aim to schedule birthday celebrations in a way that preserves as much of the two- hour work period as possible. Because there may be multiple birthdays in a given month/week, Guides will contact parents about scheduling the birthday celebration.

In the Toddler classes, we ask that you bring a collage of photographs of the child as a newborn, at six months, at one year, at eighteen months, and at two years. These photos serve as an introduction to the concepts of time and history. Parents are invited to attend and/or bring a special snack to share with the class. Some suggestions for healthy, nutritious birthday snacks are seasonal fruit, cheese and crackers, cheese and fruit, and breads such as banana bread, cranberry bread, carrot bread, or homemade muffins. Portions should be small. Please check with your child's teacher to find out the number of portions needed or if there are any ingredient restrictions due to allergies. Lastly, toddlers will become very upset to see parents 'go home 'after the celebration. If you attend the celebration, we invite you to take you child home with you at the end of the celebration.

Parent Observation

Throughout the year, parents are welcome and encouraged to observe their children responsibly from the one-way window. While observing, it is important that you are discrete and that your child and/or his/her classmates do not see you. We also kindly ask that you

limit your observation to 20 minutes. Please sign-in and out even if you're observing for a few minutes. Toddlers are very sensitive to observers at the window and can be easily upset by the presence of parents at the window. Please refrain from talking or cellphone use while observing (as noise carries easily into the environments) and monitor how closely you are standing to the window. Should your child be aware of your presence, his/her behavior may change and he/she may have a hard time continuing to work normally in the classroom. You may be asked to leave if your observation is a distraction to the children in the environment. If you have any questions following an observation, please speak with your child's teacher directly.

During transition weeks, we kindly ask that you do not observe your child for at least two weeks. Children are learning to separate from their parents and may be actively looking for their parents and are more likely to be aware of your presence.

Transition to Primary

Children in the Toddler program will transition into the Primary program around their third birthday. It is possible that this transition may occur earlier should the child show the developmental readiness, be completely toilet trained, and with parent support. Children between 30 to 36 months old may be asked to stay in the Toddler program for developmental maturation before going to the Children's House Primary classroom. Parents will be asked to review and sign a transitional form.

Parents must observe the Primary environments before their child makes the transition. Parents may observe, unobtrusively from the one-way windows. Observation, attending Parent Education events, and consulting with your child's guides will provide you with valuable information and insight about our Montessori program and how it meets the developmental needs of your child from 3 to 6 years old.

Understanding Biting

Young children bite for many reasons. They often view their mouth as a tool for solving problems and may bite as a way to cope with frustration, anxiety or anger. From the young child's perspective, biting is often a very effective strategy to get attention, cope with feelings of being crowded, and express anger. But, biting behaviors are a type of 'misbehavior' that presents danger to the Guide and the other children in the class; and thus require Guides to closely monitor and redirect the child who is biting.

Dr. Montessori believed that children 'misbehaved' when the demands of the environment (social or physical) exceeded the child's capacity. Thus, guides will work with families to observe and modify the environment and to offer the child alternative strategies and language

for coping with frustration. In order to protect all children, repeated incidences of biting cannot be tolerated at Scripps Montessori. Repeated biting may signal the child is not ready to be enrolled in a formal schooling setting.

If biting occurs in the Toddler program, the Guide will try to redirect the child, a meeting will be scheduled to discuss the incident and recommendations will be given by the Head Teacher. If a second instance of biting occurs, another meeting will take place with the family, the Head Teacher and the Pedagogical Coordinator. After a third instance, the child may be dismissed.



7. Our Primary Communities



The teacher's task is not to talk, but to prepare and arrange a series of motives for cultural activity in a special environment made for the child"

– Maria Montessori

Program Description and Objectives

Scripps Montessori's Primary classroom environments are designed to offer a unique cycle of learning to meet the developmental needs of young children, ages 3 years through 6 years. There is a 12:1 child-teacher ratio with no more than 24 children in an environment. The Primary program is a three year program; children stay in the same class for three to four years until they complete the full Primary cycle and are ready to continue to our Elementary level. This three to four year age span is unique and beneficial to the children in many ways. Within this mixed age group of children, each child develops at his or her own pace. There is a deep sense of caring and respect for one another and for the environment.

The Primary environment is designed for children who are already developing an emerging sense of independence; they want to work, feed themselves, use the toilet, and can generally care for themselves independently.² The environment offers them ways to care for themselves in increasingly complex ways with progressive materials. Each year in the Primary class, the children develop different skills and explore materials in new ways. They experience a sequence of activities that indirectly prepares them for their next level of learning. It is essential for the child's full development to complete the entire Primary three-year cycle.

² The primary environment is designed for children who are already independently using the toilet. That is, they are aware of when they need to go, they can use the toilet independently (including wiping after a bowel movement), and they can change their clothes when they have wet events. In the Primary environment, guides only prompt use of the toilet at the start of the morning work period, prior to going out to the playground, at lunch. SMS reserves the right to defer placement in the primary classroom of a 3-year-old child who is not yet toilet-ready.

In their culminating year, the oldest children are the leaders in the Primary classroom community. They assist and teach the younger children. They also serve as responsible models of classroom procedures. This culminating year is one of consolidation and mastery of knowledge and creative development. Completing the full Primary cycle benefits each individual child's development as well as the entire classroom community, therefore enrollment in the Primary level requires a commitment to complete the Primary cycle, which takes three to four years, depending upon the individual child's development.

