

Maple Tree Montessori Academy



2944 S Old U.S Highway 23 Brighton,
MI 48114
810-225-8321
www.mapletreemontessori.com

TODDLER COMMUNITY HANDBOOK

“Education is a natural process carried out by the child and is not acquired by listening to words but by experiences in the environment.”...Dr. Montessori

Welcome to our growing MTMA Toddler Community

“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” ...Dr. Montessori

This Handbook is designed to inform you of our class procedures for the school year. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have other questions.

Peace,

Toddler Community Staff

Our Goals and Objectives

The main objective of our community is to provide a planned, stimulating, productive environment of the highest quality, which is peaceful, nurturing and meet the needs of each individual child.

Our specific goals for the children are:

- To develop a positive, happy attitude toward school and learning, fostering a continued sense of curiosity.
- To build and encourage habits of initiative, concentration, persistence, independence and accountability
- To encourage and support children in their academic endeavors, providing them with opportunities to progress at their own pace and at the same time maintaining the highest academic level for each child.
- To develop a sense of high self-esteem, personal integrity, inner discipline and a sense of order.
- To foster the development of grace, courtesy, empathy and respect for others.

- To nurture compassionate socially acceptable thought and behavior.
- To create cohesive, caring, peaceful classroom communities.
- To provide the child with the opportunity to explore their environment utilizing their curiosity and senses and experience social and emotional development in a well-supported community filled with guided experiences and interactions.

Language Development and Use of 2nd and Home Languages

We enhance language and literacy in children through offering experiences that involve speaking, listening, phonological awareness, pre reading and writing skills.

We introduce second languages including, but not limited to sign language and Spanish. We offer many opportunities for children to practice their language development while interacting and playing with their classmates.

We encourage families to help us utilize your “home language” in our environment. We are happy to include any language and materials supporting that language with our students.

We encourage book knowledge and appreciation by offering a variety of high-quality books including picture books, multicultural, nonfiction, fiction, and poetry books. Teachers and children will read multiple times a day both individually and in a group.

The MTMA Handbook as well as the following information should give you and your child what you need to know to make this year successful.

1. Classroom Schedule

- Our day begins each morning at 8:30 a.m. The children arrive and transition into the community.
- The children are free to explore the prepared environment and to engage in work choices.
- There will be individual and small group presentations throughout the morning. Presentations will include: Practical Life, Sensorial, Language, Grace and Courtesy, Self-Care, Spanish, Art and preparation for Numerical Lessons. Toileting, diapering and potty training are ongoing.
- At 9:15 the toddlers have access to the playground and are outside whenever weather permits. They are in by 11:00
- We will have a short circle time around 11:15. This could include songs, music, stories, or large group presentations.
- Please pick up morning students at 11:30 a.m. Most days we will dismiss directly from the classroom. Please wait in the lobby area.
- Always make contact with an adult when picking up your child.
- Full day students and students staying for day care will be going to lunch, recess, nap and afternoon classes structured as above.
- Pick up for full day students is at 3:30 p.m. Any remaining students will be charged day care hours at 3:40 p.m. Please sign your child out of day care after 3:40 p.m.
- If someone else is picking up, please make sure that they are on your child's emergency card and bring ID.

2. Illness

- If your child is sick, a day at school may not be what is best for him or her.
- Health Department and School policy dictates keeping your child home for 24 hours after a fever breaks (without fever reducing medication).
- Often times, a runny nose or bad cough keeps a child feeling poorly. Giving a miserable, germ-laden child the time to rest and recover is probably best for the child and for the others in the classroom.
- In the case of stomach upset, the child needs to remain home for at least 24 hours after the last incidence of diarrhea or vomiting.

- Please call or email if your child will be absent.

3. Nutrition

- Please be sure that your child starts their day with a healthy breakfast.
- Lunchtime is an important part of a child's day, please pack lunches that are well balanced in terms of nutrition and proportion.
- Involve your child in shopping and in packing their lunch.
- We cannot heat food or refrigerate your child's lunch. Please use a thermos and an ice pack when, needed.
- Because we are promoting ecology, please use a thermos instead of a disposable container...such as a juice box. Please use reusable, re-sealable containers...no paper bags.

Breast feeding

Sensitivity will be shown to breastfeeding mothers and their babies.

Breastfeeding mothers, including employees, shall be provided with a private and sanitary place (other than a bathroom) to breastfeed their babies or express milk. This area has an electric outlet, comfortable chair, and nearby access to running water. Mothers are also welcome to breastfeed in front of others if they wish.

A refrigerator will be made available for storage of expressed breast milk. Breastfeeding mothers and employees may store their expressed breast milk in the center refrigerator. Mothers should provide their own containers, clearly labeled with name and date.

