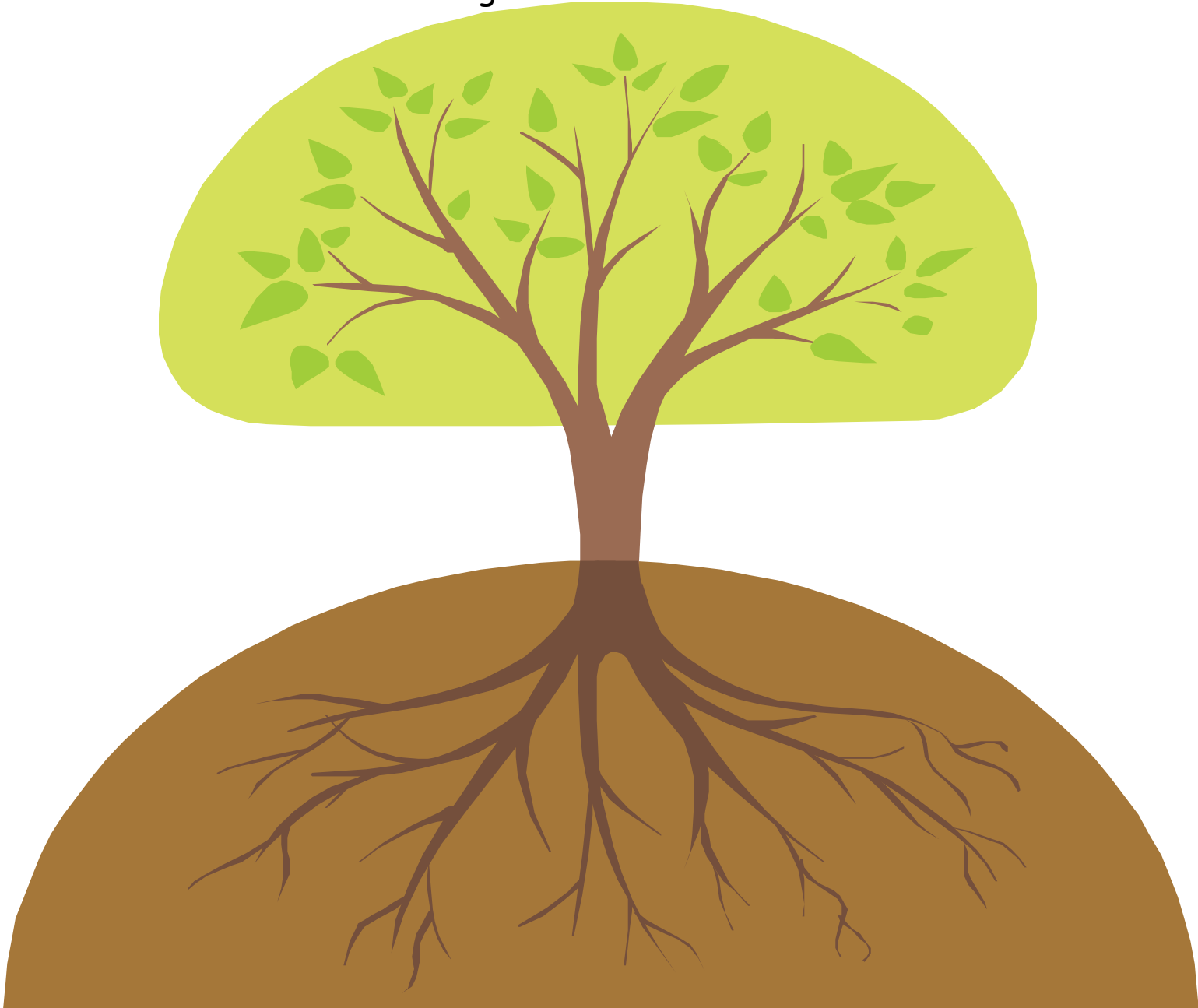




Christots Montessori Day School

Handbook for Parents

August 2009-2010



Important Information

- Hours of operation are: 7:30am to 6:00pm.
- We will accommodate Special needs children.
- We do transport children to and from Desoto Schools. However, we do not transport to all of them so please let the office know which school so we can verify if we transport to that school.
- Christots Montessori School is a member of the North American Montessori Teachers' Association, the Association Montessori Society, Montessori Education for Peace International and Shawnee Chamber of Commerce.
- Christots Montessori carries the appropriate insurance according the Statute R9-302A.
- Federal Tax ID # 431918529
- State Childcare License:
- Christots Montessori Day School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the bases of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, and other school-administered programs.

