



Toddler Program 2023-2024



"Any unnecessary help is a hindrance to the child"
Dr. Maria Montessori

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Toddler Program

The toddler classrooms are structured to accommodate the needs of children ranging in ages from 18 months to 3 years. In order to foster confidence within each child, the prepared environment is designed to develop independence while also nurturing a sense of community. Keeping in mind the many developmental milestones achieved during this transitional time and the intensely curious minds of toddlers, the prepared environment invites each student to choose, practice and repeat. Establishing this cycle of work is fundamental for both increasing a child's ability to focus and to ultimately transition into the primary level. As a result of participating in our toddler community, each child will have learned: (1) how to trust and build secure relationships with humans outside of the immediate family; (2) what it means to be a part of a Montessori community; (3) the importance of taking on new challenges and the resulting consequences of those challenges, good and bad.

The best way to support your toddler during this time is to create consistency through routine living and through setting appropriate boundaries. Encourage your child to participate in life while understanding that perfection is not the goal. The journey is most important to a toddler.

Program Options:

5 days (M-F)
4 days (M-TH)

* Village Montessori is not required to accommodate make-up days. Make-up days are at the discretion of the teacher and availability of space.

Program Hours:

8:30 am – 11:30 am
8:30 am – 12:30 pm Lunch program
8:30 am – 2:45 pm Nap program
8:30 am – 5:30 pm All day program

Late arrivals are highly discouraged as they are disruptive to the community.

Toileting

The early toddler years are ripe for toilet training. Much like how a toddler learns at this age to talk and walk without direct instruction, learning to use the toilet is a skill that is instinctual. A toddler simply needs consistency and practice to master the new skill.

- Begins on Day 1! – begins as soon as the child is comfortable
- Only cotton underwear in environment
- Home and school must work in harmony

- Changes of clothing and 5-10 pairs of underwear available every day, label each item

Dress code

- Elastic waste bands are best
- Plain, “natural’ clothing (solids, prints, subtle patterns) **NO CHARACTERS***
- Indoor rubber shoes (crocs are good choice)
- Velcro closed toe shoes for outside
- Rubber rain boots for outside

*Please avoid lights and cartoon characters, Disney, etc.

Personal items

Are not necessary! Please leave personal toys and other treasures at home including pacifiers, bottles, and blankets.

Lunch

- Must include a thin ice pack.
- One serving of a protein and 1-2 fruit and/or vegetable.
We provide flatware, dishes, napkins, water, and milk (2% organic).
We also have a microwave.
Please label your containers and lunch boxes.
Again, please avoid commercial images and cartoon characters.
Also, please avoid yogurt in tubes, gummy fruit snacks, and pureed fruit foods in “suckable” containers.
Please package food in re-useable containers, glass preferred.

Nap

Please send in a nap mat that can roll up for storage.
We will send them home on Fridays and/or after a toileting accident for laundering.

*According to DHR Code 591-1-1-03, “Supervised nap or rest periods for a minimum of 1 hour during the day shall be provided for children under 5 years of age.”

**If a child is having a difficult time resting and is disruptive to other children, the parents will be notified, and other arrangements will need to be made.

Birthdays

At this age, birthdays are best celebrated within the home and family unit.

Transition to the Primary Level

Advancement is based upon levels of readiness in each of the developmental areas: social, emotional, physical, and intellectual. This transition typically occurs around the 3rd birthday, but transitional timelines also take into consideration the school calendar (natural transition points) and is not limited to or by the actual birthday. Primary teachers also take part in this process through observation, feedback, and an interview with the toddler. Every effort is made to ensure a smooth transition; however, any change in a child's routine requires time, patience, and support.

Admission & Fees

Enrollment forms:

Due the first day of school

- Student Information form
- Parent Acknowledgement Form
- COVID Acknowledgement Form
- Text Messaging Form
- Immunization form
- Emergency Information Form

Tuition:

- **Due the 1st of each month**
- Please mail to school or drop it off in Tuition box in front office or beside the front door. NOT in the school mailbox.
 - Check, money order, or credit card payments may be used.
 - Late fee of \$40 after the 5th of each month
 - Additional late fee of \$40 after the 15th and \$3/day thereafter
 - Fee of \$35 for returned checks.

A **90-day written notice of withdrawal is required** for any withdrawals. Tuition will not be refunded in the event of withdrawal without 90-day written notice. Registration fees and supply fees are not refundable.

Registration Fee:

- There is an annual registration fee.
- This fee is non-refundable and is not applied toward regular tuition.
- Registration is reduced for contracts that are returned by a specified date.

