



Children's House

Montessori School

A Note from the Head of School

Hello Children's House Families!

November and December are always such a blur! With the holidays and the school breaks, these months end up being very short. But, they are filled with lots of excitement! The children carry around a lot of anticipation and wonder during this time. They have been busy getting their regular work done in the classroom, making holiday crafts, and also preparing for the performance.

In January, we will have our Transition Meetings. These meetings are for the parents of children who will be moving from one classroom to another. In other words, children who will be turning three before September 1 will come and meet with Ms. Amy, our Primary teacher. Children who will be finishing Kindergarten and entering First Grade next year will come and meet with Ms. Kalie, our Elementary Teacher.

In February, we will host the Primary and Elementary families for Open House Lessons. This is a time when the students will be showing their favorite lessons to the parents. Parents can walk around and watch all the different lessons happening in the room. It gives a wonderful glimpse into what the children are doing each day. **Please note this date has changed from what is on our school calendar.**

We will also have our Dash for the Future in February. We used to do this event in March in the morning, but we have moved it to earlier in the year in the hopes that the weather will be at least a little cooler. It will be from 1:00 to 3:00 on February 10. The Dash is a fundraiser we do each year. Children take pledges from family and friends, and then they all participate in running or walking on the track we set up in the woods and field. Parents are encouraged to come and cheer everyone on, and we will also need volunteers for set up, handing out things during the event, and help with clean up. We'll send a sign up out closer to the event.

Thank you to everyone who donated items to the family we are helping this Christmas. Your generosity will make this family's Christmas a merry one.

Important Upcoming Dates:

Mon and Tue Jan 2 & 3:
Holiday Break—No School

Mon Jan 16:
MLK Day—No School

Tue Jan 24—Toddler
Transition Meeting 4:30

Wed Jan 25—Primary
Transition Meeting 4:30

Fri Feb 10—Dash for the
Future

Wed Feb 15—Open
House Lessons 5:00-6:00

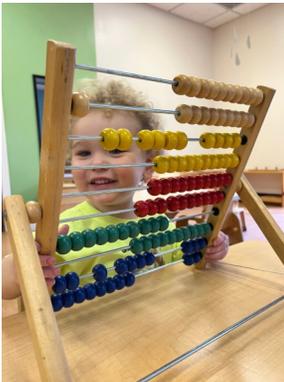
Mon Feb 20—
President's Day—No
School

 Ms. Kelly



The Toddler Class with Ms. Connie, Ms. Heather, and Ms. Dani

Our toddlers are growing and learning beautifully. Some have had a growing interest in trying to use the toilet. Some are getting better at taking their shoes off while getting them on is still a challenge. Many students are talking more and playing more with each other. They have worked on saying colors, counting and singing with hand motions. We have talked a lot about animals and animal sounds. The students are growing in understanding the flow of bringing work from the counter, to the table and back to the counter. We have been blowing our own bubbles, playing underhand catch and balancing beanbags during play time. The class loves when I sing Deck the Halls and we get to the Fa La La La La part of the song. My singing is that good. It is a joy to see them learn and grow. We are so happy to welcome Ms. Heather back to our classroom! And, happy that Ms. Dani will also be helping out each morning.



Getting from point A to point B is a learning experience every day for the Toddlers. Sometimes it creates lovely moments.



“When little people are overwhelmed by **BIG EMOTIONS** it’s our job to share **OUR CALM,** Not to join their chaos.”
~L.R. Knost

The Primary Class with Ms. Amy and Ms. Cory



The Thanksgiving Feast

In November, we had our Thanksgiving feast with beef stew, carrot cake, and corn bread muffins. The children each brought ingredients, helped to prepare the meal, and enjoyed it together.

We have moved from North America and have started our studies on Europe. Individually, the children are all working hard and learning so much!

We enjoyed celebrating Lily, Ziah and Jamison's birthdays.

We are all looking forward to the holidays!



"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."

~Maria Montessori

The Elementary Class with Ms. Kalie and Ms. Nikki



The daily soccer game.



The preparation for, and enjoying, the Thanksgiving Feast



Autumn is the lizard whisperer. This one is wearing a hat!



After preparing the food, we hosted the special area teachers for our Thanksgiving feast. We made one huge table so we could all eat together.

At playtime, the big draw is the soccer game. We are either playing, or cheering the soccer players on.

We are so excited for the break!

HAPPY
Holidays!

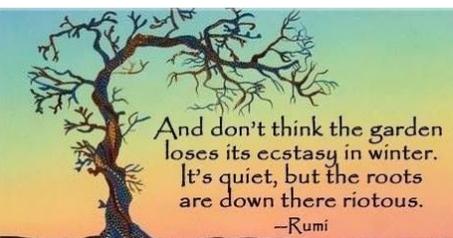
You can make it a
GREAT DAY
or not,
the choice is
yours.

