

Ridgecrest Montessori Children's House

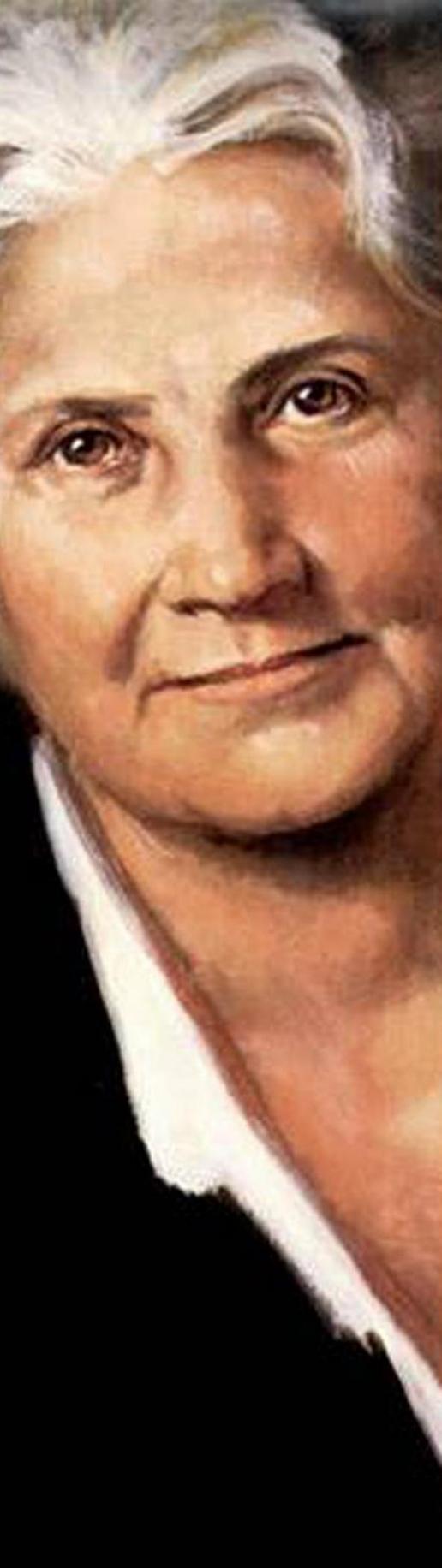
Parent Handbook



“The goal of education should be to activate the child’s own natural desire to learn.”

-Maria Montessori

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Program Overview



Welcome! Thank you for choosing Ridgecrest Montessori Children's House for your child's education, and for joining our community.

I am pleased to welcome all families to Ridgecrest Montessori Children's House! We pride ourselves on being a strong and connected community. As members of that community, we all have an important role to play. This Parent Handbook is designed as a reference tool for you to access information about Ridgecrest Montessori Children's House policies and procedures. The partnership between parents, teachers and administrators is key to a successful relationship, and our goal is to provide the tools for good communication from the start. I look forward to an exciting and productive school year.

Sincerely,

Abeer (Abby) Alhayek

Owner, Director, and Teacher

Program Overview



School Contact Information

Address: Ridgecrest Montessori Children's House
732 North Norma Street
Ridgecrest, California, 93555

Hours: 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Monday through Friday
and by appointment

Phone: (760) 381-6527

Email: ridgecrestmch@gmail.com

Website: www.ridgecrestmch.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ridgecrestmch>

School Staff

Owner, Director, Teacher

Abeer (Abby) Alhayek

Elementary Lead Teacher

Amanda Nelson

Elementary Teacher

Deidre Nehr

TK-Kindergarten Teacher

Misty Siebert & Janett Arechiga

Montessori Education



*“Free the
child’s
potential,
and you will
transform
him into the
world.”*

- Maria Montessori

Mission

Ridgecrest Montessori Children’s House cultivate a community of children, families and staff working together to create a positive and nurturing environment to support learning and personal growth.

Purpose

Ridgecrest Montessori Children’s House provides a Montessori approach to education that offers both freedom and structures so each child may learn at his or her own pace, develop a love of learning and reach his or her maximum potential. Students cultivate independence as they take greater responsibility in caring for themselves, their peers, their classroom and the greater community.

