

A Child's Journey
Montessori
A School for Young Children



Parent Handbook
2018-2019

Dear Parents

Welcome to A Child's Journey Montessori School! We are excited and honored that you have chosen our school for your family. We ask that you take some time to read through this handbook. It is designed to not only answer some of your questions, but also to let you know what we expect of you as a parent and member of our school family. We hope you find this handbook helpful. We want to remind you that our doors are always open to you, should you have any additional questions or just want to chat. We love getting to know our families.

We are thrilled to have you with us and welcome you as part of the ACJMS family!

Warmest Regards,

Mrs. Linda Gamroth
Owner/Director

Our Philosophy

We are committed to providing an educational program that is challenging, creative, nurturing and child-centered. By offering an inviting, stimulating environment and developmentally appropriate programs we see that each child's social, emotional, and cognitive growth is encouraged and valued. We believe learning should be a joyful experience.

Our philosophy is based in our belief that children are competent individuals who can construct their own meaning of their experiences. The teacher's role is not to provide all the correct answers. Rather, the teacher provides the setting for discovery and learning.

Our approach is hands-on and multi-sensory. We recognize that children have a natural curiosity and a predisposition to enjoy the unexpected. Children engage in active exploration and investigation to make sense of their world. We strive to fuel children's investigative impulses by encouraging discovery, promoting questioning and challenging of ideas, and formulating connections of experience.

We respect children's multiple ways of demonstrating their intelligence. Children are encouraged to develop their individual strengths and each child's unique contribution to their community is appreciated. Their strengths are celebrated and valued while opportunities are created to provide exposure to, and enhancement of, other talents and skills. Children will be given the opportunity to express themselves through music, painting, drama, song, movement, and play.

A Child's Journey Montessori School program draws from several models of child development including Montessori model to create an inclusive, child-led, emergent program steeped in the belief that children are strong, capable, creative thinkers who can explore their ideas in a myriad of ways. Components which will be incorporated into our program include:

- Classrooms that are beautiful, inspirational spaces
- Children, family, teachers, parents and community that are interactive and collaborative
- An awareness and appreciation of the natural environment
- Opportunities for artistic expression in a variety of media
- Documentation of children's activities and exploration through the tadpoles app.

Our Ratios and Group Size

There are nine full-day classrooms. In the Infant through Preschool classrooms there are two teachers in each room.

Having two teachers in the classrooms allows for greater flexibility, closer observation and supervision, and most importantly more opportunities to build, close and secure relationships.

Age Group	Ratio
Infants 2m-12m	1:4
1's	1:7
2's	1:7
2.5-3's	1:10
4's	1:10
5's	1:10

Fee Schedule

Tuition is due on the 1st day of the month with a direct deposit using ACH please stop by the office to set up your ACH account. A \$35 fee will be charged for any returned deposits. A charge of \$35 dollars will be added for any payments received after the 1st and will be due along with tuition. If tuition is not received by the 5th your child will be taken off the class roster and your key card will be cancelled.

If tuition is not paid by the 15th of the month, the child will be withdrawn immediately and any fees paid will be forfeited. Upon disenrollment, you will need to reapply and pay a new deposit/fee in order for your child to be considered for reenrollment.

*Priority may be given to children on the waiting list.

Please see the director for a current tuition list.

Tuition includes organic milk, breakfast, lunch, and two afternoon snacks.

Tuition is not prorated; tuition will remain the same regardless of any absence, vacation, or holiday, or portion of month used. Current tuition rates can be found on the Tuition rate sheet in this packet or on our website. Tuition may be adjusted annually to keep our teacher pay current with the cost of living.

Our Day

Each classroom has its own unique personality, flow, schedule and activities.

Child are not to be dropped off past 9:30am.