The Full-day Primary is a continuation of the morning activities. The children work independently and in small groups with the classroom materials. They also receive individual and small group lessons. All children enrolled in Full-day Primary attend class Monday-Friday, until dismissed at 2:45 p.m. In order for your child to receive the full benefit of Full-day Primary and to ensure continuity for all the children in the classroom community, we ask that you only schedule extracurricular enrichment classes after the school day has ended. Children of 4 years of age are strongly encouraged to attend Full-day, however, all children in their culminating year (5-6 year olds) in the Primary level are enrolled for Full-day Primary.³

Primary Communities Daily Schedule⁴

8:15am to 8:45am	Morning Arrival
8:15am to 11:15am	Classroom Work Period (snack offered)
11:15am to 12:00pm	Lunch
12:00pm	Half-day Dismissal (in classroom)
12:00pm to 12:30pm	Outdoor Playground Time
12:30pm to 2:25pm	Afternoon Work Cycle and/or Nap
2:30pm to 2:45pm	Full-day Dismissal

Between 8:15-8:45am staff members will be available to accompany your child from the car to the gate. Please follow all procedures for drop off and pick up. Upon arrival, your child will be invited to walk independently to his/her room where a Guide will greet her.

Primary Children are considered tardy after 8:45am. After 8:45am, please park your car and walk your child into the office to sign them in. Office staff will escort your child to his/her classroom. We ask that you please wait with your child in the front office until someone is available to greet and escort him/her to the classroom.

Clothing & Changes of Clothing

³ To read more about the Montessori Environment, we recommend *A Parent's Guide to the Montessori Classroom* by Aline Wolf: <http://www.montessoriservices.com/books-resources/montessori-at-home/a-parent-8217-s-guide-to-the-montessori-classroom>

⁴ We have five primary communities that take turns on the playground. Some classrooms may have lunch before playtime; other will have playtime first then lunch.

Children work and play actively; therefore we ask that all children comply with our basic rules of school attire.

Dressing for Independence: Please choose clothing that is appropriate for your child's ability to put on and take off. Consider what they can easily pull up and down to use the toilet.

- The children should wear clothing that they can manage entirely by themselves, including all fastenings. Elastic-waist, cuff-less pants that can be easily pulled up work well.
- Since a lot of activity takes place on the floor and the children paint, wash, and explore in the outdoor environment, they should be dressed in comfortable, washable, non- restrictive casual clothing. Please, no formal shoes or clothing as they restrict your child's choice of activities, independence, and movement.

Dressing for Safety: The children will be playing outdoors and so please send them to school in comfortable shoes that fit securely, offer good traction, cover their toes, and allow them to run, climb etc. Crocs, flip flops or open-toed sandals are not allowed, as they can cause the children to trip and do not protect the foot from injury. Indoor shoes should allow for independence, movement, and comfort.

- Shoes need to fit securely on the feet to avoid slippage and tripping accidents. Please do not send your child in sandals, flip flops, crocs, or back-less shoes.
- Please do not send your child to school in shoes that will present a distraction (i.e. shoes that light up or make noise, party shoes / heelies, cowboy boots).
- Jewelry is not permitted in the classroom or on the playground. Necklaces, bracelets, and rings can present a safety challenge if they get caught or are tightened around neck, wrist, and fingers.
- Soft elastic hairbands are permitted, so long as they remain in your child's hair. Children who remove elastic hairbands will be invited to place them in their cubby. It is also important to remember that jewelry / headbands can be a distraction for your child and his/her classmates.
- Children should be dressed according to weather conditions. Because the weather can change significantly during the course of the day, we recommend layered clothing.
- On rainy days or when the ground is wet, children may wear boots, raincoats, and hats. However, if you send your child to school in boots, please be sure also send your child shoes to be worn indoors.
- For the safety of the children, umbrellas are not allowed at school.
- Your child is welcome to wear a hat to school provided that it has a purpose based on the weather.

Non-Character Policy: In keeping with the Montessori Philosophy, which focuses on the real world, developing the true personality of the child, and promoting the growth of the imagination (vs. fantasy) we discourage clothing and paraphernalia with commercial characters (e.g., Pokémon, Barbie, etc.) or superheroes (e.g., Batman or

Ninja Turtles) in the Primary classrooms/learning environments. This includes books, underpants, shoes, socks, shirts, jackets, lunch boxes, and backpacks. Key chains, whistles, and other character toys attached to a backpack can be an unnecessary distraction. While we admire the imagination that goes into creating these characters, our work at school is the work of understanding the real world. Once your child understands the real world, there will be plenty of time for fantasy. In early childhood, we want to give your children the tools and mental space to develop their own imagination.

Changing Clothes: Please send your child to school with 1-2 changes of clothes (shirt, pants, underwear and socks) that are clearly labeled. We are not responsible for unmarked clothing or items. These clothes will be stored in a cubby that your child can access. Whenever your child's clothing has become wet, for any reason, he/she will be offered clean, dry clothes to change into from their classroom's supply. Wet and or soiled clothes will be sent home at the end of the day with a request for you to send back a replacement.

If your child requires a change of clothes and does not have any available in their cubby, they may be offered a set of garments from the classroom's reserves. Because the school provides these clothes, they must be laundered and returned to school immediately in order to keep our supply adequately filled. Donations of out-grown pants, shirts, socks, and underwear are greatly appreciated by the Toddler and Primary classrooms.

Lost and Found

All items left at school that are not marked are put in the Lost and Found located in the School Office. Please check the Lost and Found if you are missing any articles of clothing because we will periodically donate all lost or unmarked items to a charitable organization.

Personal Belongings: Children enjoy bringing things to share (e.g., books, shells, an interesting leaf, rock, picture, insect) with the classroom. Items of educational value are always welcomed. It is important for children to understand and be ready to 'share' what they bring with the class. Sharing may involve passing it around during our group time and/or displaying it on a tray for children to observe. If your child has something to share, please label the item or its container so that it can be safely returned to you.

It is perfectly normal for children to have difficulty separating from loved toys from home. Please do not allow your child to bring toys, money or jewelry to school. Let your child know that if he/she leaves his/her special toy in the car, it will be safe until he/ she returns from school.

