



TODDLER HANDBOOK

It is our pleasure to welcome you to the Toddler environment. Your child is entering one of the most exciting times of life. Our goals are to provide an engaging, safe, enriching environment where your child can explore, develop, change, and create and to provide support for parents of toddler-aged children.

To help answer some questions, please read through the information below. Please keep this handbook available for reference throughout the year.

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Mrs. Rachell Felder
Sun Room Directress
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ATTENDANCE

The Toddler program is open from 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM; half-day toddlers will attend school from 9:00 AM to 11:45 AM. To truly experience the benefits of Montessori, it is imperative that your child arrives on time and is able to participate in the full work cycle. Late arrivals are a distraction to students that are engaged in their work. As such, we expect **all children must arrive by 9:00 AM.**

Please call the school office by 9:00 AM if your child will not be in school on a day they usually attend. Please be prompt for arrival and dismissal, as charges may apply.

Days that the school will be closed are marked on the school calendar. Please note these days in advance and make alternative plans for your child. School closings for weather are announced on Fox 8, Facebook, and via parent broadcast. You will also receive a call from the parent broadcast system regarding other important information. Please refer to the CMS Parent Handbook for further information regarding school closings.

BIRTHDAYS

Most children enjoy sharing a snack with their friends at school to celebrate this special day. Parents are welcome to provide a special birthday snack and will celebrate their child's special day during circle as well. *Please talk to your child's Directress regarding acceptable snack options, such as the child's favorite fruit (dessert snacks, including cookies and cupcakes, are not permitted).* **Due to dietary concerns, we do prohibit the use of tree nuts and peanuts.**

MEALS AND SNACKS

Since children at this age need to eat approximately every two-three hours, we will serve a morning and afternoon snack.

7:00 – 7:45 AM: Breakfast

Children are encouraged to share a breakfast at home with family; however, they may bring a simple, nutritious breakfast to school. Finger foods like fresh fruit or a piece of toast work best. Please pack your child's breakfast in a bag or lunch box.

10:00 AM: Snacks

Nutritious snacks will be served at approximately 10 AM, and students will eat together as a group. Once a month, you will be asked to provide a snack for the classroom. Snack calendars will be posted outside your child's room and online monthly. *Due to food allergies, please send in the snack as requested or consult with your Directress regarding a substitute.*

12:00 PM: Lunch

The school lunch program is available to children who are enrolled all day. Alternatively, your child may bring a packed lunch, *including a drink*. Please do not send items that may cause a choking hazard, such as uncut hot dogs, popcorn with the hulls, or whole grapes. Uneaten food will be sent home if requested. Daily notes are provided to inform you how your child ate at school.

Staff will not be permitted to heat lunches for students. Lunches will also not be refrigerated. Please provide a thermos for hot foods and ice packs for cold items.

3:30 PM: Snack

Nutritious snacks will be served at this time.

CMS is a TREE NUT, PEANUT, AND PEANUT PRODUCT free environment

CLOTHING

Independent self-care is an extremely important aspect of your child's growth and development at this age. The child wants to do everything possible without help or wants to at least try. Your child will be helped to change their diaper and learn to dress independently. Please dress your child in simple, sturdy, washable play clothes that they can manage independently. We suggest elastic waist pants, pullover shirts, sneakers, and socks.

Please, no flip-flops or dress shoes. Experience has shown that these can be dangerous for your child to wear, especially on the playground. *Shoes must have hard soles.*

We will go outside regularly when the weather permits. When purchasing winter gear such as boots, snow pants, coats, and mittens, it is very helpful to take your child with you to see if they can be easily managed by him/her. Please remove drawstrings from coats, raincoats, and jackets to prevent possible injury. *Please put your child's name on all clothing.*

Each Child Will Need

- One package of diapers
- Diaper cream if needed (a form is required)
- Small plastic cup (no sippy lids)
 - Garden Room students are asked to bring in a labeled water bottle each day.
- 5 extra changes of clothing: shirts, pants, socks, and underwear if potty training.
- One extra pair of shoes.
 - Sun Room students are asked to bring in a pair of croc shoes to wear in the classroom.
- Plastic container for extra clothing (shoe box size)

- Small backpack or bag to carry information and work to and from school

Nappers should bring:

- Blanket and/or small pillow. These will be sent home at the end of your child's week to be washed.
- Pacifiers are to be kept at home or in the car.
- Loveys and/or stuffed animals are not permitted.