Components which will be incorporated into the regular schedule for all classrooms are:

1. Whole Group Activities

Children gather in the mornings for sharing, songs, and discussion of the day's events. Our understanding that intelligence is constructed in a social setting creates the basis for our belief that children's thinking is stimulated through interactions with others. Activities to expand cognition, stimulate new thoughts, and reflect on observations are incorporated. In addition to the morning meeting time, children generally are together as a whole classroom group for meal times, nap time, and morning/afternoon outdoor play.

2. Small group activities

During much of the day, we break into smaller groups in which a primary caregiver works with a small group of children. This small group time is used for investigation, discussion, and experimentation that may not be possible within the larger group. At times, these are more teacher-directed activities such as a planned art activity or experiment and offers a balance to the child-directed play that is predominate during the day. This time allows us the opportunity to really tune-in and hear the children's thoughts and ideas, expand on activities experienced in the larger group, and work on particular developmental areas.

Children are encouraged to make their own choices for daily activities from a variety of play areas in the classrooms. Through independently making decisions about how they spend their time, children are empowered to explore and discover. In addition to the permanent materials in these play areas that serve as our classroom staples, unique materials are also introduced to spark interest and encourage creative exploration.

Parents can find weekly curriculum posted outside their child's classrooms.

3. Meals

We believe that mealtimes are a vital portion of the children's daily experience. It is an opportunity to try new foods, to take risks and discover new tastes, a chance to connect to their world around them, and practice independence. It is a time to listen to each other and be heard, to practice turn taking and to expand their vocabulary. It is also an opportunity for us to demonstrate our belief that children are capable and competent. All the children, from toddlers to preschoolers clean up after themselves. We do not assume that children have only a limited repertoire of foods. Instead, we offer creative and delicious meals prepared by our chef that are kid-friendly but also extraordinary.

Children are encouraged, but never forced to eat. Children are offered seconds and are encouraged to serve themselves. Lunch is served family style. Children sit at tables in their small groups. Meals are prepared using fresh, organic ingredients as much as possible. Our chef creates meals around seasonal fruits and vegetables. Increasingly, parents should expect our produce to be grown and produced by local farmers. Children drink organic milk at lunch.

After nap, an afternoon snack is served in the classrooms. This is typically a savory bread or crackers with fresh fruit, vegetables or cheese.

Children at school after 5:00 are served another light snack to tide them over until dinner at home.

A detailed description of each day's menu is posted in the front hallway every morning.

*Whenever possible, A Child's Journey School will offer alternative foods to our children with food allergies. Please see the director for more information. If we are unable to provide an alternative we will ask the parent to bring in a bag lunch or snack with the child's first, last name and current date on it. If you bring in a lunch or snack please take it to the kitchen so that we can prepare and serve it along with our food so the child feels included.

4. Rest time

Between approximately 1pm to 3pm, the school rests. This is nap time for most children, but others rest and then read or listen to music while respecting their friends' need for sleep. Teachers meet with each other during this time to plan, reflect, and consult with each other, meet with the program director, and write observations of the children.

5. Outdoor learning

We spend a great amount of time outdoors in all weather conditions. Rainy days mean puddles and streams. And mud!! Cold days are a chance to see our breath and feel snow. Children will tend to our gardens, planting seeds, watering, and picking vegetables.

Admission Requirements and Enrollment Procedures

A Child's Journey School welcomes children from all racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds, A Child's Journey School recognizes that all children bring their own unique gifts to our community, thus enriching the environment for us all. If your child needs additional emotional, cognitive, or development support as stated by an IEP or doctor's recommendation. Parents are responsible for providing this additional support.

We reserve the right to maintain a balance between ages and gender in each classroom. Enrollment decisions are based on consideration of the "best fit" for the group rather than according to the date of application or age of child.

We offer a rolling admission. To schedule a tour, please contact the school.

In order to hold an available opening for your child, a non-refundable deposit of \$150.00 and a signed Enrollment Agreement must be returned within three days from the date the spot was offered. If there are no openings, your child will be placed on the waiting list and you will be notified when a space becomes available.