Toilet Independence / Toilet Learning Plan

It is important to understand the Primary environment is not designed to support toilet learning. With that said, physical and cognitive development may not happen at the same pace; with some children demonstrating cognitive readiness to enter the Primary environment prior to mastering toilet independence. Additionally, young children continue to have toilet events to and through 6yrs; and during times of stress may struggle with using the toilet

independently. In the event parents and Guides agree the Primary environment is the right-fit for child who has been in the Toddler community but has not yet met toilet independence, Guides will work with parents to draft an individuated Toilet Learning Plan. This plan outlines services provided by the school and any additional supports/service require by parents to assist an older child with additional toilet learning.

Essence of the Work Period

The overarching goals of the Primary program are to provide a trusting environment where young children can learn to separate from their parents, to cultivate the young child's sense of physical, emotional, and intellectual independence, to develop the young child's capacity for concentration, and to create opportunities for young children to practice self-direction and self control.

The primary classroom is inherently designed to help the young child organize and explain these perceptions (what is color, shape, size, texture, sound, words, writing, reading, counting, numbers etc....). The Primary classroom includes areas of *Practical Life, Sensorial Materials, Mathematics, and Language Development*. Lessons are also given in History, Geometry, Biology, Geology, and Geography. Art, Music, and Literature are integrated into the classroom activities. In the Primary classroom, the majority of lessons are offered individually; with language lessons in the bilingual classrooms generally offered in English first.

The environment is also designed to develop concentration. Children are afforded freedom with limits. Three limits permeate: children must wait for a lesson before choosing a material, they only work with one material at a time, they must put away work they have chosen, and because materials are limited they may have to wait if the material they want is not available. Guides use the language of limits: "In this classroom..." These limits compel the child to stretch her mental muscles to develop language to ask for lessons, self-control to wait for lessons, and self-discipline to work independently.

Snack

Snack is an integral part of the day in a Montessori Primary Classroom. We ask your family to contribute to our community by providing the class with a nutritious and interesting snack for one week at a time on a rotating basis with the other families in our class (a list will be provided). Please be mindful of timely delivery of snack. Each family's participation allows us to provide a variety of nutritious snacks for your child and his/her classmates. Allowing your child to accompany you to the store to purchase the snack supplies will help enhance his/her sense of responsibility. By providing snack, your child is contributing to an important class activity. In the Montessori Primary Classroom, the children prepare the snack. Each week, snack may include the following items:

- *Fresh Flowers*: 1 large bunch of assorted flowers with no thorns such as carnations, lilies, daisy, chrysanthemum.
- *Hard Boiled Eggs*: One dozen eggs that have been hard-boiled at home.
- *Cheese*: For example mozzarella, Cheddar, Havarti, Gouda, Munster.
- *A Fruit*: For example different kinds of apples, pears, bananas, or grapes.
- *Citrus Fruit*: For example lemons, limes, oranges, grapefruits.

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- *A Grain:* For example whole-grain cheerios, crackers, mini-bagels, tortilla chips etc.
 - *A Spread:* For example hummus, whipped cream cheese, fruit preserves.
 - *A Dried Fruit:* For example, raisins, apricots, cranberries and mango.

In the primary environment, taking snack is a work. And, just like any other work in the environment it is limited (only two children at a time). Children are expected to take snack independently (serving, eating, and cleaning up). Guides work with children to develop self-control when taking a 'reasonable portion' of snack as well as taking turns. With 20+ children, children may have to learn how to keep busy while waiting for a turn to take snack.

Playground Principles and Policies

Dr. Montessori wanted to give the young child the opportunity to experience freedom within limits. She prepared an environment for the children to feel free. On the playground, in addition the structures / materials we offer for play, we prepare the environment by separating the age groups during play time (infants, toddlers, primary, elementary) and offering safe structure and materials to play with. We then afford children the freedom to play the way they want to play during "free play" time.

- We observe for unsafe behaviors and transform them into teachable moments on the playground.
- We observe for behaviors we may not see in the classroom and transform them into teachable moments in the classroom.

Celebrating Birthdays

Children like to share this special day with their classmates. Birthday celebrations allow each child the joy of sharing some of life's more exciting and meaningful moments. Guides aim to schedule birthday celebrations in a way that preserves as much of the three-hour work period as possible. Because there may be multiple birthdays in a given month / week, Guides will contact parents about scheduling the birthday celebration. We ask that you kindly respect the scheduling and policy of birthday celebrations in your child's classroom.

In the Primary classes, birthday celebrations contain several parts. The first part involves telling the story of the child's life. We ask that you prepare, with your child, a photo collage that tells the story of your child's first years in images. This is an introduction to the concept of time and history. In the classroom, the Primary child will also carry our globe of the earth around the sun (a candle) once for each year of his/her life. The second part involves singing a birthday song and the child bringing a voluntary class gift.

Children are invited to choose a special gift to give to the class: a favorite book (non-fiction or realistic fiction only), a beautiful small vase, or a carefully chosen plant is always appreciated. The third part is the sharing of a special snack. Please be conscious of potential food allergies in your class and refer to the suggested list.

Lunch

The Primary environment assumes children can independently prepare their plate, feed themselves, and clean up. In the beginning of the year, Guides work with the children to learn

how to set up and clean up lunch. Throughout the year, guides work with children to develop a concept of table manners (chewing with mouth closed, having a conversation at the table, cutting larger portions with a knife). Below are some notes to consider when planning lunch for their young child.

- We ask that you please follow the school's nutrition policy and work with your child to pack a low fat, low sugar, and high protein lunch.
- Children work to set their own plate. Some brands of food- storage containers are more child-friendly than others. Please be thoughtful about the containers you send for lunch.
- Smaller containers with twist or snap or pull lids offer the young child opportunities to practice opening and closing as well as provide for the child to become independent in eating their lunch.
- Please pre-cut food for all children under the age of 5 years old into bite-sized portions. Smaller pieces offer the young child more opportunities to practice using utensils.
- Some foods, such as popcorn, represent choking hazards that cannot be served at school. We cannot serve children under the age of 5 years old whole grapes, olives, or grape tomatoes – even if they are packed in their lunch. Please cut their grapes (and any olives, cherry/grape tomatoes) in half before sending them.
- Microwaves are available in each classroom. If you would like your child to experience a hot meal, you can either send food warmed at home in insulated containers or include a note for the meal to be warmed on a plate.
- Please monitor the portion size. Send a portion that the children will be able to finish.
- Please refrain from including a 'treat' to have after lunch. We try hard to communicate to the children that school is a place for eating healthy.

