

2023 Elementary Parent Handbook

"We discovered that education is not something which the teacher does, but that it is a natural process which develops spontaneously in the human being. It is not acquired by listening to words, but in virtue of experiences in which the child acts on in his environment."

- Maria Montessori, The Absorbent Mind

Morning Arrival~ Please be on time! School starts promptly at 8:30 a.m. Your child must be signed in! Please ensure that your child is signed in prior to leaving. We will not be accepting children who are not signed in. Please have your child place all their items on their hook and should enter with only their water bottle (which should be labeled with their name). We do not use indoor shoes in the elementary classroom.

The child who arrives late could disrupt the class and miss the important socialization process that naturally occurs at the start of the day. Children who arrive past 8:30 a.m. will need to enter the classroom peacefully and independently.

Departures... students who will not be staying for after-school daycare are to be picked up at 3:30 p.m. Children leaving early for any reason must contact the teacher or office and leave a note for the teacher with the time they are being picked up. This can be done in the note section at drop-off on transparent classroom. This will ensure the children will be ready at the requested time and will cause the least amount of disruption. Need to talk to the teacher... Morning drop-off time is usually quite busy. If you need to talk to the teacher about your child or have any questions, please speak with the office so that they may facilitate or schedule a time to speak with Brittney. You can also feel free to schedule a brief conference, if necessary. The easiest way to reach Brittney is to email her at Brittney.Collinsworth@montessoriupland.com. Communication is a very important element of the parent-teacher relationship. Please feel free to come to us with any concerns you may have. Most questions and concerns are best addressed directly with Brittney who has an understanding of your child's progress in each area of development.

Absences/Change in Schedule... We understand that the children may get sick, have appointments, or may have other events that might conflict with the regular school day. If you know your child will be absent ahead of time, please email me or fill out a green change of schedule note which is located outside of the classroom. If your child needs to be picked up early or dropped off late for any reason, it would be greatly appreciated if you could inform me, either through an email or through a green note. This will allow us to plan appropriately.

Toys, jewelry, and other personal belongings... Please do not allow your children to bring toys, jewelry, or other personal belongings such as extra colored pencils, markers, Legos, etc.. to school. The specialness of an item may be too tempting for other children, or the item may be lost or broken and cause hurt feelings.

Share time/ Public Speaking... Educational objects from nature, books, photos, etc. make great share items. Children are also welcome to share something verbally about their lives. The children will also have an opportunity to share work that they are proud of. Through this the child learns to speak in front of their peers. This is an excellent way of gaining self-esteem and public speaking at an early age. Share Day will be decided by the students during a group discussion. **Toys will not be permitted for Share Day.**

Children's Drawers... Each child has a drawer to store their classroom materials and work in progress. As the children complete their work, it will be turned in for the teacher to review. At the end of the week the children will have a meeting with the teacher to go over their work that week and make plans for the next week. The children will take their completed work home with them on Fridays. Please send your child with a backpack daily, on Friday your child will take their work home in their backpack.

Field Trips... We generally will have the opportunity to go on 3-4 field trips away from the school. On these trips, we will require parent volunteers. Transportation for these trips is usually provided in vehicles of parents or guardians of the children enrolled in the school or via a bus. We encourage you to participate in these trips. To be a parent volunteer you will need to provide the following items to the office prior to the field trip:

- Show proof of valid driver's license
- Show proof of insurance (if driving)
- Show proof of immunizations:
 - Measles
 - YEARLY Influenza (Flu Shot or declination)
 - Pertussis (Whooping Cough)
 - TB Clearance (within the last year)

*Field trip chaperones may be limited due to the nature of the field trip or other factors. The limit is up to the teacher's discretion.