The Gardens with Ms. Sharon, Ms. Jessica, and Ms. Diane

In the Primary Garden, the children love to care for the animals, both domestic and wild. They make sure they are clean, fed, watered, and loved. They have been busy helping with all kinds of things with the plants. We are always watering and weeding of our herb, vegetable, and flower beds. They also loaded and transported mulch in wagons from our mulch pile into areas of the garden. The chicks, Bluebelle and Tia, now adolescents, are integrating into our existing flock. They are out of their brooder and enjoying life with the hens and students in the chicken area. The chicks' digestive system can now tolerate dried crushed corn and the students were excited to grind the corn and feed them. The children were a huge help in getting ready for the plant and craft sale. They transplanted plants into pots and priced them, and made glitter pinecone ornaments that smelled of cinnamon.

The Elementary Garden is also bustling with students watering and weeding of our herb, vegetable, and flower beds. Our lime tree has produced some small fruit, which is very exciting! We harvested tatsoi and herbs from the garden and made a salad. Most everyone enjoyed the salad topped with raspberry vinaigrette dressing. We helped with the Plant and Craft Sale by making herb infused olive oil and lemon honey salad dressing with herbs and lemons from the garden. The students enjoyed sampling the oils with bread.

The students are following the growth and development of a dairy cow calf through the Adopt-A-Cow program from the American Dairy Association. Students were introduced to our 'adopt-a-cow' calf, Glenda, via photos and information provided from Glenda's dairy Farm. Students watched a video tour of a dairy farm to see how the farm operates, what the cows eat, and how the cows are milked. We are all looking forward to watching Glenda grow throughout the school year.



Plant and Craft Sale

On December 2, we had an event that is new to our school. We had vendors set up in the parking lot for a plant and craft sale. Some vendors were part of our school community, and a few were from the DeLand area. At the end of the evening, we had a bonfire and people could purchase S'More Kits. We had a good turnout for a first year event. We hope to watch this event grow year to year. Thanks to Morgan Beattie and Lauren Lyall for helping arrange things and gathering vendors.



Items made by students and sold to raise money for the gardens.



Staff Vendors



Parent and Student Vendors



S'Mores at the Bonfire



Vendors from the DeLand Area Community



Filo Greek Food Truck



Some of the plants sold

What did you do at school today?

Montessori literacy is approached in different ways depending on the child's age and ability. Singing the ABC's and reading to your young child is the perfect place to start pre-literacy skills. It may not seem like much, but they are so important in beginning to build those skills. They begin to learn about the symbols (we call them letters) that form our language and connect those to sounds, then sounds to words, and words to ideas. As they get older, you can use your finger to follow the words you are reading and they can see that we read top to bottom, left to right.

In the Primary classroom, children focus on writing first. They begin with the Sandpaper Letters, which look exactly like you are probably picturing in your mind. There is a letter made of a rough material that they trace with their fingers as they hear the sound. Once the sounds are mastered, they move on to the Moveable Alphabet. This material is wooden letters that the child can move around to form small words. Some of the materials they are using are also getting their fine motor skills ready for holding a pencil correctly. They require children to use a pincer grip that matches how they will hold a pencil once they are ready to write on paper. Once their grip is mastered, they will be introduced to the colored pencils and Metal Insets. They use these to trace shapes, draw parallel lines, and make patterns. They will eventually realize that they can also write letters with the pencils. They will then have lessons on writing in cursive (which matches the Sandpaper Letters and Moveable Alphabet that they have already worked with). Cursive is more fluid and has less starts and stops than print does, so children tend to pick it up more naturally. They will begin to write in a journal each day. They may begin by practicing writing letters, tracing words and sentences, and copying things, but will get to a point where they can begin to write independently. From there, reading comes naturally. The child will realize they can decode things they see written and will begin reading everything they can. Signs, product labels, and, of course, books.

As they advance, it's time to learn the rules of how things should be written, in other words, grammar. The Grammar Boxes give each part of speech a color and a shape. There are multiple boxes that they will move through as they get more and more advanced. The first starts off with nouns (represented by the color black and the triangle shape). They learn to link the article and the noun (for example: a cat, an orange, etc). The next box features adjectives, and so on.

There are many more materials that go into the literacy program, and we have adopted the Orton-Gillingham method to support struggling readers as well. With literacy being the foundation of all learning, we want to be sure we are giving our students everything they need to succeed.



Sandpaper Letters



The Moveable Alphabet



Grammar Box



The Elementary Language Area

Holiday Performance

This year, Ms. Tatiana asked the children to select the song they would like to present to their families. We had students who wrote about their favorite memories and traditions, and students who played the piano. What a wonderful way to close out the calendar year and begin our holiday break.



There was one group that wrote their own lyrics (pictured bottom right). They used *The Ants Go Marching* tune and wrote *The Elves Go Marching*. If you were a little further back in the church and had a hard time hearing, you missed out on some creative lyrics. So, here they are!

The elves go marching one by one, hurrah, hurrah. The elves go marching one by one, hurrah, hurrah, the elves go marching one by one, the little one stopped to start the song. And they all go marching down, to the workshop, so they can make toys (boom, boom, boom).

... two by two, the little one stopped to shine a shoe

...three by three, the little one stopped to trim the tree

...four by four, the little one stopped to toast a s'more

...five by five, the little one stopped to chimney dive

...six by six, the little one stopped to check the list

...seven by seven, the little one stopped to look for Kevin (I'm home alone!)

...eight by eight, the little one stopped to catch snowflakes

...nine by nine, the little one stopped to tie some twine

...ten by ten, the little one stoppe to say HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