Care of the Environment

Learning to care for the environment is a central component of the Montessori curriculum. Caring for the environment begins with the child learning to clean up after him or herself. Children are limited to using one work at a time and must return the work to the shelf in complete condition (to the best of their abilities). Children also learn to set the room for lunch, to clean their place, and older children participate in cleaning the room after lunch. Our care of the environment extends to caring for plants and our classroom pet as well as caring for our garden area and the playground.

Afternoon Work Period

The afternoon work period is a shorter, uninterrupted, second work cycle of the day. Children 4+ are encouraged to stay Full-day to maximize their time in the environment working with materials. SMS invites any child under the age of 4 years old enrolled Full-day be brought to a quiet area and be given an opportunity to rest. Thus, 3 year-old children capable of afternoon work are encouraged to rest quietly for a minimum period of 30 minutes prior to returning to the classroom (see below Developing the Concept / Capacity to Rest).

Full Day Option with Nap / Rest

The State of California requires that all children be given an opportunity to nap or rest without distraction. Primary children must be toilet independent to sleep in the napping room; pull-ups/night underpants are not permitted during nap for Primary children unless previously disclosed by parents beforehand.

Nap Room Policies and Practices for Primary Children: Primary children who are enrolled for a Full-day and still nap at home will be invited to sleep in a community of no more than 10 children. Children prepare for nap by using the toilet after lunch. Children are invited to rest on a cot with a sheet in a quiet room. To help children adapt to the environment and to learn to put themselves to sleep, parents are encouraged to send them with a blanket to snuggle, occasionally guides will play soft music to help children calm down, and guides may rub their back gently. We do not provide reports for Primary children regarding the amount of rest/sleep.

It can take a young child several weeks to adapt to the nap room. During that time, he/she may not sleep much at school and come home tired and irritable. We ask for your patience and support during the transition. Most children adapt by about 2- weeks.

It is also important to understand that children are not required to sleep. However, it is important to understand that Primary level children should demonstrate the ability to rest quietly for a minimum rest period of 30 minutes. If the napping environment is not a good fit for your child (i.e. he/she excessively cries or disturbs other children), for their own benefit and that of the other children, SMS may re-assign him/her to a half-day schedule.

Developing a Concept / Capacity to Rest: When we are preparing to transition a Toddler to Full-day who does not have a history of napping, we encourage parents to practice 'resting' at home.

- *First, define resting as making your body and mind still.* It does not involve sleeping, but it does involve being still and peaceful. In general, we discourage sending additional comfort objects (i.e. stuffed animals/'lovies') as children can become distressed if these items
- don't return home / don't come to school. If your child needs an additional comfort object, we recommend rotating different objects on a weekly basis.
- *Model how to be peaceful while lying down.* Model how to count breathing. How to listen for quiet sounds in the room/ observe different shapes.
- *Develop her capacity with a timer.* Begin with a short period of time. Practice resting together for 5 minutes for a few days, then 10 minutes, then... until she can rest, calmly for 30 minutes. Quiet talking is good at first, but over time, try to shift the talking to listening. When she can do that with you, attempt to develop her capacity to do it alone.
- *Role play.* How will they respond if another child is trying to disrupt their rest.

Parent Observation

One of the best ways for parents to find out how their children are progressing in the classroom is to observe them as they work. In order to support you in this process, we

schedule two classroom observations before each of the Parent Conferences (one in fall and one in spring). Before observing inside of the classroom, your child's teacher will send you an email with important information on the process of observation. Please read this email prior to your visit. It will also help to remind your child that you will be coming in for observation that day. Lastly, we ask that you leave any personal items including cell phones and cameras outside of the classroom.

Prior to this opportunity, parents are welcome and encouraged to observe their children in the classroom at any time from the one- way-windows. You may observe whenever you wish, but it is important that you are discrete and that your child and/or his/her classmates do not see you. We also kindly ask that you limit your observation to 20 minutes. Please sign-in and out even if you are observing for a few minutes. We recommend observing during the children's work period from 9:00-11:00 a.m. or from 12:45-2:30 p.m. as they are the best times. Should your child be aware of your presence, his/her behavior may change and he/she may have a hard time continuing to work normally in the classroom. You may be asked to leave if your observation is a distraction to your child. If you have any questions following an observation, please speak with your child's teacher directly.

During transition weeks, we kindly ask that you do not observe your child for at least two weeks. Children are learning to separate from their parents and may be actively looking for their parents and are more likely to be aware of your presence.

Transition to Elementary

Conventional Public Schools and Montessori schools differ in their beliefs about when to begin 'Elementary 'School. Conventional public schools begin 'Elementary School 'when the child is five years old; the entry year is called Kindergarten. Dr. Montessori observed that children shift into a different plane of development around the age of 6 years old. She believed the best time to begin 'Elementary School 'was after the child demonstrated the characteristics of psychological readiness for group-oriented learning. This psychological readiness not only involves demonstrating academic readiness (interest in Language and Math and development of mathematical literacy / reading skills) but also social and emotional readiness. The third year of a Montessori Primary program represents the equivalent of the young child's kindergarten year; addressing all of the curricular standards of conventional public schools and in many ways extending beyond them to cultivate a different quality of mathematics and linguistic literacy in the young child.

