



September Already?

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September is always a month that is filled with mixed feelings. It is with sadness that we had to say Good-bye to some of our children that have been with us for a while and now they are all grown up starting Grade 1. But it is with great joy that we welcome our new children.

September is also probably the most difficult month – new children are getting used to a new environment and a new routine, separation anxieties are at a high and parents feel apprehensive about leaving their children behind – it is this month that we ask our families to be patient and not to draw conclusions from these first days. Your children are in very capable hands and the teachers are doing everything to make them feel comfortable and loved. There are three teachers on staff every morning.

Children will be greeted with a “Montessori greeting” in the morning - a warm smile and a handshake.

September is also a month that offers wonderful learning experiences for our returning children – they become big helpers, they share responsi-

bilities, they are asked to assist the teachers with different tasks, they help the new or younger children with activities and they learn to build new friendships. But even our returning children might feel little scared, some of them spend a whole summer away from us and they just don't want to go back to school, others are little nervous around all the new faces.

Again, completely normal reactions – who wants to go back to work after a wonderful vacation? We all experience separation anxieties from our holidays, from summer.

I am thrilled to be back on board and can't wait to meet all the new children and welcome back our returning children.

A few things will be different this year. We had to say good-bye to Miss Alicea, who had a beautiful baby boy, and Miss Holly who is due early November. I will be teaching again in the morning, and we have a new assistant joining us—Miss Beth. You can find

her bio on our website.

We have very exciting field trips coming up, so always make sure to check our info board at the school.

I am planning to make this newsletter a more of a school's “community” newsletter, which means that any tips you would like to share - maybe you discovered a beautiful beach on the weekend, read an amazing book, seen a great movie, used a fantastic new recipe and dinner actually tasted great, a business that you are involved in, you would like to carpool, anything that you would like to share or advertise, just e-mail me and we will put it into the next month's newsletter.

It will be a wonderful year and I hope that you are just as happy as we are to be part of our family at Victoria Montessori.

Miss Ivana

Medication - A serious issue

As we head into the fall season we will undoubtedly start to see a lot of our children coming into the centre with colds, flu, ear infections etc. Some of these illnesses are contagious, particularly if there is a fever present. As part of our policy, any "over the counter" medications normally used to reduce fever, will not be administered and we ask that you

keep your child at home until they are well enough to return. Only prescribed medication by a physician will be administered. ALL medications need to be handed directly to a staff member in the ORIGINAL bottle, at which time you will be asked to fill out a form titled "Permission to administer medications"

Please do not send medications in your child's lunch box.

If at any time you need clarification on this or any of our centre policies, please feel free to speak to a staff member.

Thank you all in advance for helping us keep our centre as healthy as possible this school year.

What do the children do all day?

"So how was your day today, Lori?"

"Okay"

"What did you do?"

"Nothing"

"Did you do any reading, art, special project?"

"I don't remember"

It doesn't matter how old your children are, 3 or 13; this is probably what you will hear for the next 13 or so years. It is a natural phenomenon. But obviously they are doing something and learning something along the way.

Our schedule is as follows, and it might change if we are working on a specific project or the children have a total "off" day.

- 8:00 - 8:20 Greeting
- 8:20 - 11:30 Work Period (Montessori presentations and activities)
- 11:30 - 12:00 Circle (calendar, songs, theme, etc.)
- 12:00 - 1:00 Lunch Time
- 1:00 - 1:30 Clean-Up and Teeth Brushing
- 1:30 - 3:00 Outside Play Time
- 3:00 - 5:00 Learn through Play After School Program

The theme calendar is posted on our website and is also displayed on our info board at the school.

Just a few important reminders ...

- FAQs and the Answers:**
- The school opens at 8:00 am. If you arrive before that time, please stay with your child until the door opens.
 - We greet between 8:00 and 8:20, so please try to be on time. If you come in during our work cycle, please enter the school quietly so not to interrupt the curriculum.
 - If you have not submitted postdated cheques, please remember fees are due on the first of every month.
 - Please ask your children not to bring in toys, explain to them that their special place is at home.
 - Nap time: the regular nappers will be given a nap bag with a sheet and a blanket. This bag will go home at the end of the week to be laundered
 - Please label all clothing that will stay at the school.
 - Please remember to pick up your child's art . If it is not picked up by Friday it will be recycled.
 - Pick up time is 3:00pm or 5:00pm, please be on time.
 - We have our own website, please visit us regularly for updated info at www.victoriamontessori.com.
 - Our e-mail address is victoriamontessori@shaw.ca.
 - If your are planning to keep your child at home due to sickness or other reasons, please leave a message at the school in the morning. Phone number is 250-380-0534.
 - We have an info board in the shoe cubby area where you can post your personal or friend's business card for services that can be provided (ie. real-estate, electrician, landscaper etc.). You can also advertise in the newsletter. We like to keep it all within the community.
 - Show and Tell or Sharing time: if your child would like to bring in a special object from home that s/he would like to share, please make sure that it is theme related. Our theme calendar is posted on our info board and on our website.
 - If possible please pack your child's lunch in a small lunch bag (don't forget to label the bag) - our fridge cannot hold 25 large lunch bags. If it is a large lunch bag we will leave it on the shelf, so please pack lunch with an icepack
 - We will create a little library for parents - you will be able to borrow books about Dr. Maria Montessori, her philosophy and her teachings. We will also provide the ALIVE magazine at the beginning of every month, which is yours to take home and read!
 - Please try to make it a habit to always read the info/message board in the morning at drop off. It will post reminders, important info, etc.
 - Please take all extra clothing home at the end of the day - children don't need 2 jackets, 2 hats etc.
 - If a red bag is hanging on your child's hook , please take it home. It contains soiled clothing that needs to be replaced.
 - If you are picking up your child with a sibling, please ask him/her to wait in the entrance area while your child is getting ready to go home!