"Our aim is not only to make the child understand, and still less to force him to memorize, but so to touch his imagination as to enthuse him to his innermost core. We do not want complacent pupils, but eager ones."

Maria Montessori

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School Information

Introduction

Because the family is the primary source of love and guidance in a child's life, no school experience is complete unless the home is involved. It is our goal to enhance your relationship with your child and to work with you in planning for your child's education.

To help build a bridge between your home and Christots, we have prepared this handbook which contains detailed information that will be useful to you during your child's years with us. In addition to this handbook, parents are required to attend at least two parent nights during the school year, and we encourage parents to read several books about parenting and the Montessori Method. All of the books listed below as well as many others are available at the library.

A Parent's Guide to the Montessori Classroom by Aline Wolf is an excellent overview of Montessori philosophy and explanation of classroom materials.

Montessori: A Modern Approach by Paula Polk Lillard is a more in-depth explanation of the Montessori Method.

Children: The Challenge by Rudolf Dreikurs, M.D., while dated in terms of the roles mothers and fathers play in the family is a valuable tool for parents who want to implement the same discipline structure at home that is used in the classroom at Christots.

Positive Discipline by Jane Nelson, Ed.D, is an updated version of the Dreikurs approach. A must for parents and teachers.

Parenting with Love and Logic by Jim Fay

MONTESSORI PROGRAM

The objective of the program is to help the child achieve his fullest potential and mental ability by carefully preparing a learning environment to meet the child's needs. The child uses materials designed to assist growth in practical life, sensorial, mathematics, language arts, music, art, science, geography, and nature.

The program is based on the philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori, a noted Italian educator and physician (1870-1952), who revolutionized early childhood education by advocating that children be allowed the freedom to explore and develop their own creative potential through a wealth of self-teaching educational materials. Much of the educational equipment found today in the Montessori classroom was developed by Maria Montessori nearly 100 years ago. They include hands-on mathematical materials and activities to develop the child's sensory perceptions and refine his sense of awareness. Many exercises are designed to allow young children to practice skills they will need for daily living and self-help. The child's avid interest is nurtured by materials illustrating principles of geography, zoology, botany and archeology. All of these areas are explored with concrete objects, tactile experiments, collection, classification and identification. The children readily take up this reality-based purposeful "work" designed to develop mental and manual dexterity. Children also develop the tools for a life time of creative learning.

Our program rests on four pillars:

- The cultivation within our students of a passion for excellence in everything they do, both in and outside of school
- The development of a strongly held set of universal values, which include self-respect, respect for others, honesty, integrity, responsibility, empathy, compassion, kindness, peacefulness, a sense of concern for others, warmth and a love of community God and nature.
- The development of a global perspective and sense of international understanding
- A lifelong commitment to give something back through service to others who are in need.

Montessori's dynamic theories included such revolutionary premises as:

- Children are to be respected as different from adults and as individuals who are different from one another.
- Children create themselves through purposeful activity.
- The most important years for learning are from birth to age six.

What makes Montessori education unique?

The "whole child" approach. The primary goal of a Montessori program is to help each child reach full potential in all areas of life. Activities promote the development of social skills, emotional growth, and physical coordination as well as cognitive preparation. The holistic curriculum allows the child to experience the joy of learning and to develop self-esteem and independence.

The “Prepared Environment”. In order for self-directed learning to take place, the whole learning environment—room, materials and social climate—must be supportive of the learner. The teacher provides necessary resources, including opportunities for children to function in a safe and positive climate. The teacher thus gains the children’s trust, which enables them to try new things and build self-confidence.

The Montessori materials. Dr. Montessori’s observations of the kinds of “toys” which children enjoy and return to play with repeatedly led her to design a number of multi-sensory sequential and self-correcting materials which facilitate the learning of skills and concepts. Our teachers follow “Montessori principles” as they structure new activities for the classroom.