Near the end of the child's third year, as they approach their sixth birthday, Primary Guides will begin evaluating the child's readiness to transition to the Elementary program. Specifically, they will look for signs that the child is passing into the Second Plane of Development and signs that the Primary environment is no longer a good-fit for the child's developmental needs. When Primary Guides sense the child may be ready to go to Elementary, they will begin coordinating with Elementary Program Guides. The overarching goal is to afford the child a peaceful transition from one program to the next. In general, this is accomplished by affording the child opportunities to 'walk through 'and 'visit 'the Elementary classroom; affording Elementary Guides the opportunity to observe the child working in the Primary environment. It also includes scheduling a conference with parents regarding this transition.

When possible, current Primary parents are encouraged to learn more about the Elementary Program by attending their parent education events and, when possible, observing / touring the environment. Observation, attending Parent Education events, and consulting with your child's teacher will provide you with valuable information and insight about SMS's whole Montessori program and how it meets the developmental needs of your child from 6 to 12 years old.



8. Our Elementary Community



The secret of good teaching is to regard the child's intelligence as a fertile field in which seeds may be sown, to grow under the heat of flaming imagination. Our aim therefore is not merely to make the child understand, and still less to force him to memorize, but so to touch his imagination as to enthuse him to his inmost core. We do not want complacent pupils, but eager ones."

- Dr. Maria Montessori

Scripps Montessori Elementary program is for students in 1st through 6th grade. Our elementary program hours are from 8:15am to 2:20pm with extended care options available before and after school. Our classroom was designed as a prepared environment so students can develop their social and academic skills. Applying a research style of learning, elementary students work both individually and in small groups on projects that spark the imagination and engage the intellect. Our elementary students work in the areas of mathematics, language, history, geography, science, botany, arts, music The design and flow of the Montessori classroom creates a learning environment that accommodates choice. Our prepared environment takes into consideration human tendencies that our students are going through such as the need to move and be dynamic, socialize, adapt, explore, imagine. We believe that the hands are an instrument of the mind which is why we present lessons in a hands on approach.

Program Description and Objectives

The Montessori Elementary program aims to serve children who have had Montessori background during the preschool years. Elementary students are expected to be able to choose activities without adult direction, work independently, finish a cycle of work, keep track of their projects, follow classroom rules, participate in classroom discussions, and respect other classmates. In our experience, some children coming from other programs who have had some of the principles behind the Montessori Philosophy may also adapt well to this program.

Cosmic Education: The elementary curriculum is also known as “Cosmic Education” because the subjects are presented in ways that illustrate the inter-connected nature of knowledge. During individual and group presentations, the teacher uses the Montessori materials to illustrate key concepts and then guides further exploration in each subject. Students regularly undertake research projects based on their interests and present their discoveries to the rest of the class.

Going Beyond the Montessori Materials: In addition to the work with the Montessori materials, the Elementary program relies heavily on science experiments, storytelling, research in books, contact with experts in the broader community, field trips and community service. Music, art, dance, organic gardening, drama and culinary arts enrich the core Montessori curriculum and are offered to all students on a rotating basis throughout the year.

Development of Character: The Elementary program focuses on helping students develop character. We offer the children opportunities to ponder questions of morality, justice and empathy through storytelling, group activities and community service. Teachers and students work jointly to keep track of projects, and discuss strategies to ensure the student is receiving in-depth exposure to all subjects. Parent-child-teacher conferences are held twice a year with the goal of helping parents understand the child’s progress and letting children share their achievements.

In our Lower Elementary classroom (6-9 year olds) and our Upper Elementary classroom (9-12 year olds), introductory lessons are cosmic in scope, and impressionistic in nature. The avenues of Geography, History, Mathematics, Geometry, Biology, and Language proceed from the “vision of the whole.” Music, art, and drama are integral elements of the environment. The children are encouraged and guided toward creative expression. The children tend to work in groups they establish themselves. Collaborative projects are common, each member contributing within his own capabilities. In addition, the child continues to build skills in reading, writing, and mathematics with the guidance of the teacher.

Elementary Community Daily Schedule

8:10am to 8:25am	Morning Arrival
8:10am – 11:30am	Classroom Work Period
11:30am – 12:00pm	Lunch
12:00pm – 12:30pm	Outdoor playground time
12:30pm to 2:30pm	Afternoon work cycle
2:30pm to 2:45pm	Dismissals

Art Class: Fridays

Gym Class: Monday

Scooter Day: Wednesday Outdoor Play

As noted earlier, consistent on-time arrival is necessary for the elementary age child (see page). Children who arrive late may miss important communication regarding the day's events as well as lessons offered at the start of the day. Children in Elementary arriving late may miss the first group lesson of the day. They often have 'work buddies' for skills such as reading or math facts that are practiced early in the morning. Lost learning time can affect growth of math and language skills. Consistently arriving 10-15 minutes late translates into a child missing the equivalent of up to 45 "days" of one-hour lessons, for example, over a 180 day school year.

- Elementary children are considered tardy after 8:40am. After 8:40am, please park your car and, walk to the office located to sign in your child. An administrative assistant will walk your child down to his/her Elementary classroom.

Elementary children often feel invincible. The parking lot, however, can be a very dangerous place during drop-off and pick-up. Guides are focused on escorting children from cars and getting them signed in. Please do not allow your child to exit the car unescorted, walk or run through the parking lot, or play in the parking area during drop off and pick up.

Similarly, we know it can be tempting to have a conversation with another parent. However, our aim is to model safe behaviors for the children. Please stay in your car and refrain from engaging the guides and other parents in conversation during the drop off / pick up period. If you would like to have a conversation with another parent, please arrange for both parents to park meet in one of the grassy areas.