Our Classrooms

The Montessori classroom is a stimulating learning environment consciously prepared to invite exploration and discovery. Children work independently or in small groups. Self-directed, hands-on learning is encouraged. The Montessori classroom is a multi-age learning environment where you will see younger children exploring, middle-aged children mastering, and older children leading and mentoring. .

The Montessori elementary classroom is a child-directed, project-oriented, creative and inspiring learning environment. The teachers have college degrees and Montessori certifications and are committed to personal growth and creatively applying their knowledge and skills to create a stimulating and healthy environment. (See additional information under the Curriculum section.)

Daily Schedules

The Montessori environment provides a peaceful and orderly daily schedule for children with a combination of gathering and individual work times. There are also times for children to be social, and to play together outdoors. There may be a variety of special activities offered as well to support the learning children are doing, or to provide enrichment opportunities.

One of the central tenets of a Montessori education is having a daily uninterrupted work cycle where children will work independently for around three hours each day. We strive to ensure that children have this uninterrupted learning time each day to ensure that they can build the concentration and focus that will make them successful in learning, and in life.

Keeping Track of Work

Children in an elementary classroom begin to keep a record of their work. This can take the form of a journal, a work plan, or a chart. Children develop work plans where they agree to do certain work during a day, week or month. This is a process that is supported by teachers, and undertaken by children who learn to take responsibility for their own work.

The child still has the freedom to choose their own work, as well as choosing to work with another child or in a group. Keeping track of their work helps them make good work choices, and lets the teacher see which presentations have been done and which are still needed.

Montessori Education

Montessori Curriculum

In the elementary program, students begin to move away from concrete materials and develop an ability to think abstractly as developmentally dictated. Learning tools in the Elementary classroom take on multiple and more sophisticated uses. The integrated program includes reading, language arts, geography, music, art, mathematics, spelling, history, botany, zoology, physical science, physical education, and social studies.

“Children are human beings to whom respect is due, superior to us by reason of their innocence and of the greater possibilities of their future... Let us treat them with all the kindness which we would wish to help to develop in them.”

- Maria Montessori

The Elementary program is guided by individualized yet collaborative learning. Each child is a unique person with particular aptitudes and interests. The role of the Montessori teacher is to provoke questions and teach the children the skills to answer those questions. The teacher serves as a guide to each child in his or her own learning, exploring a diverse curriculum, and creating rich learning experiences as the child moves from concrete to abstract thinking. Our teachers match their instruction with each child’s learning style and natural talents, ensuring every child is engaged and invested in learning and capable of achieving success.

The children in Elementary classrooms learn to research information, write reports, and make presentations to the group. They write plays, build models of the universe, and explore the connectedness of all living things. Montessori has a proud history of offering excellent hands-on, concrete materials to teach abstract concepts in both science and math. Through various activities, students develop strong 21st Century learning skills including skills in science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics. More importantly, children learn to be motivated and curious life-long learners, with skills that will allow them to succeed in any area they choose to explore in their future. .

Together, children and teachers create an environment that supports social and emotional development as well as a strong commitment to diversity and inclusion. Children help one another and come to feel that helping is part of living. The feeling in the room is more like that of an extended family, and the focus on respectful social interaction and problem solving cultivates a social maturity atypical of children of this age. The strength of these relationships allows children to take risks, voice opinions, and creatively express themselves.

School Guidelines



“The environment must be rich in motives which lend interest to activity and invite the child to conduct his own experiences.”

-Maria Montessori

Program Overview

Registration

Registration is based on availability. In February of each year, we open registration to currently enrolled families for our upcoming school year. This allows returning families an opportunity to secure a space in the program of their choice before registration opens to the public on March 1st. When a program becomes full, we will begin a waiting list and notify applicants as space becomes available. Parents/guardians may register their child for the new school year by submitting the appropriate registration paperwork and a registration fee (\$150).