For the infant room there is a \$1845.00 deposit to hold an available opening. \$150.00 will go towards registration and the remaining \$1695.00 will go towards your 1st months tuition. At the time you make your deposit and fill out your Enrollment Agreement you have entered into a contract with ACJS. The \$1845.00 is a non-refundable deposit if you should for what ever reason decide to not use ACJS.

An annual materials/art fee of \$150 will be due at the time of enrollment; if you enroll after January 1st this fee is reduced to \$75. This fee is annual so each school year all families will pay an art fee for that school calendar year September to September.

Re-enrollment Procedures

Each calendar year in August current families will be asked to re-enroll each child. An annual registration fee of \$150 per child. This fee is due at the time of registration and at re-enrollment every August thereafter. All fees are non-refundable.

The new school year rates will be evaluated every June

Arrival and Departure

Our full-day program is open from 6:30am to 6:30pm. Please remember to sign in and out EVERY DAY. Parents are required to deliver their child INTO the classroom. **Drop off is between 6:30am and 9:30pm. Children are not to be dropped off past 9:30am.** It is the responsibility of the parent to alert staff to their child's arrival. This can be as simple as a wave and a "Good morning". However, it is important that eye contact is made and you receive acknowledgement from the teacher that he or she is aware your child is present. Transitioning into the classroom in the morning can be a particularly difficult time for some children emotionally. Establishing a routine for drop-off that includes placing the child's things in their cubby, greeting the teachers, kissing or hugging, or even a special handshake makes this transition from home to school less stressful for the child (and the parent!). Extended good-byes can cause undue distress for the child. We always want parents to feel welcome in their child's classroom. However, usually it is better to read a book, tour the room, or hear about a project at pick-up at the end of the day.

At the end of the day please remember to sign your child out. Only previously authorized adults will be allowed to pick-up a child, even in case of an emergency. If we do not recognize the person picking your child up, we will ask for identification. It is very important that parents maintain current information on their contact list and authorized pick-up list. Parents are asked to please monitor their children while in the building and in their care. It is very important that we work together to help our children understand the importance of respecting each other and our community. Specifically, caring for the classroom materials, cleaning up after playing in an area, and maintaining a safe environment are vital ways in which each child has an important opportunity to contribute.

We ask that children be picked up at least 10 minutes prior to the close of school so that each child can have time to share their accomplishments, discoveries, and artwork before they go home. According to the WAC code 170-295-2020 children cannot be here at the center for longer than ten hours. If your child is here for longer than ten hours we will give you a courtesy call. If you are not able to pick your child up in a reasonable amount of time please make other arrangements for pick up. It is essential that your focus and attention be solely on your child during this time. We ask that you refrain from cell phone use when coming in the buildings at pick-up. Please also note that at the end of the day, we are often out on the playground where the children can see all the cars pulling into the parking lot. It is amazing how many children can identify their friends' parent's car! After parking, it is very helpful for us if you walk directly into the school and visit with other parents after retrieving your child. It can be very frustrating for your child to see you, but not be able to get to you!

Late Policy

A Child's Journey School staff requests that parents respect the closing time of our day. Please arrive at A Child's Journey School by no later than 5:50pm in order to allow time for your child to gather their belongings and check in with the teacher if needed. When a parent is late to pick up their child, anxiety is felt by everyone – the parent, the teacher, and most importantly, the child. We cannot stress the importance of this enough.

If an emergency arises, please notify the school as soon as possible so that alternate arrangements can be made. If your child is not picked up on time, even with prior notice, the following late fees will apply:

\$5 per minute per child

This fee goes to the staff member who is staying late with the child and must be paid upon arrival.

Please know that asking for this fee is most assuredly one of our teachers' least favorite activities. We ask that parents come prepared to pay this fee when they are late.