Supply Fee:

- Due with the registration payment and covers some of the cost of consumable supplies.
- *Schedule of fee discounts:*
 - 25% discount for enrollment after January 1st

- 50% discount for enrollment after April 10th
- Fee will be waived after May 1st, but only if re-enrolling for the upcoming year.

Attendance

Arrival and Departure routines:

Drop-off → 8:30; carpool

Pick-up → 11:30 (outside the gate); 12:30-2:45 students participate in carpool.

- *Fee of \$1/minute after 1:10 and 3:00
- Changes in carpool must be documented in writing; alternate driver must show photo I.D.
- **No cell phone** use in carpool
- Enter from Steeple Run and exit on Woodstock Road

Tardiness:

Young children need a dependable schedule. The classroom is a collaborative community that has a definitive schedule. It is upsetting to a child if he/she is often “out-of-sync” with the rest of the class.

Please avoid unnecessary late arrivals, which can be frustrating for your child and disruptive to the class. It is vital that your child arrives at school on time.

- Tardy students must present a written note from the parent or legal guardian.
- Parents are to email the teacher/school the prior if they know they will be tardy the following day
- Arrivals after 10:00 will require a note from a doctor verifying an appointment.
- More than three late arrivals will result in meetings with administration and the child’s teacher.

Absenteeism:

- Parents must email the teacher/school when the student will be absent.
- A student must have a written note from the parent or legal guardian after an absence.
- Excessive absences will result in meeting with administration and the child’s teacher.

Inclement Weather

- 11 Alive news will post announcements – you will also be notified via email and/or Remind.

Medication, Health, and Safety

Immunization records:

- **Due the first day of school**; attendance prohibited without form.
 - GA form 3231 revision 1/100

Medication:

- First aid for minor incidents will be administered.
- DHR prohibits regular dispensation of medicine; however, a parent may fill out a waiver for special circumstances.
- Front office staff has the waiver and will monitor implementation of waiver.

Health:

- Village will adhere to DHR guidelines for all sicknesses; complete chart is in the front office
- No rashes, pink eye, vomiting, diarrhea, sore throat or green mucus will be allowed in school.
- Must be fever and/or symptom free for 24 hours without the help of medicine before returning.
- Please notify school as soon as possible of any diagnosis.
- If your child is diagnosed with a communicative disease, you must have a doctor's note to reenter school.

Visitation and Observations

Visitors:

- Classes are in session after 8:45 A.M.
- Parents and other visitors must sign in at the front office after 8:45 A.M.
- Observation through the exterior building window into the classroom is not permitted.

Classroom Observations:

Parents are encouraged to observe their child's class as well as other classes. Observing a class in progress is an exciting experience. However, to maintain the orderly environment, and out of respect for the child's work pattern, we have certain guidelines and suggestions. Toddlers may be observed only when the curtains are open. They are closed for the first few weeks until everyone is comfortable in the class.

Communication

School Calendar:

A separate summer program is offered each year.
Please refer to the school calendar for specific holidays and special events.

Office Hours:

Phone: 770.552.0834
August – May: 7:30 A.M. - 6:00 P.M., Monday - Friday
Summer office hours: 9:00 A.M. – 3:00 P.M., Monday – Friday

Email: frontdeskvms@gmail.com

Forums:

- Conferences (2-3 times/year); *no school for students on these days
- Parent Education classes
- Silent Journey

Direct Communication with Teachers and Staff:

- Communication between parents and Village Montessori teachers is crucial.
- Teachers are often unable to speak at length during school hours while children are present. An appointment can be set up after school.
- Please send in a note or call the office and leave a message to schedule an appointment. You may email your teacher directly.

It is school policy that no one on staff other than the lead teacher communicates with parents in matters of their child's behavior or gives advice on that subject. If you have questions or concerns about any administrative issues, please contact the office.

Questions...

Regarding your child or your child's classroom, please email your child's teacher and he/she will contact you promptly.

Regarding tuition contact Debbie Drankowski the school bookkeeper

Discipline and Behavior Guidelines

Village Montessori School strives to create a safe, loving, and supportive environment. Our staff is highly qualified to guide and direct children along the path of development. Children will be taught what is and is not acceptable behavior and encouraged to participate in cooperative learning. Consistent guidelines will be set and discussed with the children. The Montessori environment instills self-direction, self-motivation, and self-control. The acquisition of these traits is critical to the success of the program. Our staff will guide and direct the children toward these goals of acceptable behaviors wherein the child grows in self-esteem and self-confidence. Montessori professionals are trained to redirect children's behavior and to connect to the child's inner interests so that he/she may express that interest in his/her daily activities. However, not all children are able to become self-directed and independent and thrive in the Montessori environment. Children who are unable to exercise self-control, despite various approaches to behavior modification, may be referred for alternative placement.