Clothing & Hygiene

As students come to the Elementary environment, they enter a new stage of development in which social bonds become stronger and more important than previously. The students become more discerning, and begin to estimate the actions and attitudes of others. This is an important part of their development as it helps them to begin to navigate their own moral code. We want to create an environment in which students base their judgments of others not on what they wear, but on their words, actions, and the way they regard others. For this reason, the elementary children are required to wear uniforms. Additionally, uniforms are very convenient for the children when they dress in the morning. Please label all clothing and items, as we cannot be responsible for unmarked clothing. The Elementary uniform is as follows:

- **Bottoms:** pants, shorts, skorts, or skirts can be either navy blue or tan (khaki). If girls wear a skirt, please be sure that they wear shorts underneath for comfort.
- **Tops:** An SMS polo shirts (long or short sleeved). We suggest having one shirt for everyday of the school week, plus one to keep in school.

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- *Jackets*: navy blue jacket, sweater, or sweatshirt (without designs or logos).
 - *Shoes*: Comfortable shoes that fit securely on their feet and allow them to run, climb, etc. Please send a pair of “indoor shoes” that will be kept in the classroom. These shoes should be soft-soled, closed-toed and allow for movement and comfort. High-heels and light up shoes are not permitted, as they are a distraction to learning.
 - *Accessories*: We prefer that the children not wear jewelry to school as it could get lost or broken, and it can also be a distraction.
 - *Field Trip Shirt*: For the children’s safety, children must wear the school-issued polo on field trips. Parents will be sent an order form for the SMS field trip shirt as they become available. Lost and Found: All items left at school that are not marked are put in the Lost and Found located in the School Office. Please check the Lost and Found if you are missing any articles of clothing because we periodically donate all lost items to a charitable organization.

Essence of the Work Period

The Montessori Elementary curriculum covers first through sixth grade. This curriculum branches out from five ‘Great Stories’ told to all students at the beginning of the year. These tales introduce key concepts and encourage the children to ask questions that then lead to individual or (more commonly) group projects. The Five Great Stories (and the subjects they introduce) are:

- *The Creation of the Universe*: chemistry, physics, astronomy, geography, geology.
- *The Story of Life*: zoology, botany, paleontology.
- *The Story of Human Beings*: pre-historic man, the Great Civilizations, fundamental human needs, migration, political and economic geography.
- *The Story of Language*: reading, writing, parts of speech, word study, language history, and etymology.
- *The Story of Numbers*: the history of math, new math, operations, squares and cubes, algebra and geometry.

Playground Principles and Policies

Dr. Montessori wanted to give the young child the opportunity to experience freedom within limits. She prepared an environment for the children to feel free. We then afford children the freedom to play the way they want to play during “free play” time.

- We observe for unsafe behaviors and transform them into teachable moments on the playground.
- We observe for behaviors we may not see in the classroom and transform them into teachable moments in the classroom.

The Guides' main role in the Elementary Community's playground is to keep every child safe physically and emotionally. Because Elementary children are naturally oriented to form their own groups and to develop their own social skills, Guides and the older children agree every year on sets of rules that allow everyone to participate and be safe. Guides may occasionally facilitate the organization of games or may present different activities to redirect groups and provide opportunities for all to be included.

Celebrating Birthdays

The day of your child's birthday we will sing to them and they are welcome to bring an album with their life story to share with the class. Parents are invited to attend and/or bring a special snack to share with the class. Some suggestions for healthy, nutritious birthday snacks are seasonal fruit, cheese and crackers, cheese and fruit, and breads such as banana bread, cranberry bread, carrot bread, or homemade muffins. Portions should be small. Please check with your child's teacher to find out the number of portions needed or if there are any ingredient restrictions due to allergies. Often, the children enjoy preparing cards for their friends on their birthdays. The birthday child may also be invited to choose an activity from the ones that are normally done in the classroom to play outside.

Snack & Lunch

Elementary children are invited to bring their own nutritious snack from home and take snack during the morning work period. The snack table is available starting at 9:30am, so please ensure that your child is eating a substantial breakfast.

Elementary children are involved in preparing tables for lunch (i.e. setting placemats, plates, glasses, silverware and napkins). The environment assumes children can independently prepare their plate, eat politely using appropriate cutlery, and clean up. For safety reasons, children are not permitted to share foods. Please follow the school's nutrition policy and work with your child to pack a healthy lunch. (See handout)

A microwave is available in the classroom. If you would like your child to experience a hot meal, you are welcome to either send food warmed at home in insulated containers or encourage your child to warm their food on a plate in the microwave.

Excursions

Elementary children participate in two types of excursions: Field Trips and Going Outs.

A Field Trip is a more traditional excursion for the whole group. It is organized and executed by Guides in pursuit of an area of interest relevant to the whole class. Children also initiate a Field Trip excursion related to an area of interest. For example, a group of students may work with Guides to plan a trip to a museum to study a subject in depth. Field Trips present great opportunities for parents to observe the Elementary program.

Going Out excursions are planned, organized, executed, and followed up by the children with the Guides' assistance if necessary. These are spontaneous outings, which may include a trip to the library or to shop for items necessary to complete a project. If, for example, a child is in charge of caring for the plants in the garden, and runs out of plant food or potting soil it is

his/her responsibility to arrange for a trip to store to purchase more. The Office is notified prior to the outing and staff member drives a small subset of children.

At the beginning of the school year, all Elementary parents will be asked to sign a Field Trip / Going Out Permission form. Parents may authorize and give permission for their children to participate in the SMS Going Out excursions during the school year. Parents do not need to sign a permission slip for each individual trip.

In the event that children have demonstrated, in the classroom, challenges with controlling their behavior or talk, Guides may contact specific parents to accompany their child on an excursion.

Chaperones /Car Seats: A chaperone is an adult, often a parent or a child in the Elementary community, who accompanies the children on a Field Trip or Going Out excursion. Chaperones have three main goals:

- To ensure the children's safety by preventing interactions with non-affiliated adults;
- To interrupt children displaying unsafe or inappropriate behavior and, if necessary, return them to school immediately;
- To observe, record, and share the experiences with the children and report back to the Guides.