The Montessori elementary environment and curriculum differs significantly from that of a more traditional elementary program. We have found that it can be quite difficult for a child with no prior Montessori experience to assimilate into a Montessori environment once they have reached the third-grade level. This is, in large part, due to the fact that the third year in a Montessori program is a culminating year of the cumulative curriculum that builds upon the foundational lessons and materials of the first and second years. With this in mind, new enrollment requests will be accepted on a case by case basis under the following parameters:



- New first, second and third grade enrollment requests for students, with or without prior Montessori experience, will be accepted until October 15th.
- New fourth and fifth grade enrollments will be accepted through October 15th, when the student is transferring directly from another Montessori Elementary (or similar) program or has had prior Montessori experience.
- New first through fifth grade enrollment requests may be considered after the October 15th deadline, when the student is transferring directly from another Montessori Elementary (or similar) program.
- New fourth or fifth grade enrollment requests for students with no prior Montessori Elementary experience will not be accepted.
- All new enrollments, regardless of start date, are subject to the 6-week probationary period.
- We must receive a complete copy of the new student's cumulative records before enrollment is granted.

School Guidelines

Confidentiality of Information

All information and records obtained from or regarding children shall be confidential. It is the responsibility of the Ridgecrest Montessori Children's House to safeguard the confidentiality of record contents. The use or disclosure of all medical, financial or other information concerning children or families will be limited to purposes directly connected with the administration of the educational program. No other use of this information may be made without parent's/guardian's prior written consent. Parents/guardians shall have access to all information contained in their own child's file. It is the responsibility of the program staff to secure confidential files at all times and prevent unauthorized access.

Non-Discrimination Policy

The Ridgecrest Montessori Children's House shall be free from discrimination in administration of any of our policies, programs, or activities, based on actual or perceived sex or gender, race or ethnicity, physical or mental disability, medical condition, age, color, national origin or nationality, religion, limited proficiency in English, sexual orientation, or anyone associated with a person or group with one or more of the above actual or perceived characteristics. We welcome the enrollment of children with disabilities and will make reasonable accommodations for such children.

Child Abuse and Neglect

All schools, childcare centers, physicians, and others who work with children are required by law to inform Child Protective Services at the Department of Human Services of any suspected abuse or neglect of children. By law, a suspicion of child abuse generally means that the reporter has "reasonable cause to believe" or "reasonable cause to know or suspect" that a child is being maltreated physically, emotionally, or mentally. Employees are trained in identifying abuse and neglect.

Staff Screening and Training

In order to ensure all children are safe in our care, all employees undergo rigorous screening and background checks, including fingerprinting. Staff also receive training in a number of areas to ensure that they are creating a safe and healthy environment. These may include supervision, first aid and CPR, gentle discipline, and others. All teachers are also required to be fully certified in Montessori teaching methods for the grade that they will be teaching.

School Guidelines

Tuition

Tuition for the school year is calculated based on the number of school days and is then divided into ten equal monthly installments. First installment will be due on August 1st and the tenth and final installment will be due on May 1st. If you are interested in paying your tuition in twelve installments, contact the office and we will work with you to make arrangements beginning July 1. Discounts may be available for families who wish to pay their annual tuition in full. Monthly invoices for these installments will be sent to the email address provided on the tuition contract.

Payments are due by the 1st of each month. Payments made after the 10th will be subject to a \$25 late fee. If payment is not received by the 25th, we will begin a leave of absence for your child until we receive payment in full. If we do not receive payment in full by the 1st of the following month, the child's enrollment may be terminated.

Our preferred method of payment is our online payment network. Payments may be made online via automated bank transfer or credit card by clicking the "View & Pay Invoice" button at the bottom of the emailed invoice. Payments may also be made by phone with credit/debit card or you can mail in payment to our business office at 732 N. Norma St. In-person payments can also be made in our office during office hours. If you are making your payment in person, please place payment in a sealed envelope with your child's name and give it to office staff. Receipts will be provided electronically via email through our payment system.

Families who have a flexible spending account that may allow them to be reimbursed for tuition can request a form for reimbursement from their account plan manager. Completed forms can be provided to the office, who will verify information and sign them.

"Our care of the child should be governed, not by the desire to make him learn things, but by the endeavor always to keep burning within him that light which is called intelligence."

-Maria Montessori

Discounts

We offer the following tuition discounts to our families. Please note that we only allow one discount per child per school year.

- Military Discount-\$25/month for active duty and retired military service members.
- Sibling Discount-\$25/month applicable when a second child enrolled in an RMCH program.