*If a child has not been picked up by 6:15pm A Child's Journey School staff will attempt to reach both parents using all known contact numbers, then all listed emergency contact telephone numbers. In the event that no listed emergency contact is reached, at 6:30pm the Kirkland Police Department will be contacted to help us find an appropriate person with whom to leave your child.

School Calendar

A yearly schedule of holidays and vacations is posted on our website and in our newsletter, as well as on the outside of each classroom.

School Calendar year is from September to end of August.

Inclement Weather Policy

A Child's Journey School follows the recommendations of the Lake Washington School District. Changes in schedule due to inclement weather will be emailed to all families using the newsletter platform by 6:00AM. In addition we will post closer and late starts on our facebook page A Child's Journey School.

Transitioning into New Classrooms

A Child's Journey School staff is very invested in the cognitive, emotional and social development of all of the children entrusted to our care. We strive to present our children with stimulating and challenging opportunities daily and to observe and record the children regularly in order to monitor and document their growth and maturation.

While we roughly outline an age range for each of our rooms, our program is based upon the cognitive, emotional and social development of our children and not their chronological age.

At times, children may fall above or below the average chronological age range for a given classroom. A Child's Journey School staff believes that children move at their own pace and that given appropriate support and opportunities they will thrive in their own way at the right time for their own developmental process. We believe that it is our job to provide those opportunities and to group children of similar developmental levels together.

Teachers work very closely together with the director and parents to plan for a child to leave one room and join another. At times, a child may be ready to move mid-year. When this occurs, the child and their parents will be offered the next available opening in the appropriate classroom. Since our community is very stable as a whole, space may not become readily available in the next classroom. As a general rule, most children move from one class to the next in small groups during the summer months.

What Children Need to Bring to School

Children should wear washable play clothes to school that are comfortable and appropriate for the season. We play hard and get messy often. Please do not send your child in their “best clothes”. We encourage creativity and exploration and with that comes dirt, paint, clay, spaghetti sauce, mulch, and many other interesting materials encountered during the day. We change clothes often so children need at least two clean, weather appropriate changes of clothing every day in their cubby including shirts, pants, under garments, socks and shoes.

The children all sleep on mats at naptime. Parents are asked to bring in a standard crib sheet each Friday for the next week and take the dirty one home to be washed on Friday. If your child has a special blanket or stuffed animal that is required during sleep time, please have it available on a regular basis. Otherwise, all toys and other personal items should be left at home at all times. In addition, please keep candy, gum, money, and jewelry at home. These items can be difficult to share or get lost or broken.

Children are welcome to bring books to share at story time. Books are always welcome!!

Children may be asked to each bring in an umbrella, rain coat and rain boots for nature walks and play in the rain.

Label Everything

It is amazing the amount of lovely clothes, books and shoes that end up in our lost and found every year!

Special Note to the Parents of Infants

Parents bringing children to the infant room must label everything with their child's first and last name. Any bottles or jars of food must be labeled daily with their child's name and date. Breast milk may be frozen in the classroom freezer as long as it is labeled and dated. Any bottle or jar that is not labeled and dated will not be served under any circumstances. When a child is trying new foods, we ask that the first introduction to a new food be done at home and be repeated for several days before bringing it to school. We ask that food from home be healthy, nutritious, and easily consumed by the baby.

Potty Training

When your child is ready, we will assist with potty-training. We consider a child ready when they are able to initiate the request to go to the potty. When your child is ready and you are beginning to work together at home, it is critical that you let your teacher know. Our teachers are potty experts and are ready and willing to work individually with each family to develop a plan for success for each child. While each child is different we do follow several guidelines during this process:

Children should remain in diapers while potty "practicing". Children who are being taken to the potty to "try" are in the practicing stage. We will practice at school several times a day during this period as well, but children cannot be sent to school in regular underwear until accidents are infrequent. We also ask that only pull-ups with Velcro sides be sent to school with your child.