The Teacher. Originally called a “Directress” the Montessori teacher functions as a facilitator of learning. She is a role model, designer of the environment, resource person, demonstrator, record-keeper and observer of each child’s growth and development. She encourages, respects, and loves each child as a special, unique individual; she also provides support for parents and joins them in a partnership to nurture the development of the child.

How does it work?

Each Montessori class, from toddlers through college, operates on the principle of freedom within limits. Every program has its set of ground rules which differs from age to age, but is always based on core Montessori beliefs: respect for each other and for the environment.

Children are free to work at their own pace with materials they have chosen, either alone or with others. The teacher relies on his or her observations of the children to determine which new activities and materials he may introduce to individual children or to a small or large group. The aim is to encourage active, self-directed learning and to strike a balance of individual mastery with small group collaboration within the whole group community.

The three-year-age span in each class provides a family-like grouping where learning can take place naturally. More experienced children share what they have learned while reinforcing their own learning. Because this peer group learning is intrinsic to Montessori, there are often more conversation-language experiences in the Montessori classroom than in conventional early education settings.

Goals

The goal of Christots Montessori is to introduce children to the experiences which:

- Provide a warm and loving environment in which each child feels secure, respected and loved.
- Support and encourage the growth and development of the whole child.
- Develop social skills, emotional growth, physical coordination, as well as cognitive preparation.
- Help build self-confidence, self-esteem, motivation and leadership.
- Foster the natural desire to learn.
- Develop freedom within limits.
- Develop and refine each child’s sensory motor skills.
- Lengthen each child’s attention span.
- Enable each child to move smoothly and purposefully.
- Provide a framework of discipline through which each child can develop self-discipline and personal strength.
- Provide an environment with safe limits in which each child can become an active explorer and learner.
- Provide opportunities for each child to develop social grace and courtesy.
- Develop skills in observation, questioning and listening.
- Prompt order, coordination, concentration and independence.
- Refine and develop each child’s physical and mental capabilities and interests as they expand.
- Help develop respect for themselves, for others, God, nature, and for their environment.

Ground Rules

- We respect each other.
- We respect our teachers.
- We listen and follow directions.
- We respect the work of others.
- We may not misuse the materials.
- We take care of our environment.
- We walk in the classroom.
- We use inside voices in the classroom.
- We do not hurt anyone in any way.
- We are kind and loving to each other.

*The purpose of these ground rules is to aid the children in acquiring self respect, respect for others, and respect for the environment.

Discipline/Peace Education

The word “discipline” is derived from “disciple”, which means teacher. Therefore, the purpose of disciplining is to teach the child acceptable ways to handle various situations. Even a very young child can understand the cause and effect of his/her actions.

We at Christots Montessori recognize the dignity and worth of every human being within the School. We want the children to develop a positive self-image and respect for themselves, others and the environment. We believe that by treating the children with fairness and respect, they will react in kind.

Adults in the classroom model a positive, caring attitude at all times. When problems arise with one or more children, the adult will encourage the child or children to talk about it and find solutions peacefully. If one child hurts another, the first child may be momentarily removed from the situation, while the adults check to see that the hurt child is all right. Then the adult will return to the first child and discuss the problem(s) and look for a more appropriate solution. We find that young children do not have the words to express their feelings, and this frustration is often what leads to conflict.

The goal of discipline is to help a child change his/her behavior from negative to positive. Redirection is most often used to redirect their activity in order to help a child with this process.

If a child repeatedly does not respond to discipline used at school, the parent will be contacted and asked to come in for a conference. Parents and school will devise a consistent discipline plan for use at home and in school. A time-line of 30 days will be set at this conference, after which, parents and school will meet again to review the child’s progress.

The philosophy of the School is based on love and respect. We believe that the adults must be models of the behavior they wish to elicit from the children and others, and must show respect for the child and others at all times. Therefore, any abuse of the child, and/or others, verbal, psychological, or physical is prohibited. It is the policy of our staff never to use or threaten to use any physical punishment. Verbal abuse is never permitted.

If the student becomes a danger to himself or other individuals at the school, Christots Montessori reserves the right to remove the student until the appropriate procedures can be implemented. A more detailed guideline can be obtained at the front office.

Communication

The more accurately informed we are about your child, the better we can care for him/her. Please inform your child’s teacher of any changes at home in the child’s life that may have an effect at school.