School Guidelines

Probationary Period

It is of utmost importance to us that every child has a positive and successful experience in our program. To this end, all new enrollments are subject to a 6-week probationary period. This period allows us the opportunity to thoroughly assess readiness and to determine whether the program is a good fit for the child. During the probationary period, enrollment may be terminated by RMCH or the parent/guardian with a 14-day written notice, or immediately for cause (see DISCIPLINE section for more information).

At the end of the probationary period, provided it is determined that the program is a good fit for the child, enrollment will be considered permanent for the remainder of the term unless there is cause for immediate dismissal or a disenrollment request is received from the parent/guardian as outlined in the DISENROLLMENT section.

Disenrollment

During the probationary period, we request a 14-day written notice of your intent to disenroll your child. In the event that enrollment is terminated, the parent/guardian will be held financially accountable for the prorated tuition, which will be calculated based on the number of days the child attended the program.

Once the 6-week probationary period has ended and enrollment is considered permanent, we require a 30-day written notice of your intent to disenroll your child. The parent/guardian is financially responsible, without exception, for that 30-day period. Re-enrollment within the same school year will be subject to a \$75 re-enrollment fee.

School Guidelines

Student Discipline

Discipline in the classroom is a procedure to teach children appropriate behavior with the goal for each child to develop self-control. Constructive methods, such as gentle redirection and role modeling, are used to help the children gain self-control and learn to make appropriate behavior choices. Teachers guide the children through conflict resolutions and help them learn how to get their needs met in a peaceful and positive way. Our philosophy does not condone corporal punishment or any frightening/humiliating techniques. We believe that if a child is involved in work that interests him/her and understands the ground rules, he/she will usually behave in an acceptable manner.

The safety of our students and staff members is our number one priority. In the event that a child's behavior poses a threat to the mental, emotional or physical safety of themselves or others, progressive disciplinary action will be taken. At the discretion of the administration, taking into account factors such as the severity and frequency of the behavior, progressive disciplinary actions may include temporary removal of the child from the classroom environment, a phone call to the parent/guardian, suspension, or dismissal from the program. Parents will be contacted if a child's behavior escalates or if there is reason for immediate dismissal.

At no time will any form of discipline or punishment be used or be permitted that is developmentally inappropriate or is prohibited by law or policy. Staff is to ensure that each child is treated with dignity and respect while maintaining a safe and comfortable environment for all children. Corporal punishment, humiliating or frightening techniques, sarcasm, and labeling children ("good" or "bad") are prohibited.

As a general rule, for physically harmful and/or threatening incidents to other children, we will follow the guidance as outlined below:

1st incident: The teacher will talk with the child (and the other children involved) to discuss the cause of the incident, using problem solving and conflict resolution techniques. The child will be offered a cool down period in the peace corner.

2nd incident: The child will be given a cool down period; after cool down, the parent(s) will be called so that the child can talk to them. The child will lose playground privileges for a period of time, as warranted by the incident. In the event that parents cannot be reached by phone, they will be notified of the incident via voice mail and email.

3rd incident: The child's parent/guardian will be called to pick up the child and take him/her home. A conference will be set up with the parents to discuss the child's behavior and possible solutions.

School Guidelines

Arrival and Dismissal

It is important that your child arrive on time, as the beginning of the school day sets the tone for the classroom. Children who are rushed and arrive late may not be in the right frame of mind to begin activities. We ask for your cooperation in ensuring that your child can begin his/her work at the start of class.

Parents/ guardians should not enter classrooms or disturb teachers once the day has begun.

After-School Program

An after-school program is available for children of working parents or who want extra enrichment and socialization. This program provides a safe and enriching educational environment during extended learning hours, following the underlying principles of the Montessori philosophy. The after-school program operates during all regular school days, excluding holidays and minimum days, until 5:30pm. There is an additional charge for the after-school program, and space is limited and will be assigned based on the same registration priorities as the regular education program.

Each regular school day runs from 8:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m. We offer early drop-off beginning at 7:30 a.m. and encourage you to bring your child at least 5-10 minutes before school begins to get settled in. (Please do not leave until your child has been determined to be temperature free.) Minimum days run from 8:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. with school being dismissed before the regularly scheduled lunch time. Please do not pack your child a lunch on these days.

For your child's protection, we will not release a child to any unauthorized person(s). Authorized persons include parents, legal guardians, or another designated person(s) as noted on the child's emergency card. Identification will be required if a staff member does not recognize someone as an authorized person.