Celebrations

Children's birthdays are an exciting time and we enjoy sharing in the joy of these celebrations. Usually, we celebrate during our afternoon snack time at around 3:00. Parents are welcome to come and help us serve snack and enjoy the festivities with their child. For birthdays you may choose to request that the chef prepare a classroom treat for a fee of \$2.00 per child. Chef prepared treats include popsicles, yogurt parfaits, and popcorn for older children. This is not required by any means and is a personal choice for you to make. We will sing anyway and have the child wear a special birthday hat or crown and probably be very silly so a snack is not necessary, just icing on the cake (or bran muffin as the case may be).

We work very hard to create a healthy environment around our children and we need to extend this to celebrations as well. We appreciate your support

Parent Participation

A Child's Journey School maintains an open-door policy and parents are welcome and invited at any point in the day. We invite parents to be involved and share in your child's school experience. If you have items, books or experiences that reflect what the children are learning, please feel free to speak to your child's teacher about sending them in for sharing. Parents are also welcome to assist in the classrooms in a variety of ways including, but not limited to:

- Lunch helpers
- Library book organizers
- Classroom photographers
- Story tellers
- Play dough makers
- Observation sharers
- Parent Ambassador

Parents are encouraged to present their own ideas for participation as well. Let us know your talents and interests so we can put them to good use! It is our hope that everyone in the child's community is informed and involved in the school as a whole.

We also have a few school wide parent volunteer positions.

- Secretary/Minute Keeper
- Volunteer Coordinator
- Community Liaison
- Technology Team Leader

Communication

When talking with the teachers, it is important that communication remain positive and mutually respectful. If an issue arises that needs to be negotiated, we ask that this be done outside of the children's presence. We are happy to discuss any aspect of your child's development, school policies, or goings-on in the school. However, we respect our children's rights to privacy and take confidentiality very seriously. We will not discuss another child with someone who is not a parent or family member.

*It is important to remember that while communication is important, it is the teacher's primary responsibility to supervise the children at all times. If you are requiring more than just a quick check-in with your child's teacher, please schedule a time to visit by phone during nap time instead.

A school wide newsletter will be distributed each weekend. Please be sure that the director has your email address in order to receive this newsletter.

Donations

A Child's Journey School appreciates parent donations and gifts to classrooms. Any classroom addition **MUST** be approved in advance by the director. Materials donated to the school become the property of the school and may be circulated throughout the school without consulting the donor. A Child's Journey School also reserves the right to discard any material donated to the school without consulting the donor.

Discipline and Behavior Management

We recognize that learning self-control is a normal part of growth and development. As a school, we employ Conscious Discipline as our model of teaching children self-regulation skills. Our discipline policy is designed to promote positive behavior by using praise and positive reinforcement to shape behavior in the classroom.

If behavior escalates or becomes a disruption to others, a teacher may remove a child from a situation for a short period of time in order to have a one-on-one moment. This time is used to calm the child and help reflect and refocus before returning to the group. Should a child demonstrate ongoing difficulty in the classroom, parents will be invited to meet with the teachers and director in order to discuss options and strategies.

During this parent-teacher meeting a behavior plan may be put into place. A behavior plan is designed to address the child's present issue by evaluating the environment, instruction, and interactions around the child in order to support the development of more pro-social behaviors. Plans can vary from simple strategies such as developing a plan to support a child who is having difficulty at drop-off by designing a predictable routine or song to sing, to a more complex plan in which teachers and parents agree on strategies to prevent and/or respond to a challenging behavior while developing and implementing techniques to teach a replacement behavior. Teachers, parents, and the director are involved in creating, implementing, and reviewing the plan for effectiveness.

If a more intensive plan is appropriate to the circumstances, the director may invite a behavioral specialist into the classroom to observe the child's behavior.

If a child's behavior is dangerous to themselves or others on an on-going basis and there is no response to the interventions put into place, the child may be dis-enrolled from A Child's Journey School.

