

The ABCs of Primary Montessori

A Parent Reference Guide for the School Year

Please keep this guide for reference throughout the school year.

Many common questions about our classroom routines and procedures are answered here.

A

Absences

School attendance is important. Please keep your child home only when they are ill or there is a family emergency. If your child will be absent, call the school office as early as possible:

402-715-1295

Allergies

We have children with nut allergies in our classroom. Please do not send foods containing nuts or foods processed on equipment that also processes nuts.

We carefully check food labels when snacks are brought to school. Snacks that do not follow our healthy food plan or contain allergens may be sent home.

Arrival

The first bell rings at **8:20 a.m.** Please make sure your child arrives on time each day. The tardy bell rings at **8:30 a.m.** Children who are not in the classroom by then will be marked absent.

Children may enter through **Door #2** at 8:20. If your child needs breakfast, they may pick up a sack breakfast in the lunchroom and bring it to our classroom.

Art

Older Friends have a more formal art lesson on Wednesdays. Younger Friends participate in a larger group art project on Thursday or Friday.

We do our best to avoid messes—but we are still learning! Please avoid sending your child in their very best or most expensive clothing on art days.

B

Backpacks

Please send a **large, labeled backpack every day**. We create many papers and projects throughout the year.

Please:

- Check your child's backpack each evening for notes and papers.
- Check it especially on Fridays when Friday Folders go home.
- Check the backpack each morning to ensure that toys, jewelry, pets, or other items that should remain at home have not been packed.

Birthdays

Due to nutritional needs, allergies, and other considerations, **edible treats may not be brought to school**.

Instead, families may choose a non-food way to celebrate, such as donating an item to the classroom, school, or charity.

A Birthday Packet will be sent home several weeks before your child's birthday. It will include instructions for creating a **birthday timeline** with photographs showing how your child has grown and changed.

We will celebrate your child's life at school on or near their birthday, usually near the end of the day. Your child will walk around the Sun in the center of our circle once for each year of their life while we share their timeline.

Summer birthdays will be celebrated near the child's half-birthday or in May.

Breakfast

School breakfast is served at **8:15 a.m.** Children have approximately 15 minutes to eat in our classroom.

C

Communication

Please contact me with any questions or concerns. Our partnership is important to your child's success at school.

Best method of contact: Email
kdboyd@mpsomaha.org

Conferences

Conferences are held in **October and March**.

- Kindergarten parents should plan to attend both conferences.
- Preschool families will have their second home visit in February or March, which will include a conference.
- If you prefer to meet at school rather than at home for the March conference, you may request this option.

Additional information will be provided as the dates approach.

Computer Lab

Kindergarten students attend Computer Lab during their Library time.

Cooking

Food preparation is an important part of Practical Life. We also prepare recipes together as a whole class approximately twice each month.

COVID-19 and Other Illnesses

Please continue to monitor your child for symptoms of illness and follow current district guidelines if your child tests positive for COVID-19.

D

Dismissal

School dismisses at:

- **3:30 p.m.** — Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday
- **2:30 p.m.** — Wednesday

Our class dismisses approximately 5–10 minutes before the rest of the school.

We meet at **Door #3 near the playground**. Before leaving, please have your child give Mrs. Boyd a high five and acknowledge the adults who are present.

Dress

Our classroom is active, and we go outside for recess whenever possible.

Please choose:

- Comfortable clothing suitable for running, jumping, climbing, and active play.
- Shoes your child can safely play in. **No flip-flops, please.**
- Layers as the seasons change, since the building can be warm.

Please keep a **complete change of clothes** in your child's backpack:

- Underwear
- Pants or shorts
- Shirt
- Socks
- Shoes

Change the clothing seasonally and label every item, including the bag.

E–F

Field Trips

We hope to take several field trips throughout the year. In previous years, we have taken approximately one trip each month, although the number of trips will depend on available funding and donations.

Families may be asked to make a donation to help offset the cost of each trip. Donations are greatly appreciated and help make these experiences possible for our students.

Paid preschool students may be asked to contribute because they are enrolled in a parent-paid program.

Friday Folder

Each Friday, your child will bring home a folder containing newsletters, lunch menus, and other important information.

Please:

- Read everything in the folder.
- Return the folder every Monday.
- Have your child place it on the snack table when they arrive.

If you send money to school, place it in an envelope or plastic bag labeled with:

- Your child's name
 - Mrs. Boyd's name
 - The purpose of the payment
-

G

Gym

Gym is on **Tuesday and Thursday**.