During drop off or pick up, please drive in a counterclockwise motion around the parking lot. Enter from Norma and go to the back row of the parking lot where you can enter our drop off area, and proceed to the space adjacent to the gate when it is safe to do so. Exit by returning out on the west side, and then leaving the parking lot toward Norma. Parents are also welcome to park in the parking lot or along Norma Street to escort children to and from school.



Student & Family Guidelines



“The child, making use of all that he finds around him, shapes himself for the future.”

-Maria Montessori

Student & Family Guidelines

Health Policy

The first year the child attends school is generally the most difficult as far as illness is concerned because he/she is regularly exposed to many children in a group situation for the first time. To protect all the children in the school, ill children should be kept at home. If your child comes down with a communicable illness, please notify us immediately. Children will not be permitted to attend if any of the following symptoms are present:

- Fever (temp. of 100° F or higher)-child must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school
- Discharge of discolored or profuse amounts of mucus from the nose
- Diarrhea (runny, watery or bloody stools)-child must have normal stools for 24 hours before returning to school
- Vomiting (more than once in a 24-hour period)-child may return to school 24 hours after vomiting ceases
- Body rash with fever; undiagnosed body rash (requires doctor's note to return to school)
- Sore throat with fever, swollen glands or mouth sores
- Eye discharge-thick mucus or pus draining from the eye
- Head lice or nits (eggs)
- Symptoms of possible illness such as coughing or wheezing, continuous crying, fatigue, or difficulty breathing
- Severe coughing-child gets red or blue in the face, or makes high-pitched whooping sound after coughing
- Child requires care that we cannot provide without compromising the safety of the other children in our care

Parents/Guardians will be contacted immediately to pick up their child if any of the above symptoms are observed. Additionally, parents/guardians shall be immediately notified if the child sustains an injury more serious than a minor cut or scratch. In the case of less serious injuries, including but not limited to minor cuts and scratches, the teacher or administrator will document the injury in the child's record and notify the parent/guardian of the nature of the injury when the child is picked up from school. (COVID-19 Policy is included at end of handbook.)

Does your child have a food or other allergy? Talk to your teacher today, or call the office so we can make sure they can be safe at school!



Student & Family Guidelines

Administering Medication to Children During School

In the event that your child must take medication* while under the care of our school, the following procedures must be followed.

- The parent/legal guardian must provide to one of the administrators or authorized staff member a written statement authorizing the school to administer the medication to their child;
- Any medication that is brought to school must be given to your child's teacher. It cannot be kept in your child's bag or lunch box.
- No medications are to be in lunch boxes, backpacks etc., if you want your child to have vitamins or nonprescription drugs, please administer them at home.
- The medication must be delivered to the school in the original container.
- The medication and dosage are clearly identified on the container.
- The container or the parents written statement must clearly specify the time during which the medication is to be taken while at school.
- The container or the parents written statement must state if there are specific storage requirements for the medication, e.g. must be refrigerated.
- The parents written statement must include any other pertinent data regarding the administration of the medication.

**Medications include not only substances dispensed in the U.S. by prescription, but also substances that do not require a prescription such as sunscreen, over the counter remedies, nutritional supplements, and herbal remedies.*

A new or amended statement must be provided annually or whenever there is a change in the child's authorized health care provider, or a change in the medication, dosage, method by which the medication is required to be taken, or date(s) the medication is required to be taken. The parent/legal guardian may terminate consent for the administration of the medication at any time.

Unused, discontinued, and outdated medication will be returned to the child's parent/legal guardian. If the medication cannot be returned to the child's parent/legal guardian, it will be disposed of by the end of the school year in accordance with the applicable law.

Student & Family Guidelines



Handwashing

Children and staff will wash/sanitize their hands upon arriving at school daily. Children and staff will wash/sanitize their hands before eating, after using the bathroom, upon returning from outdoor play, after blowing their noses and when deemed necessary.

Emergencies

In the incredibly rare case of an emergency at school, the child's individual emergency instructions on file will be consulted and the parents will be notified immediately. If necessary, the child may be transported to Ridgecrest Regional Hospital by ambulance. The signed consent statement and medical information you provided will accompany the child so that treatment can be given immediately. It is imperative that you keep medical information and emergency contact information current for your child. Please notify the office if you wish to update any information.