Health Policy

Parents will be notified immediately if a child is vomiting, has more than three diarrhea episodes, displays symptoms of a contagious illness, or is running a fever of **100 degrees** Fahrenheit or higher. If a parent cannot be reached, we will contact designated people on the Emergency and Medical Information form. It is important for sick children to be picked up promptly. If a teacher or director calls a parent to report that their child is sick, it is critical that all efforts are made to come to the school to pick up the child as soon as possible. Please know that before we make that call, we have done everything in our power to make the child comfortable and meet the child's needs. When we make the decision to call the parent, we do so knowing that we are asking the parent to leave their work or other responsibilities. While we understand the difficulties this causes, it is our job to keep all of our children safe and healthy, including the child who is not feeling well. When a child is vomiting or feverish, we move the child from the classroom to the office or other quiet area. If it is going to be more than one hour before you are able to arrive to pick up your child, we ask that you make arrangements for another person on your authorized pick up list to come for the child.

A child must be **excluded** from attending child care with the following Symptoms: **Diarrhea** (one watery stool we notify parents, second that day, we ask parents to pick up. One bloody stool we ask that you pick up), **Vomiting** (two or more times within 24 hours), **Open or oozing sores**, unless properly covered with cloths or with bandages, **Fever of 100 degrees Fahrenheit** or higher. **Fatigue that prevents participation in regular activities.** (WAC code 170-295-3030)

A child must be **symptom-free, without a fever for 24 hours** (without fever reducing medication) in addition if antibiotics are given child must be on the antibiotics for 24 hours or three doses before returning to childcare. Children who return must be well enough to participate in all activities, including outdoor play, before returning to school. While we respect the constraints and expectations of our families' workplaces, it is our job to protect the children in our care and to create the healthiest environment as possible for the children and teachers.

We ask that parents use good judgment and common sense when considering bringing their child back to school after an illness. For example, if a child is sent home in the afternoon due to illness, it is best for the child to stay at home the entire next day, not returning until the morning of the following day. In addition, if a child is sick with a contagious illness, it is best practice for parents to also keep siblings at home to try to limit further exposure. We work very hard to keep the school germ free by washing our hands A LOT,

disinfecting toys, and teaching the children healthy practices such as coughing into their elbow and wiping noses with a tissue. We ask our families to support our efforts by always washing hands upon arrival, informing us about illnesses, and maintaining healthy practices in their homes.

Parents are asked to notify the school if a child is going to be absent from school, particularly if this is due to a contagious illness or infestation such as pink eye, chicken pox, lice, etc. In these cases, parents of the child's classmates will be notified that there is an illness in the room, but your child's privacy will be respected and names will not be used.

Medications

As a group care setting for well children, A Child's Journey School staff members will not administer any prescription medication at any time without a doctor's note or prescription. In addition, A Child's Journey School teachers will not administer any over the counter medications without a completed and signed medication form available from your child's teacher.

Sunscreen is to be provided with a filled out sunscreen form before we can apply it. Sunscreen is applied once a day in the summer months. Parents are asked to apply sunscreen in the morning before arriving at school.

First Aid

In case of an accident, staff members will use standard first aid procedures. Employees are CPR and first aid certified. If we feel medical attention is required, we will call the proper emergency personnel and then call your designated contacts.

If an accident or injury occurs during the day that does not require a doctor's attention, our teachers complete an "Oops Form". This form outlines specifically what occurred and our response. For example, if a child falls and cuts his knee, we fill out the form so that you know he fell and that we responded by cleaning the cut and putting on a Band-Aid. If a child cause's harm to another child such as a bite or scratch, we use the Oops for both the child harmed and the child who caused the incident. We do not share the children's names with the other families. For example, the Oops Form might state: "Talen was bitten on his arm today by a friend. We washed the area, applied a cold ice pack, and gave him lots of hugs and kisses." If your child happens to be the one who did the biting, we would state: "Talen bit a friend today..."