No outside toys are permitted at school! These items often get lost or broken, or disputes arise over ownership, causing hurt feelings. Explain to your child that the toy will be waiting in the car at dismissal time. Expect your child to test this limit, but please be firm.

ILLNESS

Your child will experience mild illnesses as he continues to build immunity. Most illnesses are mild and viral in nature. The staff is very conscientious about hygiene and environmental cleanliness. However, most illnesses spread before any real symptoms appear. These illnesses come from germs and viruses caught from other people, not from being too hot or cold or exposure to the elements from daily outside play.

If your child becomes ill at school, they will be made comfortable, and you will be called to come to take them home. It is helpful to arrange in advance for an alternative adult who can be contacted to come for your ill child if you are unavailable. **Your child cannot return until 24 hours after their fever or other symptom has abated.** Please refer to the CMS Parent Handbook for more information.

COMMUNICATION

We place a high value on communication between school and family. You will receive daily reports via Montessori Compass describing important events, accomplishments, and details about the school day. Formal feedback is also provided during the Fall and Spring Parent-Teacher conferences. Please communicate any messages, such as a change in schedule or who will be picking up your child, with the office or given to the Toddler staff directly. Please call the school if you have any questions or concerns. While leaving the classroom may not be possible, we will return your call as soon as possible.



Daily Schedule

7:00 – 8:30 AM	School opens, breakfast served, free choice inside work
8:30 – 9:00 AM	Free choice of work.
8:45 – 9:00 AM	Arrival carline. All students must arrive by 9:00 AM
9:00 - 11:30 AM	Circle, snack, indoor work cycle, outside time, weather permitting.
11:30 AM	Lunch set-up.
11:50 – 12:05 PM	Half-day students carline dismissal.
12:00 PM	Lunch served
12:30 – 1:00 PM	Lunch clean-up and nap time begins
2:30 – 3:00 PM	Nap ends, and PM snack served
2:55 – 3:30 PM	Full-day carline dismissal.
3:30 – 5:00 PM	Afternoon free choice work and/or outdoor work
5 - 5:15 PM	Light snack offered as needed.
6:00 PM	School closes.

Again, welcome to the Toddler Environment, and we wish you the very best as you and your child begin one of the most exciting and fascinating times of life!



Tour of a Montessori Toddler Environment

- ❖ Toddler classrooms are designed for children ages 18-36 months old.
- ❖ Each classroom has easy access to the outside environment.
- ❖ Observation windows provide the opportunity where you can watch the activity of the classroom without disturbing the concentration of the children. Once you step into the room, the focus of the child changes (stranger anxiety may set in or the focus becomes the visitor, not the child's work).
- ❖ Toddlers learn to trust adults through a "homelike" environment that is nurturing, safe, vital, and full of beauty for order balance, harmony and respect which leads to peace.
- ❖ Each classroom has a bathroom with a low sink for hand washing, a low toilet, diaper cubbies, steps with a safety railing so the children are able to assist in the diapering and potty training process independently along with practicing self care skills.
- ❖ The focus of the toddler is to develop in the areas of *Movement*, *Language*, and *Order*. In order to meet these needs, the classrooms are designed with the following areas:
 - Movement – Both fine and large movement puts the child in contact with his environment through exploration and discovery, imitation, and independence. There is a Large Motor Area where children can run, jump, balance, throw and catch all in a safe place. Fine motor skills are honed in many areas of the classroom such as the **manipulatives**, **math**, **practical life** and **sensorial** areas. The activities are so "hands on" they let children get significant practice at refining their new found skills which prepares their hands for future writing.
 - Sensorial – Using the senses develops awareness of different qualities of objects appealing to needs of observing, touching, tasting, smelling and listening.
 - Practical Life – Practical life teaches children purposeful movement with visible results (sweeping, dusting, transferring, spooning, water activities, etc). We use real life items to encourage students to build skills in caring for themselves, caring for the environment, food preparation and serving, and grace and courtesy. Children delight in preparing and serving themselves snack at a table with their friends as they practice practical life skills.
 - Art – Art helps children develop self expression through creativity such as stickers, paint, glue, play dough, water colors.
 - Language – In an inviting area through books, puzzles, and conversations with others, children learn to communicate needs and feelings through verbal communication. They learn to speak clearly, use words that have proper meaning, speak distinctly, and label objects and people in their world.