VMS retains the rights to dismiss a family or student for any reason deemed appropriate. All forms of harassment and discrimination based on race, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, age, or disability are strictly prohibited. Causing physical or emotional harm to anyone, damage to property of others, or creating a hostile environment at school will not be tolerated. *Reference: Thacker Montessori School Policy*

Discipline Policies

1. All classroom and playground rules and procedures will be clearly outlined and explained to all students.
2. All staff will apply rules and limitations consistently.
3. All children will be treated with respect and empathy.
4. Children will be encouraged to learn to interact with respect for one another, to manage conflict and to cooperate without an adult's direct intervention. However, if the teacher believes intervention is necessary, he/she will intervene to achieve this result.

Behavior which is not acceptable, and which will receive intervention when excessive or frequently repeated may include but not be limited to:

- Physical aggression such as hitting, kicking, biting, or pushing.
- Purposeful destruction of the school's or other children's property.
- Excessive outbursts or frequent "temper tantrums," such as throwing items, screaming, or hurting self and others.
- Consistent refusal to adhere to or cooperate with teacher's instruction or the classroom rules, schedules, or procedures, especially in a manner which might create hazards for self and others.

When a child poses a threat to himself or others in the classroom, or any other behavior threatens the integrity of the classroom. An incident report will be filed, and the child may be sent home. Removing a child from the classroom occurs rarely; however, this action will be at the discretion of the teacher if she/he deems it necessary for the welfare of the entire classroom. If the behavior is repeated, the parents will be requested to come immediately to pick up the child. In this event, you must plan to have your child picked up from school. If any of the above behaviors are frequent, parents will be consulted and suggestions for addressing these behaviors may involve contacting the Fulton County Dept. of Family and Children's Services or the special education department in the local school system or a child psychologist or professional. Parents who enroll their children in VMS must be willing to fully cooperate in addressing the special needs of their child.

Biting Policy

1. Parents will be notified of the biting incident and will assist us in training the child to use appropriate behavior.
2. The teacher will review with the parent suggested approaches to address the biting behavior.
3. After three biting incidents, the student will be withdrawn from our program if deemed in the best interest of the child, Village Montessori School, and the other children. Probationary re-enrollment for the child may be considered three months after the termination.
4. If, at any time, child's biting behavior becomes especially excessive or hazardous to the children or staff, the child can be discharged from the program.

Being a Village Montessori Parent

When parents choose to enroll their children in Village Montessori School, they agree to support our mission statement, follow rules and guidelines set out in the Parent Handbook, and abide by Village Montessori policies.

We expect the following from our parents:

- Make continuing efforts to understand and embrace the Montessori approach and work in partnership with the school.
- Demonstrate respect for all adults and children, the school, and the school's programs.
- Strive to parent according to Montessori principles.
- Maintain active, direct and respectful communication with the school.

As parents, you can expect the following from us:

- We strive to fulfill our missions as an AMI Montessori school.
- We aim to maintain open, honest, timely and respectful communication with you about your child and about information affecting the school community.
- We strive to ensure that the environment is physically and emotionally safe and supportive, as well as aesthetically beautiful.
- We work hard to ensure that the school building and grounds are physically safe, secure, and well maintained.

VMS Parent Association

Philosophy: The VMS parents' association acts as a forum for VMS parents to gather in support of each other and to support the goals and spiritual growth of VMS.

Goals:

1. Parent support - The VMS-PA provides an opportunity for parents to not only interact in organized settings, but also an informal way for social interaction and mutual support for families with similar needs and values, with a goal of building a sense of community and providing a substitute "extended family" for our families.
2. Parent Education
3. Community Outreach
4. Growth and expansion of school or programs

Membership: All parents of children enrolled at VMS are members of the Parent Association. Meetings will be held periodically throughout the year and dues are requested. The membership fees fund social events, seminars, festivals, family picnics, etc.

Lending Library

VMS maintains a collection of books and articles which parents may borrow to learn more about Montessori education or parenting.

- Since these items are limited, please return them after one (1) week.
- A sign-out/sign-in sheet is provided to check out an item.
- Please ask for assistance from the office staff.

Summary

Thank you for taking the time to read our Parent Handbook.

Village Montessori School reserves the right to revise this handbook.

Village Montessori School is dedicated to exploring and maintaining the principles of an AMI Montessori education in a warm and nurturing environment that is meticulously prepared to meet the needs of your child. In addition to our commitment to your child, we are also dedicated to family support. We provide parent conferences, study groups, parenting classes and a Parent Association to support Village Montessori families.

We at Village Montessori School welcome all our families and are looking forward to another great school year!