- Please read all signs and posted notes
- Please check your child’s file-folder and cubbies daily
- Please check the web site (Christots.com) weekly for updates and class notes.
- Please update Administration with any change in personal information
- Please do not rely on verbal messages regarding your child. Please submit all messages in writing to admin@christots email address so the message can be shared with all appropriate staff.
- Feel free to call the school to talk to the Director or Administrator about any concerns you may have. Your child’s Teacher, the Director or the Administrator will return your call at their earliest convenience.
- Twice a month you will receive a classroom update via email. The update will cover what the children have been discussing and learning over the last few weeks as well as discuss what is to come in the following weeks. Lesson plans are posted at the doors where you sign your child in.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Informal conferences can be arranged and may be held at anytime. If at any time, you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact your Teacher first, then if necessary the Director or Administrator. It is distracting to the teachers to engage in lengthy conversation at pick-up and drop-off times.

Formal conferences for Preschoolers are held twice a year, in October and March coincides with the Desoto school district. We only close one day during this time, along with a mid-year progress report. This gives parents and staff an opportunity to discuss the child’s social, physical, emotional and cognitive development. Both parents are encouraged to attend. Check the School Events Calendar for specific days.

Enrollment Process

Christots accepts children from birth through age 6. There are three distinct programs by age group: infants/toddlers (to age 3) and preschool/kindergarten. Infants and toddlers are taught at our Woodland facility, and preschool/kindergarten students learn at our Midland location.

Christots accepts children in the following order:

1. Current Students
2. Siblings
3. New Enrollees

New openings are filled from the wait list with applications submitted during the Open Enrollment period. Children who are not selected during this time will be placed on a waiting list. All applications will be accepted according to the application process.

An application for enrollment will not be accepted without the following items:

- Completed enrollment application that has been signed and dated
- Completed emergency card and form
- Copy of immunization records and signed physical from doctor
- Signed parent Handbook Agreement
- Records request (when applicable)
- Any applicable fees

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- There is no discrimination made between applicants on the basis of race, creed, national origin, or disabilities. Priority enrollment status will be given to siblings or existing students and to those enrolling in the full-time program.
- All children are accepted on a conditional basis. Parent(s) may be asked to withdraw their child if the school determines that the program is not meeting the child's needs, or that the child's presence is having an adverse effect on the program.
- During the year, a written request must be submitted to the Director for any changes to enrollment. These changes will be considered based on availability. This will result in a new agreement being signed and an adjustment being made to the tuition, if needed.
- A one-time non-refundable registration fee of \$75.00 is due upon submission of the Registration Form.
- The first month's tuition is due on or before the first day of the enrollment into the program.
- Tuition is based on a 12 month school year. (Based on the number of school days.)
- There are NO MAKE-UPS and tuition is not subject to adjustment because of illness, vacation, holidays or absence from school or school closings.
- Parents are responsible for paying the tuition on time. Tuition payments are due as indicated on the contact and will be considered late if not received on or before the 7th day of every month. There will be a late charge fee of \$25 if tuition is not paid by the 8th of each month unless on the bi-weekly payment plan. No more than seven days may lapse, after which your child's enrollment may be terminated.
- Please make checks payable to Christots Montessori and place in the Noah's Ark box located by the door in the downstairs room.
- If your check is returned for any reason, there will be a \$25.00 charge.

Tuition for 2009-2010 Academic Year

****Please see Enrollment contract***

Observations

All parents are encouraged to visit their child's classroom throughout the year. Your visits are welcomed. In order for your observations to be as beneficial as possible, we have found the following guidelines helpful. We ask that observations do not begin until the sixth week of school. This gives the child the opportunity to adjust to the new environment.

When to come: You are always welcome at any time, but by arranging it ahead of time you are assured of having the day you request. Mornings between 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. are best to observe the educational programs in progress.

How to Observe: An observation chair will be provided so you can view all the activities. We request that you remain seated so that the children are able to continue with their activities. When you arrive please check in at the office.

How Long: The length of stay is up to you. However, most observers find that 20 to 30 minutes are quite fulfilling.

Classroom Placement

The final decision for classroom placement is made in the best interest of the child by the Administrative Team. Parents who have information relating to this decision should put their request in writing and submit to the Administrative Team. Changes in classroom assignments will only be made if the well-being of the child is seriously affected. During the summer classrooms may be consolidated for teacher/child ratio.

