“The child is both hope and a promise for mankind”
- Dr. Maria Montessori
Welcome to the Children’s House at Lexington Montessori School. There are two Toddler classrooms and four Children’s House classrooms at LMS. This Handbook, along with the LMS Parent Handbook, includes information and tips that are universal across each of the separate classrooms. During Back to School Night, and in the first weeks of school, you will receive information specific to your child’s classroom.

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Thank you for taking the time to read through our Children’s House Handbook.

Don’t forget to look in the school-wide calendar as well as the school-wide parent handbook. You’ll find more great things that apply to everyone in the school!
Communication

We are available by phone and email before school from 8:00 – 8:30 and after school between 3:15 – 4:00 unless we are in a meeting. So that we may give our full attention to the children, please understand that we will not answer the classroom phone during the school day. We will, however, try to check email at lunchtime and after dismissal and will call or email you back when necessary. If you have something urgent to discuss during school hours, please call the Office and someone will deliver your message to us.

Room Parents

Each class has Room Parents who are a great resource for families and who can be helpful in all sorts of ways during the year. Among other things, Room Parents plan and arrange group gatherings such as the potluck dinner before school starts, Community Day in October, and the holiday celebration before winter break.

In Person

We make an effort to avoid discussing the children when they are within earshot and therefore prefer to avoid even “mini-discussions” during arrival and dismissal. We can schedule a before or after school parent/teacher meeting if you have something that you need to discuss. We have two formal parent-teacher conferences per year.

Take-Home Folder (not applicable to Toddler classroom)

Each child has a take-home folder that comes home on Friday afternoons in your child’s backpack when your child has completed work they wish to take home. It may also contain information, such as a permission slip or classroom reminders. Please make sure the folder is returned in the backpack the following Monday.

Classroom Information

We are always exploring effective ways for parents to more easily access classroom information. Our school website, classroom web pages, emails, newsletters and our social media accounts are among the ways to stay up to date with classrooms and LMS.
What to Bring

Extra Clothing

Each child has a box in which to keep extra clothes. We recommend: 2 pairs of socks, 2 pairs of underwear, 2 pairs of pants / shorts and 2 shirts, each labeled with your child’s name. Please replace any extra clothes that are used as soon as possible, and change them according to the weather as we spend a lot of time outdoors on the playground and within our 19 acres of land. The spare clothes are kept in individual cubby boxes that are labeled with your child's name.

Extra Boots

We recommend that each child keep a pair of boots in their cubby for trips into the newly acquired 19 acres of land. Children’s House classrooms utilize the “LMS Woods” for nature walks, hiking and observing nature and teachers are not always able to plan these outings, or able to send reminders about bringing appropriate outdoor footwear, as they happen spontaneously.

Indoor Shoes

To allow for maximum safety and independence in the classroom, we ask that the children bring Velcro or slip-on shoes or hard, rubber-soled slippers. (Your child should be able to take off and put on the shoes themselves) Soft-soled slippers and flip-flops may present a problem if the floor is wet or if there is a fire drill. Simple slippers, without stuffed animals attached to them, are best for allowing the children to move freely and safely in the classroom.

Indoor shoes are placed in the blue cubbies outside the classroom.

Please send your child to school with tie shoes only if he or she can tie them. Developmentally, children are able to master tying between the ages of 6 and 7. Your child’s clothing and footwear should be easily manipulated for the child to develop greater self-confidence and self-esteem...

Dress for Success!

Backpack

Children should bring a backpack, with zippers that are easy to manage, to school each day. Please make sure that it can easily fit a folder, lunchbox, hat, gloves, snow pants, change of clothes etc.
Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

We use a car line arrival and dismissal system. Please be aware that the car line loop is one way only. Cell phones are not allowed while driving on campus, for the safety of everyone.

Arrival

The school day begins at 8:45. Arrival is between 8:45 - 9:00 every day. Arriving at school is part of your child’s day so we make a 15-minute window to allow your child time to be ready in the classroom or on the playground at 9:00 when school activities begin. Arriving after 9:00 will result in your child being marked tardy in the Office records. Each morning a toddler teacher, a Children's House teacher or an administrator walks your child safely from the car line to school. Your child’s day begins by arriving for school on time to be ready with the other children and the teachers at 9:00. Whether your child’s class starts the day outside or inside, it can be disconcerting for your child to arrive at school late and try to enter an already established work or game. The playground is an extension of the classroom and arriving on time, adhering to a consistent routine, and allowing the child to leave the parent and start his or her separate school day promotes independence, consistency and social relationships. For the child who is experiencing separation issues, the use of the car line is even more important because the child is leaving you rather than you leaving the child, and in this way the child also develops a clear arrival routine.

Dismissal

Half Day Dismissal is at 11:45. Please park and pick up your child at the benches. A teacher opens the gate to release your child to you. On Thursdays, please follow the car line system explained below.

Full Day Dismissal is between 2:45-3:00 (and between 11:45-12:00 on Thursdays). Please follow the car line system explained below.

Car Line System: Please drive slowly to the bench area and wait in your car with the name sign (which will be given to you before the first day of school) visible on the passenger side of your windshield (attaching the sign to your sun visor ensures that the teaching staff can see your child’s name when you are in the car line). If you are at the front of the line, please pull your car all the way up to the front of the bench area. Please remain in your car while in the car line as teachers escort the children to the first five cars at a time. If you are late your child is brought to the After School Program (and you are charged accordingly.) If your child is to be picked up by someone other than a person on the pick-up list that you submitted to the office, you must inform your child’s teachers or call the office before we can release your child, and the person picking up your child will be asked to show an I.D.
Inclement Weather Dismissal Procedure

If there is inclement weather during Half Day Dismissal, we dismiss from inside the back of the building. Please walk up to the first black gate and a teacher will walk your child to you from indoors.