Reports of Child Abuse

A Child's Journey School and its staff are mandated by the State of Washington to report any suspected child abuse or neglect to the Department of Social Services.

Appendix

Please use the guide below to help make decisions about the appropriateness of bringing your child to school.

Symptom:

- Coughing
- Runny nose

Recommendation:

If cough is mild and intermittent (your child can go 15 minutes between coughs), he or she is considered safe to attend school. If the cough is persistent, this indicates that the infection can spread through cough droplets. If discharge is clear, your child is safe. However, children with continual runny noses (wiping needed every 10 minutes) can be very demanding for teachers. Please use your discretion. If the discharge is thick and discolored, it is considered infectious.

•Fever:

Rule:

Your child needs to be free of fever (defined as a temperature over 100 degrees) for 24 hours to be considered free of infection.

- Sore Throat
- Ear Infection

Recommendation:

Unless accompanied by other symptoms, your child is considered safe to attend. Please simply judge how your child feels.

•Conjunctivitis

Rule:

Considered infectious.

- Diarrhea

Rule:

More than 2 loose stools in a single day should be considered infectious and given a 24-hour waiting period.

Montessori Education

In a Montessori environment, children learn by exploring and manipulating specially designed materials. Each material teaches one concept or skill at a time, and lays a foundation from which students can comprehend increasingly abstract ideas.

Children work with materials at their own pace, repeating an exercise until it is mastered. The teacher may gently guide the process, but her goal is to inspire rather than instruct.

Throughout the classroom, beautifully prepared, inviting curriculum areas contain a sequential array of lessons to be learned. As students work through a sequence, they are developing qualities with which they'll approach every future challenge: autonomy, creative thinking, and satisfaction in a job well done.

Montessori Terms

Sensitive period: A critical time during human development when the child is biologically ready and receptive to acquiring a specific skill or ability-such as the use of language or a sense of order-and is therefore particularly sensitive to stimuli that promote the development of that skill. A Montessori teacher prepares the environment to meet the developmental needs of each sensitive period.

Sensorial exercise: These activities develop and refine the 5 senses-seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, and smelling-and build a foundation for speech, writing, and math through the use of sensorial materials. The exercises also bring order to the barrage of sensorial impressions the child experiences from birth onward.

The 3-period lesson: A 3-step technique for presenting information to the child. In the first-the *introduction or naming* period-the teacher demonstrates

what “this is” (the teacher might say “This is a mountain”, while pointing to it on a 3-dimensional map). In the second-the *association or recognition* period- the teacher asks the child to “show” what was just identified (“Show me the mountain”). Finally, in the *recall* period, the teacher asks the child to name the object or area. Moving from new information to passive recall to active identification reinforces the child’s learning and demonstrates her mastery.

Work: Purposeful activity. Maria Montessori observed that children learn through purposeful activities of their own choosing; Montessori schools call all of the children’s activities, “work.”

Grace and courtesy: Children are formally instructed in social skills they will use throughout their lives, for example, saying “please” and “thank you,” interrupting conversations politely, requesting rather than demanding assistance, and greeting guests warmly.

Practical life: The Montessori term that encompasses domestic work to maintain the home and classroom environment; self-care and personal hygiene, grace, and courtesy. Practical life skills are of a great interest to young children and form the basis of later abstract learning.

Practical life activities: Young children in Montessori classrooms learn to take care of themselves and their environment through activities such as handwashing, dusting, and mopping. These activities help toddlers and preschool-age children learn to work independently, develop concentration, and prepare for later work with reading and math; older children participate in more advanced activities.

Prepared environment: The teacher prepares the environment of the Montessori classroom with carefully selected, aesthetically arranged materials that are presented sequentially to meet the development needs of the children using the space. Well-prepared Montessori environments contain appropriately sized furniture, a full complement of Montessori materials, and enough space to allow children to work in peace, alone or in small or large groups.