Your child must wear tennis shoes to participate. Other types of shoes are not permitted on the gym floor.

Ground Rules

At the beginning of the year, we spend time learning and practicing our classroom ground rules. These include:

- Using good manners
 - Keeping our bodies safe
 - Keeping our classroom safe and orderly
 - Respecting the work and concentration of others
-

H

Home Visits

Home visits for Younger Friends will continue in February. Scheduling information will be provided closer to the date.

If you have children in other grades at Montclair or would like information about your child's progress before signing district transfer papers, you may request a school conference instead of a home visit.

Homework and Home Learning

The most valuable home learning is reading together every day.

Your child may also bring home:

- Sound Bags
- Learning games
- The Peacemaker of the Week packet

Please work on these activities together and return materials promptly when requested.

Helping Your Child

You can help your child begin each school day successfully by:

- Checking their backpack each evening.
- Establishing a consistent bedtime routine so they get plenty of rest.
- Arriving at school on time. Consistent routines help children feel secure.
- Practicing writing their name using a capital first letter and lowercase letters for the remainder.
- Reading together every night. You may read to your child, listen to them read, or ask them to tell you the story from a picture book.
- Spending time outdoors.

- Limiting screen time and choosing high-quality media when screens are used.
-

I

Illness

Please keep your child home if they have a fever, vomiting, or diarrhea.

After an illness, children should remain home for **24 hours after symptoms have resolved and they are fever-free without medication.**

If your child has symptoms that could be related to COVID-19, testing may be appropriate. Please consult your healthcare provider if you have concerns and follow current district guidelines.

Independence

Independence is an important goal in both Preschool and Kindergarten. Please help your child practice:

- Tying shoes
- Zipping
- Buttoning
- Blowing and wiping their nose
- Using the restroom independently
- Washing hands
- Helping with appropriate household tasks

Interruptions

Children are learning to wait for their turn to speak. Our classroom reminder is:

“Two fingers, two taps, two eyes.”

If a child needs to speak with an adult, they gently tap the adult's arm twice with two fingers and wait for eye contact.

Please practice this routine at home.

Involvement

Your involvement shows your child that school matters. This may be as simple as asking about their day and looking through papers that come home—or volunteering in the classroom or school.

J-L

Kindergarten

We call our Kindergarten students **Older Friends**.

Lunch

Lunch is at **11:15 a.m.** each day.

Children may:

- Bring a lunch from home.
- Purchase milk if needed.
- Choose a school lunch from the weekly menu.

Each Friday, a lunch menu will be sent home. Please indicate your child's choice for the following week, including whether they will bring a cold lunch and whether they need milk.

Library

Library is on **Friday**.

Please return library books on or before Friday. Children should bring returned books into the classroom and place them in the **purple bin**.

Lockdown and Safety Drills

We practice safety drills to help keep children safe during emergencies.

- **Secure:** Children move inside quickly.
- **Hold:** Children remain in the classroom and continue working during a disturbance in the hallway.
- **Lockdown:** Children remain out of sight and quiet during a serious emergency involving an intruder in the building.

These procedures are practiced in an age-appropriate manner.

Labeling Items

Please label **everything** your child brings to school, including:

- Coats
- Hats
- Mittens and gloves
- Water bottles
- Backpacks
- Clothing
- Other personal belongings

Children often do not recognize their own belongings, so labeling helps items find their way home.

M

MAP Testing

Kindergarten students take the MAP assessment three times each year. The results help teachers understand which skills children may need to continue developing in Mathematics, Language Arts, and Reading.

Money

All money sent to school must be placed in an envelope labeled with:

- Your child's name
- The purpose of the payment

Whenever possible, please send money in the Friday Folder and secure it inside.

For accounting purposes:

- Separate checks must be written for each child.
- Please do not combine multiple field trips on one check.

Music

Music is scheduled as follows:

- **Younger Friends:** Tuesday
- **Older Friends:** Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday

Mittens, Coats, and Hats

Please dress your child appropriately for the weather. We go outside every day unless temperatures or conditions are extreme.

Please label all coats, hats, gloves, and mittens. This is especially important during the winter!

31 children × 2 hands = 62 mittens!

N-P

Nap Mats

Nap mats and sheets are provided for Younger Friends.

Children may bring:

- A small blanket
- One small comfort item, such as a stuffed animal

These items will be sent home each evening.