All children whose weight or height exceeds the forward-facing limit for their car seat should use a belt-positioning booster seat until the vehicle seat belt fits properly, typically when they have reached 4 feet 9 inches in height and are 8 through 12 years of age.”⁵

Participating in an excursion offers parents a unique opportunity to observe, first hand, the richness of the Montessori Elementary program. Please contact your Guides if you are available to assist with excursions throughout the year.

How is My Child Doing?

At any time during the year, parents can refer to information about the curriculum posted on the Classroom Blog, discussed at parent education nights and described in suggested readings. These materials and experiences can form a basis for initiating conversations with your child (i.e. about what he/she is doing and how he/she is feeling about school), and their Guides.

⁵ www.cdc.gov (July 18, 2017)

To help you gauge how your child is doing, there are two parent-teacher conferences scheduled during the year. The first conference usually happens at the end of October. During the fall conference, the Guides share observations of a child's development initial transition into the environment, their growth during the first few months, and catch up with the parents on any relevant information from the summer break. Goals and objectives are discussed for the current year. The second conference happens at the end of May. During this conference, Guides provide a comprehensive review of the child's progress in all areas of the classroom as well as social and emotional development.

During both conferences, Guides organize expectations for each child taking into account:

- The child's developmental stage and needs,
- The child's interests and motivation,
- State and Federal standards.

The Guides' main focus is on the child's holistic well being as the mark of success for his/her time at school. In the event parents or Guides are concerned about the child's well being, additional conferences can be called. At least one parent is expected to attend these conferences.



Behavioral Guidelines

In the Montessori Elementary environment children are expected to follow these simple guidelines:

- Be safe.
- Work together; collaborate.
- Try your best.
- Protect and respect everyone else's work and development.

Guides allow for as much independence as the children can handle; this is what allows children to construct themselves at their own pace and according to their own needs.

It is a characteristic of the 6-12 year old child to explore the limits of 'good and bad' and to develop a moral sense of their own self. Parents of elementary age children can expect new behaviors such as questioning, talking back, and retelling stories of social drama. At SMS, we believe that every child is capable of developing into a self-disciplined individual; they simply need knowledge and skills to meet the demands of an increasingly complex society. When children transgress behavioral norms, Guides strive to address children's concerns with the children first through their regular 1:1 conferences with the child, informal meetings, and whole-group discussions. Our aim is to promote an awareness of the impact of each child's words and actions on the other members of the community. On occasion, guides may send home a brief note about something that came up during the day so that you can be aware of what is happening in the classroom and can initiate conversations with your son/daughter.

Some behaviors are not acceptable in the community because they hurt. These include hitting, biting, cursing and any aggressive behaviors that might be interpreted as bullying. When these incidents occur, Guides will follow the School Discipline Policy.

During off campus activities, safety is paramount. Guides prepare the children ahead of time for the specific challenges that a Going Out of Field Trip may pose. If a child is presenting difficulties following directions in a way that is dangerous to him/herself or others, the Guides may ask the parents to attend/be "on call" during the off campus time. While off campus, the SMS Discipline Policy is still in effect.

9. Whom Should I Contact?

Please contact	for help with...
Ms. Ciara Concepcion info@scrippsmontessori.com	School closure Personnel changes Employment opportunities Marketing and public relations Fundraising events Annual Fund donations Fundraising strategies In-kind donations; equipment donations Building and grounds Safety and security emergencies School mission and goals School policy and procedures Health policy Nutrition policy Dress standards Alumni relations
Ms. Arlett Ms. Polly (858) 566-3632 during school hours	Enrollment & re-enrollment Requests for financial aid School calendar Absence and attendance Arrival and departure Before & after care enrollment Parent observations Outreach events School photographs Remind App
Your Child's Guide Short messages through Remind App or (858) 566-3632 during school hours for urgent messages	Montessori Pedagogy Your child's (children's) developmental progress Academic curriculum Social/emotional curriculum School culture questions / advice Going out / field trip protocols Inquires about transition to new program
<i>* For questions or concerns about classroom issues, please contact your guide first. Most of the classrooms have divided responsibilities such that the English Guide is managing parent-communication via phone / e-mail. However, we are a bilingual school. If you prefer to communicate with your guide in Spanish, please contact your Spanish guide (e-mail on website). Additionally, guides inform each other of all parent communication and will carbon-copy (:cc) each other on e-mail communications / responses.</i>	

10. Index and Appendices

Appendix A: Health Services

According to the State of California, “As specified in Health and Safety Code Section 1596.750, in general child care centers provide non-medical care and supervision to children. However, the use of the term ‘non-medical’ does not preclude the provision of some incidental medical services to a child in a child day care facility as specified herein. This could include handling prescription medications, non-prescription medications, and providing other incidental medical services. It is the responsibility of the licensee, not the Department, to make admission and retention decisions for individual children. It is the responsibility of the licensee to ensure the child’s needs can be met at the time of admission and throughout the child’s attendance at the facility (California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Sections 101214, 101215, 101216, 101218, 101218.1, 101219, 101226, and 101226.3).

Under specified circumstances as discussed more fully below, a licensee may choose to provide incidental medical services when the parent/authorized representative has provided written authorization and obtained written instructions from the child’s physician. The licensee shall ensure that the intent to provide incidental medical services is included in the facility’s plan of operation. Please also see Regulation Interpretations and Procedures for California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Section 101173, Plan of Operation. The term ‘authorized representative’ as used herein is defined in California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Section 101152(a)(5): ‘Authorized Representative’ means any person or entity authorized by law to act on behalf of any child. Such person or entity may include, but not be limited to, a minor’s parent, a legal guardian, a conservator or a public placement agency.”

Below are the types of health related services SMS staff are prepared to support with links available to procedures for childcare staff. SMS staff will work with authorized representatives to create an Individualized Medical Emergency Plan that will specify services offered for children with conditions requiring health related support.

Carrying Out the Medical Orders of a Child’s Physician: Business and Professions Code Section 2727(e) provides an exception to the Nursing Practices Act (NPA).