In the event of an illness or injury occurring and the parents/guardians, or emergency contacts cannot be reached immediately, school administration will obtain emergency medical treatment without specific instructions from the parent/guardians.

In the event of a school wide emergency, our first concern will be for the children's safety. We will take any measures necessary to assure their immediate physical safety and attend to their needs until you arrive. We will notify parents of any school wide emergencies as soon as possible via telephone or email, when available.

If the building is unsafe for occupancy, children will be evacuated to the playground. In the event our playground is unsuitable, we will evacuate to the Ridgecrest United Methodist Church parking lot on N. Norma and Felspar. Remember, your child and the staff will have had several practice drills, and discussions on what to expect. Try to stay calm and know that your child will be kept safe and as comfortable as possible until you arrive.

Student & Family Guidelines

Field Trips and Special Occasions

From time to time field trips may be available for children to visit locations not on school grounds for educational purposes. In this case, parents will be informed and a signed permission slip will be required for participation which includes location, time, and transportation information. In the event that you do not want your child to participate, alternate activities will be provided.

There may be activities included in the regular curriculum that include recognition of secular holidays or nationally recognized days, weeks, or months for various reasons. Please notify your child's teacher if there are personal, cultural, or religious reasons you prefer your child not participate in one or more of these. An alternate activity will be made available for your child.



Clothing and Personal Belongings

The children are very active during school, especially on the playground. Encourage your child to dress in comfortable and weather-appropriate play clothes and shoes so he or she can safely participate in all physical activities. Please send jackets in cold weather and sunblock/sunhats during warmer weather. (Please see medication section if you are sending your child to school with sunblock.) We ask that jewelry be left at home as they can become a distraction to the children and may get lost or broken.

All personal belongings (jackets, lunch boxes, backpacks etc.) should be labeled with the child's name before being brought to school. Lost items will be placed in our lost & found basket in the entryway. Any unclaimed items will be donated to the local women's shelter at the end of the school year. Toys should be brought to school only on predetermined sharing days. Valuable or irreplaceable objects should not be brought to school. The weekly homework packets prepare students for share days.

Student & Family Guidelines

Communication

You will be invited to join our school's private Seesaw application. During orientation you will be given a log-in which will enable you to create an account. This will be our main communication platform.

If you need to reach the teachers during the school day, our phone number is 760-381-6527. You may also reach teachers through the Seesaw application. Our teachers appreciate the opportunity to share in each child's growth and development and they welcome questions and input from parents. Frequent communication between parents and teachers leads to a better understanding of each other's goals and allows us all to provide the consistency and guidance that best suits each individual child.

Parent-Teacher conferences are offered mid-year. Progress Reports are given during these times as well as at the end of the school year. Teachers are happy to make additional appointments to discuss your child's progress between regularly scheduled conferences.

Classroom Observations and Visits

Parents are welcome to observe in our classroom. If you are interested in observing, you will be required to adhere to the same guidelines as the teachers and children. Please speak to your child's teacher to schedule a good time for this, if needed.

We welcome parent participation! There are many ways you can give your support outside the classroom. Please talk with your child's teacher for ways that you can be of assistance outside the classroom. Any person entering the building for purposes other than to quickly drop off or pick up children or children's items or visit the office, will be asked to sign in on the Visitor Log and to wear a Visitor Badge while on the premises.

Snack and Lunch

Children are asked to bring a snack from home to eat during the morning work cycle. Please pack lunches with a cold pack for items that need to stay cold. Conversely, warm food kept in stainless steel or plastic insulated containers will stay warm until lunchtime. Our school does not have a refrigerator or microwave for lunch use.

We encourage parents to send children with healthy items for snacks and lunches, and not to include candy or other items that may affect children's behavior, or be a distraction to other students in the classroom.