Separation

Separation is a process we go through all of our lives. Though often challenging and exciting, this growth towards independence can be painful and scary, especially for young children. Parents and teachers working together, showing children that they can trust and believe in one another, offers a foundation of support when the world suddenly seems a new and different place.

Independence is one of our goals but if your child is having second thoughts about being away from you, then you are welcome to stay (viewing outside the classroom through one-way glass). Remember that sometimes staying only makes it more difficult for your child as well as for yourself. Never leave without letting your child know that you are doing so. Feel free to phone anytime during the day to check on your child.

Normalization

The basic goal of the Montessori classroom is to 'normalization' of the child so that he becomes well-balanced, spontaneous and able to utilize his capabilities to the fullest. Some of the characteristics of such a child are the following: ability to concentrate, sense of personal dignity, independence, self-motivation, love of order, enjoyment of repetition, ability to work alone, self-discipline, desire for freedom of choice, pleasure and fulfillment in work for its own sake; no need for regard or punishment, obedience, preference for work over play and love of learning. Normalization is a slow process – a point of arrival, not of departure in the classroom. The activities in the Practical life area of the classroom aid in this process and are some of the first presentation given to the child. As the child spends more time in the classroom working with the materials his movements become more coordinated, he develops a sense of order, he lengthens his concentration span, and he develops independence. Meanwhile the parents are curious about what the child is doing at the school. Asking the child 'What did you do today?' is like asking an adult 'What did you have for lunch last Thursday?' A lot has happened since last Thursday, and for the young child who perceives minutes as hours and hours as days, a whole morning can seem an eternity. Because he is absorbing, categorizing, and processing as he learns, and because his concept of time is not fully developed, his answer will most often be "I don't know", or "Nothing", or "We played outside." (Not exactly what a parent wants to hear.) The best way to get a window into the child's world at Christots is to first read a book such as [A Parent's Guide to the Montessori Classroom](#) and attend the orientation information meeting in the fall. After your child has attended for several weeks, come for a visit. We will try to arrange your observation in such a way that your child is not aware of your presence. That way you can see him as he truly is in the environment. Instead of asking your child for information watch for clues: singing songs at bedtime, or a child who says 'I can pour my own milk', 'I know how to button my own coat!', or I can make my own sandwich."

Health and Wellness

Illnesses

If a child has a bad cold with a runny nose or cough and comes to school, the chances of a large number of children contracting the cold are obviously greatly increased. The children move freely throughout the environment as well as share and handle many materials. Germs have the potential to spread quickly.

With your cooperation, we can establish a healthier environment for all the children if, when your child is sick, he/she is cared for at home.

Please note: If we feel that your child is really not feeling well, and exhibiting one or more symptoms of illness we will call you to pick him/her up.

As required by State regulations - if your child has had any symptoms of illness, such as nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or fever (100 degrees or higher) he may not return to school until they are free from these symptoms for 24 hours.

If your child is on antibiotics he/she must be on them for 24 hours before returning to school.

It is particularly important that you inform the school if your child has contacted any communicable diseases so we may pass that information on to the other parents. The school follows the communicable disease reporting requirement under A.P.C. AAC R9-5-515(D).

If your child becomes ill at school, he/she will be isolated and you or an authorized person listed on the emergency form will be notified immediately in order to pick up your child.

Medications

1. Prescription medication will be administered only at the written request, with a medical consent form signed by the parent.
 - a. Prescription medication must be in the original prescription bottle.
 - b. If a student needs to take medication as school, ask the pharmacist for a second bottle and send only the tablets/liquid needed to be taken at school.
2. Any and all medication to be given during school hours must be labeled with the child's name, the dose and the time to be given.
3. Medication is to be brought directly to the office by an adult. It is not acceptable to send it in a child's lunchbox, backpack etc. No medication will be administered without a signed medication form. This form is given to you at the time of enrollment.
4. If a child takes medication daily, it is the responsibility of the parent to make sure that there is enough medication in the office. The school is not responsible for medicine that has run out.

Immunization

The state immunization law requires all students to have an immunization record on file for school attendance. If your child is exempt from immunizations, he/she must have a signed exemption on file. These forms can be found in the school office. All needed immunization records must be on file prior to the child attending school. If your child does not have immunization on file, he/she will not be allowed to attend classes until the situation has been remedied. Please bring any updated immunizations records to the school office.