<http://ccld.ca.gov/res/pdf/ChildCareCenters.pdf>

<http://www.cdss.ca.gov/cdssweb/entres/forms/English/LIC9221.pdf>

Gastrostomy Tube Care:

<http://www.cdss.ca.gov/cdssweb/entres/forms/English/LIC701B.pdf>

<http://www.cdss.ca.gov/cdssweb/entres/forms/English/LIC701A.pdf>

Emptying an Ileostomy Bag:

<http://ccld.ca.gov/res/pdf/ChildCareCenters.pdf>

Blood-Glucose Monitoring for Diabetic Children: AB 221, Chapter 550 (Statutes of 1997) added Health and Safety Code Section 1596.797 effective January 1, 1998

<http://ccld.ca.gov/res/pdf/ChildCareCenters.pdf>

Glucagon Administration: Business and Profession Code Section 2058(a)
<http://www.cdss.ca.gov/cdssweb/entres/forms/English/LIC9222.pdf>

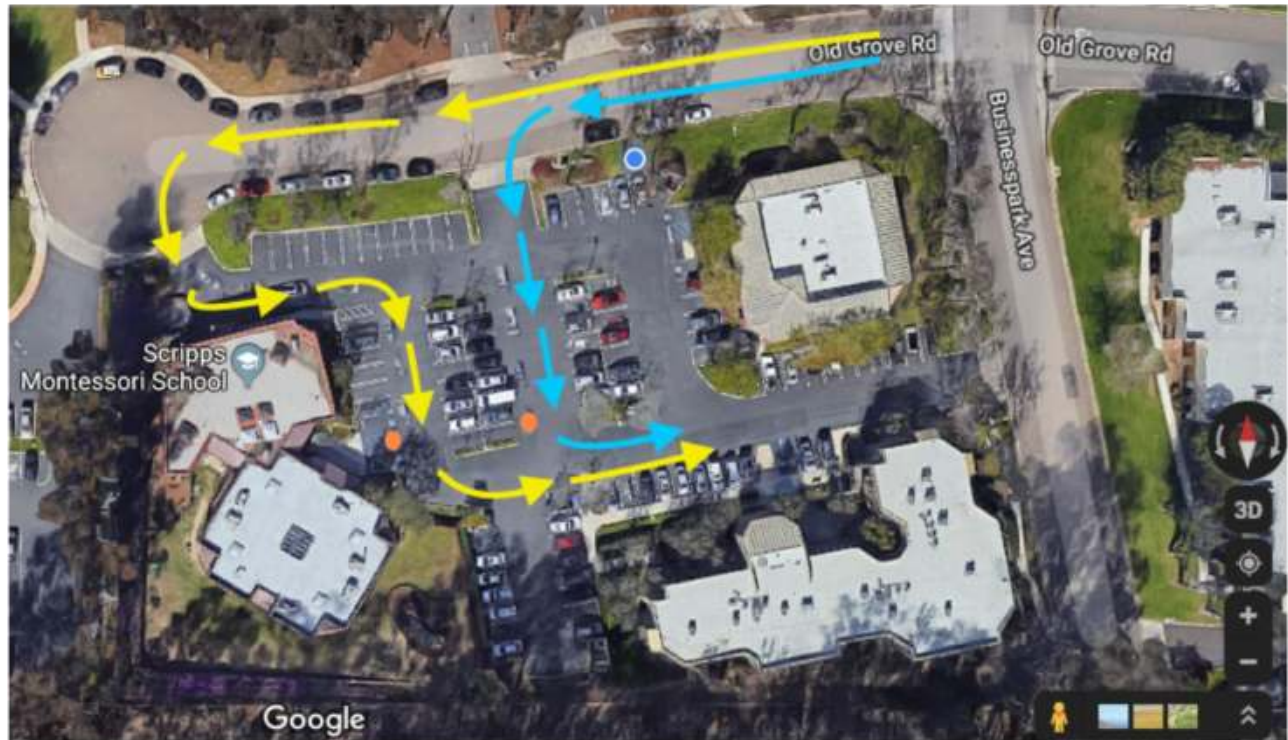
Administering Inhaled Medication: Senate Bill 1663, Chapter 625, Statutes of 1998,
<http://www.cdss.ca.gov/cdssweb/entres/forms/English/LIC9166.PDF>

Administration of EpiPen Jr. and EpiPen: Business and Professions Code Section 2058(a); California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Section 101226(e)
<http://ccl.d.ca.gov/res/pdf/ChildCareCenters.pdf>



Traffic Map for Scripps Montessori Drop-Off & Pick Up

Appendix B



Morning Drop Off: Please enter from Old Grove Rd. and drive past the first entrance to the entrance from the cul-de-sac. Drive around to the front of the school. Guides will complete a health check and assist children out of and into the car. It greatly helps us if children are seated on the passenger side of the door. To exit, please use drive forward to Business Park Ave.

Late Drop Off / Early Pick up: We understand there will be times when you and your child need to arrive late or leave early to accommodate doctors appointments etc. When this happens, please enter from Old Grove Rd. and take the first left. For safety and security reasons, we ask that you do not park in front of the building. Our elementary children and floating teachers often use this area. Please park in the parking lot. Cross the lot and ring the bell at the door. To exit, please use exit via Business Park Ave.

11. Parent Handbook Agreement 2026-2027

Please print, sign and return this agreement to the Scripps Montessori School office by *Monday, September 1st*. If you have any questions, you may address them with the office at that time.

I, (Parent/Guardian) _____, have read and understand the information outlined in the *Scripps Montessori Parent Handbook*. By signing below, I agree to follow the policies and procedures described in this Handbook.

I, (Parent/Guardian) _____, have also read and understand the information outlined in the *Scripps Montessori Parent Health and Safety Amendment*. By signing below, I agree to follow the policies and procedures described in this amendment.

Signature _____

Parent/Guardian

Date: _____

Signature _____

Parent/Guardian

Date: _____