During Full Day Dismissal between 2:45 – 3:00 (or 11:45 – 12:00 on Thursdays) the children wait indoors and teachers bring your child to your car. We still continue to utilize the full car line and when your car is the first car in line, please plan to pull all the way forward toward the elementary building.
General Information & Classroom Policies

Prepared for the Day

Children should arrive to school prepared to spend time both indoors and outdoors, no matter the weather. The playground is an extension of the classroom and children spend time outside playing, walking between buildings, farming in the greenhouse and hiking among our 19 acres of land in cold, hot, damp, muddy and snowy conditions. Providing weather appropriate clothing and footwear, every day, allows your child the comfort necessary to have a positive and enriching experience outdoors.

Classroom teachers do not take children outside for recess when temperatures drop below 20 degrees.

The Quiet Zone

The Quiet Zone is the cubby area outside the classroom. We ask that you use quiet, low voices when talking with your child and other adults. We are teaching the children how to help each other, use quiet inside voices, walk and otherwise care for themselves with respect to those around them, just as we would inside the classroom. If you want to have a conversation with another parent please use the Before and After School room.

Parents in the Classroom:

We welcome parents or friends who want to bring their interests or expertise to our classrooms. These contributions enrich the experience of all the children. Of course, these parent-guided projects are especially valuable when they enhance a current unit of study. We are happy to help make the activity timely, educational and age appropriate.

Recent parent-guided projects include:

- Planting seeds in containers and outdoors (fall or spring)
- Show and tell about another country
- Show and tell about a parent’s job
- Sharing a hobby or interest
- Helping make Valentine cards for our buddy class
- Helping make/bake a healthy snack

Volunteer Opportunities

We can always use your help with classroom laundry, sewing projects, shopping, reading a story or taking a small group of children to the library, for example. Please visit your classroom’s webpage and click on the link that will lead you to the Sign-Up Genius for volunteering.
Parent/Teacher Conferences

Two parent/teacher conferences are scheduled throughout the year. The fall conference date options are Thursday afternoon, September 20th or Friday, September 21st. The winter conference date options are Thursday afternoon, February 7th or Friday, February 8th. Each conference is 20 minutes and takes place in your child’s classroom.

Nut and Candy Free Classroom

Due to nut allergies including peanuts, please do not send anything with nuts or nut butters in your child’s lunch. Chewing gum is not allowed in Children’s House, and there is also a school-wide policy that candy is not allowed at school.

Toys/Costumes/Sporting Equipment

We ask that all toys (including key chains attached to backpacks), dance outfits and other costumes, fire hats, sporting equipment and art/school supplies stay at home. These items often create a distraction and are at risk for getting lost or damaged. We appreciate your cooperation in checking backpacks before you leave the house so as to avoid any unnecessary problems upon arrival.

Label all Belongings

Please label all of your child’s belongings, including extra clothes, shoes, boots, jackets, sweaters, underwear, books, hats, gloves, backpacks, etc. Each child learns to be responsible for keeping track of his or her own possessions. We make every effort to put all labeled items in the appropriate backpacks at the end of the day. The youngest children often do not recognize their own items. All unlabeled, unclaimed items are placed in lost and found, which is at the bottom of the stairs next to the fridge.

Illness

Specific information is in the LMS Parent Handbook, but as a reminder, please be considerate of others so that we can all remain healthy. We ask that you keep your child at home with a thick runny nose consisting of greenish mucus, which generally can be contagious. Please check with your child’s pediatrician if you are in any doubt. Your child may not come to school with diarrhea, fever, or other contagious infections. LMS has a 24-hour illness policy. This means that if your child is sent home from school with a fever or diarrhea, he/she may not come to school the next day.

Report to Parents

If your child is injured at school, a teacher fills out a Report to Parents. Teachers are always watching to prevent accidents but there may be times when something unforeseen may happen.
Snack

Throughout the year, families provide snack for the class on a rotating basis. Your class snack list is posted on the classroom web page, so please check at the start of the school year to see when it is your assigned week. If you are bringing snack, please provide us with a simple, inexpensive supply of healthy (not highly processed or high in sugar) snacks for all children for five mornings. Please check with your classroom teacher for allergies and appropriate snack options.

There is a snack table in each classroom where children can serve themselves snack at their leisure during the morning work cycle. Please make sure that your child has eaten breakfast before coming to school, however, as snack is not intended to replace breakfast.

Birthday Walk (not applicable to Toddler classroom)

Our Birthday walk is a wonderful, non-material celebration of your child’s life, common to most Montessori schools, and you as parents are invited. The children are seated in a circle around a candle that represents the sun. The birthday child, while holding a globe, walks around the “sun” once for each year that he/she has lived. Please come prepared to share a few highlights of your child’s life at each age. Siblings are welcome as are other special guests.

Please sign-up for Birthday walks through Sign-Up Genius.

Thank you for taking the time to read the Children’s House Handbook. Please reach out to your child’s classroom teachers with questions.

Children’s House Room 1 (CH1): ch1teachers@lexmontessori.org
Children’s House Room 3 (CH3): ch3teachers@lexmontessori.org
Children’s House Room 4 (CH4): ch4teachers@lexmontessori.org
Children’s House Room 5 (CH5): ch5teachers@lexmontessori.org