Exemptions:

The law allows (a) parents/guardians to elect exemptions to immunization requirements based on 1) religious beliefs, 2) medical reasons, 3) laboratory evidence. If any of these exemptions apply; please complete a Request for Exemption to Immunization form. This form is available in the office. Include a letter requesting this exemption.

Emergency Card

A child will not be admitted unless an emergency release is on file. Parents are asked to call the office immediately if an address or telephone number on the emergency release changes. Please keep in mind that if your child were to have an accident and the information on your emergency card is incorrect, we have no way to contact you.

Please do not send any vitamins or any other medications in lunch bags or back packs! This is a serious health hazard to the other children on campus. If any are found they will be taken to administration and the guardian will be phoned.

Accidents/Incidents

All accidents/incidents will be reported immediately to the Director or Administrator. The teacher is ultimately responsible for preparing a written accident/incident report for the guardian (in child's take-home file) and the student's file.

In case of a Minor Accident:

The child will be tended by a staff member. Appropriate first aid will be administered when needed (soap and water and/or an ice pack, bandage), and the injury will be reported to the person who picks up the child.

In case of a Serious Accident:

- The parent or person responsible for the child will be notified.
- The physician listed on the Emergency Form will be phoned to ask for his/her recommendation.
- For serious injuries the Director and/or Administrator will call 911. (Parents will be expected to assume responsibility for any expenses incurred.)
- If the child needs to go to the hospital and the parents cannot be reached, he/she will be transported to Shawnee Mission Hospital.
- A staff member will accompany the child to the hospital and take his/her file folder with them in case emergency care is needed.

Schedule

Arrival/Departure

Please do not arrive at Christots more than five minutes before your scheduled time of arrival, and please arrive promptly at departure time. It is very difficult for our teachers to supervise and care for children before and after class when they have other duties to perform. When arriving with your child please give hugs and goodbyes outside the classroom entrance. If you arrive after 8:30am when school has started please bring your child to the office and we will take them into the classroom. Please remember that Christots is a 'children's house' and even the presence of an adult just by his mere size can be a distraction to children working in the environment. Also, please help us keep our classrooms peaceful by speaking softly.

When leaving the school please ask your child to shake hands with their teacher. Not only does this reinforce a courtesy, but it also lets the teacher know that you are now in charge of his safety. Children must be accompanied by an adult during arrival and departure. During registration a Release Authorization Card is filled out by parents who list those persons other than parents who have permission to pick up the child. Release of your child to anyone not authorized by you will require written permission.

Parking Lot Safety

Our parking lot can be very crowded and active during peak drop off/pick up hours. To insure the safety of our children, please follow these guidelines:

- Please accompany your child into the building and make contact with a teacher before signing in.
- Please do not leave your car engine running while you take your child into the building, unless there is an adult in the car.
- Please do not leave younger siblings unattended in your car.
- Please make contact with your child's teacher or assistant before leaving with your child either through a handshake by your child, or a word of goodbye so that the adults involved knows that the responsibility for your child's safety has been transferred to you.
- Since some of our children can open the gate please keep your child with you at all times. Holding their hand can help further insure a safe departure.
- Please close the playground gate behind you as you leave.
- Please use a seat belt and/or car seat when transporting a child. As you know, state law requires the use of seat belts by all passengers, but the city ordinance is even more strict: Every child under the age of four, or weighing less than 40 pounds must be in a care seat and children over four years old must wear a seat belt.

Attendance

Parents are requested to see to it that their child(ren) arrive(s) on time. It is important that your child arrive on time to have the full benefit of the Montessori environment. If children arrive late, they are missing out on valuable class time. If the child arrives after class time has begun please check with the front desk for assistance.

Regular attendance and punctual arrival at school are two habits that dramatically impact student achievement. Absences and tardiness are disturbing to students, disrupt their schedules, require readjustment to the class routine, and slow down learning. Parents are urged to make every effort to schedule doctor, dentist, and other appointments for students at times outside the school day. This will reinforce the importance of school and will prevent the student from getting behind in his work.

In case of absence these procedures should be followed:

- A call to the school office to inform the school of the child's absence should be made as soon as possible. Our telephone number is 913-422-5684. Please leave a message if necessary.