Birthdays... Celebrating the day of your child's birth is very important and special. Our birthday celebration allows every child the joy of sharing some of the more meaningful/exciting events in the child's life. The children will receive a birthday book made by the members of the classroom and a pouch that represents the wishes and gratitude that were given to the student during the birthday ceremony. *In an attempt to avoid competition- we will not be allowing any treats or goodie bags to be handed out. Please save this for your private celebrations. We would be glad to help you distribute invitations to your child's friends. These can be handed to Brittney, one of her assistants, or with someone in the office. On your child's special day, you may bring a small treat for the class.

Low Sugar Policy... We will be implementing a healthier approach to snacks and lunch again this year. We are asking that no high-sugar products be sent to school with your child at any time except for special parties and celebrations. This includes cookies, cupcakes, fruit punch/high-sugar juice, candy, syrup, cake, donuts, etc. These foods have been found to alter the behavior of children in many ways and lead to an unhealthy lifestyle. Please help us in keeping our children happy and healthy. Any items we feel do not observe our low sugar policy will be sent back home.

Snack... Each month your child will be assigned to bring snack for the class. Please bring snack to school before 8:30 a.m. on your designated day. If you are unable to bring the snack on time for any reason, please bring it in the day prior to make sure it gets here. Please let Brittney know if you are not sure about an item or amount and she can clarify it for you. We are always open to new ideas or foods from different cultures, etc. Snack menus are available on our website at <https://www.montessoriacademyca.com/snack-schedules> for your reference. One of the jobs in the class is the snack preparer. Each child will get an opportunity in the year to prepare snack for a 2-week period of time under the supervision of the teacher/assistant.

Lunch... The children do have the ability to warm up food. They will be taught to use a microwave to reheat their food. Please do not send food that needs to be cooked for long periods of time. We want to ensure that everyone has a chance to warm their food and enjoy their lunch in a timely manner.

Allergies... If your child has any special dietary requirements, please let us know immediately. We may ask for you to provide backup snacks for us to keep on hand at the school. If your child has an epi-pen, please make sure that you provide one to the school for emergencies and fill out the proper paperwork in the office.

Observations... We will invite and encourage you to observe our class throughout the year. This is the best way to see what goes on in our unique Montessori environment on a daily basis. You can schedule an observation with me or the office. We ask that you allow us time to settle the class into the routines and schedules before this takes place. At the end of October or after would be a good time to schedule an observation.

Parent Teacher Committee Involvement... We invite all parents to join our Parent Teacher Committee (PTC) for a chance to become involved in special events and fundraisers that take place at MAU. Parents will be able to provide insight into what activities they would like to take part in and what things they would like to see improved with the school. The committee is responsible for planning community events and fundraisers, allocating funds earned, and philanthropy opportunities for the school.

Classroom Rules...In our classroom, the children are expected to treat each other, the staff, and the materials with respect. Children learn behavior from adult guidance and observation of other children. Teachers are continuously modeling appropriate behavior and intervene only when necessary. It is our responsibility as adults to foster healthy and happy interactions. In the elementary classroom, the children are learning about Freedoms and Responsibilities. The children have created a list of freedoms and responsibilities that come with those freedoms, and they will be posted in the classroom so that they can be referred to throughout the year. The children will inevitably have conflicts. We will be working with them on conflict resolution skills.

Elementary Community Daily Schedule:

6:30 a.m. – Morning Daycare

8:15 a.m. – Arrival

8:30 a.m. – Morning work period (snack available anytime)

11:30 a.m. – Lunch preparation, enjoyment of the meal, followed by whole room clean-up

12:30 p.m. – Time outside

1:30 p.m. – Afternoon work period, initiated by reading aloud

3:00 p.m. – Prepare to go home, afternoon jobs, snack available

3:30 p.m. – Afternoon Daycare – Time outside

4:15 p.m. – Afternoon Daycare – Time inside

6:00 p.m. – School Closes

*The schedule is subject to change due to weather conditions and special events.

“If education recognizes the intrinsic value of the child’s personality and provides an environment suited to spiritual growth, we have the revelation of an entirely new child, whose astonishing characteristics can eventually contribute to the betterment of the world.” - Maria Montessori, Peaceful Children, Peaceful World