The center is committed to providing ongoing support to breastfeeding mothers, including providing an opportunity to breastfeed their baby in the morning and evening, and holding off giving a bottle, if possible, when mom is due to arrive. Infant

formula and solid foods will not be provided unless parents have provided by the parents.

The center will follow human milk storage guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to avoid waste and prevent food borne illness.

Breastfeeding employees shall be provided with a flexible schedule for breastfeeding or pumping to provide breast milk for their children. The time allowed would not exceed the normal time allowed to other employees for lunch and breaks. For time above and beyond normal lunch and breaks, sick/annual leave may be used, or the employee can come in earlier or leave later to make up the time.

The center will provide information on breastfeeding, including the names of area resources should questions or problems arise. In addition, positive promotion of breastfeeding will be on display at Maple Tree Montessori.

4. Snack

Toddlers eat at will and are welcome to bring their own favorite healthy snacks every day. No peanuts, tree nuts, soda, or candy!

5. Clothing

- Children should wear comfortable clothing that facilitates independent toileting.
- Clothing can sometimes be a distraction, please keep this in mind when choosing clothing for school.
- Your child could be using, paint, ink, food coloring, markers and glue,

please choose clothing that can be damaged.

- Your child needs to have a change of clothing, including socks, underwear, shirt and pants or shorts in a Ziploc bag. Please label all items.
- Your child needs slippers or indoor shoes to wear in the classroom. This keeps our floor sanitary. Please label them; they will be kept at school. Please, no cartoon characters!

6. Toileting

- Children will be working toward toilet training during school.
- Please send them in thick underwear, diapers or pull-ups with wipes and lots of extras.
- When your child begins to show interest and readiness, thickly padded underwear works best, allowing the child to feel the moisture. In contrast, pull-ups do not allow a child to feel moisture and can often delay potty awareness.
- Please send in lots of underwear if your child is still learning.
- We will work closely with you to ensure a successful experience for your child.

Please be sure to label everything!!!

8. Toys

- Toys are a distraction in our classroom. They should be left at home or in the car. Thank you!

9. Conferences and Communications

- We schedule special conferences before or after class times, never during the school day.
- If you need to discuss something or would like to schedule a conference, please send a note or email with your name and phone number. The teacher will get back with you ASAP.
- We cannot stress how important it is for the teachers to give their full attention to the children, especially during transition times. We thank you in advance for your cooperation.

10. Nap Time

Toddlers nap at least once per day, usually in the afternoon. Please send in a pillow, blanket and favorite stuffie for nap time. The nap items including a sheet will be sent home on Friday to be laundered and returned on Monday.

11. Ground Rules, Grace, and Courtesy

- The ground rules provide the framework for the children to exercise self-discipline and self-control.
- We will spend time during school learning and practicing courtesy and ground rules as we come to define our classroom community.
- The ground rules are based on courtesy, respect and kindness. They are the philosophical structure from which all children and adults can work, learn, and grow.

Regarding "Discipline" in the Toddler Community:

We don't actually discipline children in the Toddler Community. No "timeouts" or exclusions are used with Toddlers. We work with each child and their family to help the toddlers develop self-regulation and eliminate behaviors such as biting, hitting, and so on.

In the Toddler Community we do redirect children to better choices, and we have a comfy couch where they can sit, cry, rest, and gather themselves, as needed. The child has the choice to be on the couch and to get up and choose activities. Often, a teacher sits with them, especially during drop off to comfort and help them to process their emotions.

And of course, as stated in our Parent Handbook (for all ages) and per state requirements and compliance:

Staff is prohibited by State Licensing rules for Child Care Centers, Rule R-400.51 07, from:

- Hitting, shaking, biting, pinching, or inflicting any form of corporal punishment.
- Restricting a child's movement by binding or tying.
- Inflicting mental or emotional punishment such as humiliation, shaming or threatening a child.
- Depriving a child of meals, snacks, rest or necessary toilet use.
- Confining a child in an enclosed area such as a closet, locked room, box, or similar cubicle.

Non-severe discipline or restraint may be used when reasonably necessary, based on a child's development, to prevent a child from harming him/herself or to prevent a child from harming another person or property, excluding those forms of prohibited punishment set forth above.

If you witness any action against a child by any staff member that is not consistent with our school's discipline policy, you should report it to the Administration immediately.

We thank you again for all your support and consideration. Our school community and the success of your child depend on a cohesive, comprehensive and compassionate engagement of child, family and staff. We look to Dr. Maria Montessori for inspiration and guidance remembering always, the importance of our collaboration and that each and every child is

“a hope and a promise for mankind” ...Dr. Montessori