If a sheet is sent home in a plastic bag, please wash it and return it to school as soon as possible.

Older Friends

All Kindergarten students are called **Older Friends**.

Parties

We will have two class parties:

- Halloween
- Valentine's Day

The classroom parent will contact families who would like to help or donate supplies.

Peacemaker of the Week

Each week, one child is selected as our **Peacemaker of the Week**.

The child takes home a packet of activities to complete with their family and returns it to share with the class. These activities help us continue our conversations about peace, kindness, and how we treat others.

Playground

All children may use the playground equipment appropriate for their age and developmental level. Some equipment is reserved for older children. Younger Friends will be able to use this equipment when they reach Kindergarten.

Potty Training

We would like children to be fully toilet trained when attending school. That being said, accidents can happen, so please keep a complete change of clothes in your child's backpack.

Please replace the clothing seasonally and label every item.

Picking Up Your Child

If someone other than an approved adult will be picking up your child, please notify the school office or send a note with your child.

The person picking up your child must present photo identification.

Preschool

We call our preschool students **Younger Friends**.

Q-R

Report Cards

Kindergarten report cards are sent home each quarter.

Younger Friends will have a conference in March, and a final preschool report will be sent home at the end of the year.

Rules

Our two school rules are:

1. **It is never okay to be hurtful.**
 2. **It is never okay to be disruptive.**
-

S

Seesaw

Seesaw is a digital portfolio that allows families to see photographs and videos of their child's classroom experiences.

Information about signing up will be sent home.

Snack

A snack calendar is sent home each month. Families are assigned days to bring foods from different food groups.

The **Snack Bag** will come home the night before your child is scheduled to bring snack.

Wednesdays are gift card days; no food is required. Gift cards may be purchased from places such as Aldi, Target, a pet store, or a dollar store. These funds help purchase classroom consumables and cooking ingredients.

Napkins, spoons, forks, cups, and tissues are also appreciated periodically.

Sound Bags

Sound Bags are an important home learning opportunity. When a child learns a new sound, they may bring home a Sound Bag to reinforce that learning.

We study the **sounds of the alphabet before the names of the letters**.

To use the Sound Bag:

1. Look at the sound card.
2. Gather 6–8 objects. Several should begin with the target sound.
3. Present three objects at a time.
4. Say the name of each object slowly, emphasizing the beginning sound.
5. Ask your child to identify the object that begins with the target sound.
6. Place only objects beginning with the target sound in the bag.

For example, if the sound is **/b/**, you might present a pen, a cup, and a book:

- /p/ pen
- /c/ cup
- /b/ book

You may need to emphasize the beginning sound at first.

For short vowel sounds, we use examples such as:

- **a** – apple
- **e** – echo
- **i** – igloo
- **o** – octopus
- **u** – umbrella

Please return Sound Bags promptly so your child can take home another one.

T–V

Teachers

There are three teachers in our classroom:

- Mrs. Boyd
- Mrs. Niki
- Miss Aubrey

Volunteers

There are many opportunities for families to volunteer in our classroom and school. A volunteer sign-up will be sent home.

Classroom volunteers will generally begin approximately **8–10 weeks after the beginning of the school year.**

W

Website

Please check the Montclair website regularly for school information:

<http://montclair.mpsomaha.org>

Our classroom webpage contains the monthly newsletter. The link is included in emails sent from Mrs. Boyd.

Work

In Montessori, each activity or material is called a **work**.

Instead of asking, “What did you do at school today?” you might ask:

“What works did you do today?”

Occasionally, children become attached to small classroom objects and may accidentally take materials home. If you find an unfamiliar small object in your child's backpack or at home, please ask whether it belongs to a classroom work and return it as soon as possible.

Work Plan

A Work Plan helps students plan their days and record the work they complete.

Work Plans are used throughout the week and then reviewed and recorded by Mrs. Boyd before being sent home.

When your child's Work Plan comes home, please discuss:

- The work they completed
 - The goals they made
 - What was challenging
 - What they felt proud of
 - What they might like to try next
-

X–Z

Younger Friends

All Preschool students are called **Younger Friends**.

Rest and Sleep

Please make sure your child gets plenty of sleep and rest. School days can be both exhausting and exhilarating!

Here Is to a Wonderful and Funderful School Year!

After reading this guide, please sign and date the form below and return it by August 25, 2026.

Child's Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____