It is getting cooler

Summer is almost over and it is getting cooler. :(

Here are a few suggestions for you to make your children comfortable and "weatherproof".

Bring in a warm jacket, sweater and boots, muddy buddies if needed.

All children can keep their raingear at the school.

Please remember we go outside in any weather (unless of course there is a major downpour or blizzard).

Also, we would like to ask parents to dress their girls preferably in cozy

pants, not dresses, and comfortable safe "running" shoes. They need to use their gross motor skills in the playground freely and safely.

Special Events

We have four field trips coming up before Christmas:

The Beach Clean-up

This field trip is always a huge success. It will be ***September 16th*** at 10:00am at Clover Point (Cook St. and Dallas Rd.), bottom of the stairs. The teachers will be waiting at the top of the stairs so that you don't miss it. Gloves and Garbage bags will be provided. We usually collect garbage for about two hours, record our findings and then the kids play and have a picnic. Please dress your children comfortably and don't forget to bring snack and water.

Pumpkin Patch

We have booked the Oldfield Orchard and Bakery on 6286 Oldfield Rd. This is the one field trip we are doing during the week. We will meet at the farm ***October 31st*** at 9:30 AM. You can either stay with us or you can arrange to have your child transported back to the school with a parent or teacher – we will make sure that we have enough adults. It would be really nice if everyone could stay – the event is about 2 hours long.

The Salmon Run

At Goldstream Park. The exact date will be announced in October.

Tree Planting

It will be sometimes in November, but at this point we don't have a date yet. Exact date and location will be announced.

In class events:

Parent/Teacher Interviews

We will be conducting observations and parent/teacher interviews in January. We will post the exact days closer to January.

There will be a sign-up sheet on the door for those who wish to observe and talk to the teachers – remember this is not mandatory. If you have any concerns before the interviews do not wait until January, you can always talk to the teachers on a daily basis or you can make a phone date with any of us.

Christmas Concert

Our Christmas concert this year will be on Friday ***December 16th*** at 4pm. On this day we will have early dismissal at 12pm so that we can prepare the classroom, then every one will return at 4pm. We hope that everyone can attend. The children will be working very hard to prepare something special for you.

Details will be posted when we get closer to the day.

Our last day of school will be the 16th of December and we will open again the 3rd of January.

A memorable quote:

“Nature does not hurry, yet everything is accomplished.”

Lao Tzu

The Importance of Practical Life

“The environment should reveal the child, not mold him.”

Maria Montessori

Children are innately preparing to be adults. Our goal as parents and teachers is to raise children with strong foundation skills and work habits that will one day enable them to be responsible for their own homes, families and communities. Children who learn early in life to believe in their own abilities and to take pride in their independence and self-discipline will be well equipped for life-long success.

When a child enters the Montessori preschool classroom at three years of age, the Practical Life area and activities lay the foundation for the child’s introduction to school, providing a link between home and school.

The direct aim of Practical Life activities is to assist the child in developing social skills and personal independence. S/he will learn to take care of her/himself and her/his environment. The indirect aim is to develop the child’s fine motor movement,

which involves the body, intellect and will.

All Practical Life activities are uniquely purposeful and calming. They appear very simple and repetitive, but as a child simply waters a plant or pours water, s/he is, in fact accomplishing much more.

If you were to observe a child as s/he performs such activities, you would notice the following:

- A high level of concentration
- A developing sense of order (putting materials back where they belong)
- Pride in a job well done
- An increasing sense of independence through care for her/himself and for her/his environment
- Respect for his surroundings, his classmates, and teachers
- The improvement of fine motor movement

These skills and characteristics are essential to a child’s progress in a Montessori classroom, and they will be carried forward into academic

subjects. They will also assist the child in developing into a happy, well-adjusted adult. A child that possesses all of these qualities has the best opportunity to develop strong self-esteem that will aid her/him in making beneficial decisions throughout her/his life.

Quite simply, the practical life activities lay the foundations for success not only in a Montessori environment, but for life in general.