Resources for Families



Resources for Families

There are many insightful books and online resources that you might find helpful in parenting and in understanding the Montessori approach. Below are a few suggestions:

Positive Discipline Series, by Jan Nelson

Montessori: A Modern Approach, by Paula Polk Lillard

Math Works: Montessori Math and the Developing Brain, by Michael Duffy

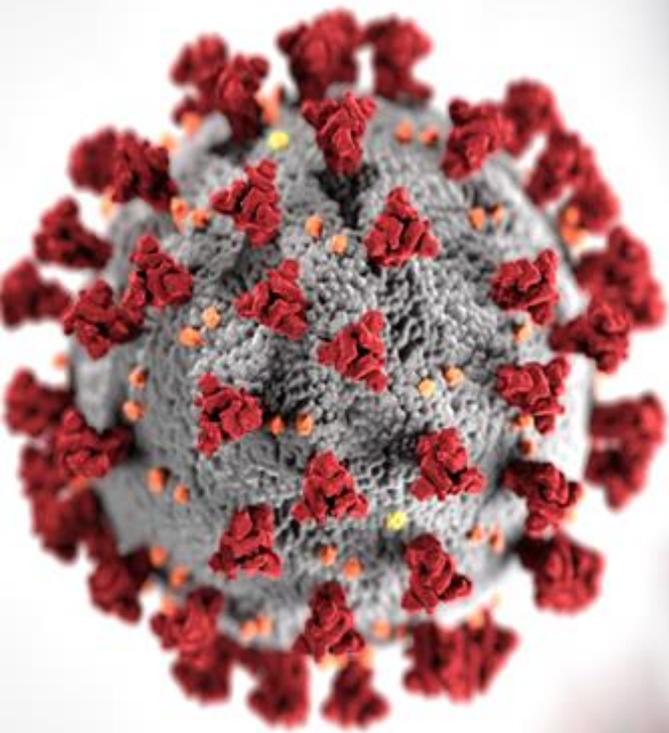
The Absorbent Mind, by Maria Montessori

www.mariamontessori.com

You are also encouraged to follow our Facebook page where we post information about, and resources for those who are interested in, the Montessori method.

<https://www.facebook.com/ridgecrestmch>

Covid-19 Policy



COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019

While Montessori schools have always placed a strong emphasis on a clean environment, good hygiene and frequent handwashing, we are placing an even stronger emphasis on cleanliness, more frequent handwashing, and now wearing face masks or shields when appropriate and social distancing, to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

To this end, the following pages outline the steps that we will implement to stay as safe and healthy as we can ***when local conditions due to Covid-19 require additional health and safety measures to be implemented in schools.*** These will be updated as necessary to align with California Department of Public Health guidance.

Covid-19 Policy

Covid-19 Guidelines for the School Environment

To help keep the school environment as safe as possible, the following strategies will be implemented at the school facility by property trained staff:

- Ensure proper ventilation of the building, i.e. airing of classrooms before children arrive;
- Implement procedures to frequently clean all frequently touched surfaces;
- Follow procedures for daily self-screening for all staff before beginning work including having temperature taken with a no-touch thermometer;
- Conduct a visual wellness check of all children upon arrival and ask health questions when concerned;
- Take temperature of each person entering the building with a no-touch thermometer (A person with a temperature of 100 degrees or higher will not be allowed into the building);
- Ensure children sanitize their hands on entering the building;
- Monitor staff and children throughout the day for signs of possible illness. If child exhibits signs of illness, the child will be isolated from the general classroom, and the caregiver will be immediately notified to pick up the child;
- Limit visitors to the classroom to those who are essential, and require all visitors to be pre-screened for symptoms and exposure, and also complete all applicable health and safety screenings and procedures upon entering the building.

Guidelines in place for staff, as well as for parents/guardians, are on the following pages.



Covid-19 Policy

Covid-19 Guidelines for Teachers and Staff

- Wear masks or face shields during the day while indoors (excluding breaks and lunch);
- Encourage children to wear face masks, however, they cannot be responsible for ensuring they keep them on;
- Keep each child's belongings separated and in an individually labeled storage container, cubby or area;
- Sanitize all classroom work surfaces, manipulatives and other frequently touched items twice a day, and as needed;
- Ensure children wash/sanitize hands before snacks and lunch, after returning from the playground, after using the restroom, and when deemed necessary;
- Ensure distancing in the classroom by placing tables 6' apart;
- Encourage children to work independently and maintain social distance;
- Ensure social distancing, as much as possible, on the playground;
- Create and develop a scripted story around social distancing, as well as handwashing, proper etiquette for sneezes, coughs, etc.

Covid-19 Guidelines for Parents/Guardians

- Provide a washable cloth mask for their child to wear, with a spare included in their backpack (Children 2nd grade and under are not required to wear masks, however, they are encouraged);
- Provide a clean mask daily for children wearing them;
- Provide a filled water bottle for their child daily;
- Wash their own hands and assist in washing their child's hands before drop-off. Parents are also encouraged to wash their hands prior to pick-up;
- Provide a bag or backpack for all personal items, e.g. lunch box, water bottle, etc. to be transported to and from school daily.
- Wash/clean personal items daily;
- Make visits as brief as possible.

Distance Learning in the Event of Closure Due to COVID-19 or other Emergency

During an unforeseen school closure, Ridgecrest Montessori Children's House School will continue to hold classes via distance learning. Parents can expect a combination of take-home packets (picked up at a pre-arranged time at the school) along with instruction via a distance learning platform called Seesaw. Since Seesaw is not "live" instruction, the lessons can be viewed at a time that is compatible for the child and his or her parents (if parent involvement is needed or desired). For students in the upper elementary class, other distance learning platforms may be included. Most items that will be needed for lessons area will be contained in the take-home packets. If there is a need for additional supplies, it is usually something as simple as paper, scissors or crayons.

Covid-19 Policy

Covid-19 Exposures in School

If a student is exposed to Covid-19 in school, staff will follow the procedures recommended by the California Department of Public Health. These are being frequently updated as new information and tools become available. As of April 1, 2022, the following are the recommendations, which will be implemented in the case of this occurrence.

Schools should notify students who spent more than a cumulative total of 15 minutes (within a 24-hour time period) in a shared indoor airspace (e.g., classroom) with someone with COVID-19 during their period of infectiousness.

- Notification should occur to "groups" of exposed students (e.g., classmates, teammates, cohorts, etc.) rather than contact tracing to identify individual "close contacts" (e.g., those within 6 feet).
- Notifications should be provided to all individuals considered exposed, including those who are vaccinated and/or recently infected. (For example, if a student in tenth grade is diagnosed with COVID-19, the school should notify groups with whom that student interacted as per the criteria above, such as those in the same classes, sports team, and/or other extracurricular cohorts.)

Exposed students, regardless of COVID-19 vaccination status, should get tested for COVID-19 with at least one diagnostic test obtained within 3-5 days after last exposure, unless they had COVID-19 within the last 90 days.

- Exposed students who had COVID-19 within the last 90 days should monitor for symptoms. If symptoms develop, they should isolate and get tested with an antigen test.
- In the event of wide-scale and/or repeated exposures, broader (e.g., grade-wide or campus-wide) once weekly testing for COVID-19 may be considered until such time that exposure events become less frequent.
- Any FDA-authorized antigen diagnostic test, PCR diagnostic test, or pooled PCR test is acceptable for evaluation of an individual's COVID-19 status. For individuals who have been recently infected (within the past 90 days), antigen testing is strongly recommended as PCR results may remain persistently positive and not be indicative of a new active infection. Repeat antigen testing and/or confirmatory molecular testing should be considered in individuals who receive a negative result with an antigen test but have symptoms specific for COVID-19 (such as loss of taste and smell).

Exposed students may continue to take part in all aspects of K-12 schooling, including sports and extracurricular activities, unless they develop symptoms or test positive for COVID-19. They should test as recommended in Section (2), report positive test results to the school, and follow other components of this guidance, including wearing masks as is strongly recommended.

- Exposed students who develop symptoms should see Section 4 of the K-12 Guidance.
- Exposed students who receive a positive test result should isolate in accordance with Section 10 of the K-12 Guidance.

THANK YOU!



Thank you for trusting us to help your child grow and develop!

We believe, as Maria Montessori stated, that “Whoever touches the life of the child touches the most sensitive point of a whole, which has roots in the most distant past and climbs toward the infinite future.” We are honored that you are giving us that opportunity in the life of your child. We are very proud of our Montessori Children’s House and the impact we know it will make on your child and their future, and we know that the reason it is successful is because of the amazing staff, families, and students who are here learning and growing together every day. We are pleased that you’ve chosen to be a part of our community, and we look forward to supporting your child and your family in getting ready for success in school and in life!

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us!