Tardiness

The school day starts at 8:30am. A student is considered late if they are not signed in at the start of the school day. Late arrival not only is upsetting to our child but to the other children whose parents have made the effort to get their children to school on time.

Academics

Before children enter elementary school, they show an interest in writing letters. Parents often show their child how to write using block or capital letters. At Christots we use the Cursive Alphabet from the start. It is most helpful if you do the same at home – we have found old habits are hard to break.

No School Days

- In order to provide the children and staff much needed rest and to do building repairs and maintenance and classroom development, the school will be closed on various days throughout the year.
- See annual school calendar for No School Days.
- Tune into Channel 4 and 9 for snow closings. We do not close for cold days.

Sign-In and Sign-Out Procedure

- Signing your preschool or extended day elementary child in and out of Christots Montessori is required by the State of Kansas.
- Please put the time and your initials in the appropriate box next to your child's name.
- Children should go to a teacher to say hello and/or good-bye. This is a good lesson in manners and courtesy. The staff is then able to take note of which children have arrived or left for the day.
- Remember to check with a teacher if you have recommendations or concerns.

Pick-up Policy

Occasionally you may wish to arrange for someone other than yourself to pick up your son and/or daughter from school. We ask your cooperation in insuring a smooth pick-up of your child when this occurs by notifying the office via email or by phone.

Please:

- Notify the staff in writing or by phone that a different person will be picking up your child.
- Give the written notice to Administration.
- Prepare your child, if at all possible, ahead of time by letting them know that someone else will be picking them up.
- Have authorized person be prepared to show a picture I.D.

General Information

Animals

Our animal program is very important part of our school. We find that very few children have access to farm animals on a regular basis. Over the years we have had chickens, guinea hens, ducks, birds and rabbits. Our children help in the care and feeding of the animals. We also have indoor animals as well. Usually you will see rabbits, birds and fish.

Birthdays

Birthdays are an important celebration for our children. During the traditional Montessori celebration of life the child walks around a candle which represents the sun. Each trip around the "sun" represents one year of life. As the child circles the "sun" the teacher or parent says something special about events that occurred in the child's life during that year. The parent and child should write a sentence describing an event for each year of life. This should be accompanied by a photograph for each year as well.

Please do not bring treats. Instead, your child will make his own cake (with the assistance of his teacher) and serve it for the afternoon snack. Also, please visit with your teacher and ask what they would like for the classroom. Your child will un-wrap the gift, present it to the class and place it on the shelf.

Birthdays at school are not intended as the child's primary celebration, so please no party favors, balloons, hats, etc.

Any birthday invitations should be mailed to the family home to avoid hurt feelings.

Christots Montessori T-Shirts

T-shirts are always for sale. Check at the front office for price and size availably. Buy one yourself and show your support!

Clothing

Young children should come to school in clothing that is easy to slip on and off. We do not recommend belts, suspenders or overalls. For more peaceful play we ask that you do not send your child to school in clothing that encourages aggressive behavior. If you child wears an item that evokes aggression he will be asked to change it.

Children are required to have a change of clothes (including underwear and socks) in their cubbies at all times. Please **label** and keep the clothes in a zip lock baggie. It is your responsibility to make sure that clothes are replaced as needed.

To promote safety we encourage all students to wear closed toe shoes. Tennis shoes are recommended. Sandals, slippers and stacked heels are extremely distracting and often dangerous.

Please bring outdoor boots for muddy days and label them.

Cubbies, bags and file folders

Each child has a cubbie/bag and file folders located near the entrance to her classroom. It is for storing personal items such as her comb and brush, food stuff for cutting, or perhaps an item brought from home such as a book. As the child matures she will occasionally produce written work which may be found in the file folder at the end of the day; however, Montessori programs are not 'end-product' producing programs. The young child is much more interested in process rather than product. The product of a Montessori classroom is the child, not the written work she produces so do not rush to your child's file folder each day anticipating evidence of the work she has done. Most of the activities do not produce a piece of paper. So remember, an empty file folder does not mean that your child has had an empty day. Quite the contrary. Your child may have ironed 10 napkins, discovered which objects float in water, scrubbed a table, prepared her own snack and learned the phonetic sounds of four different letters. None of which would be reflected in the contents of her file folder. You will need to be patient as your child gradually reveals her newly acquired skills and knowledge. Observations, conferences and parent nights give you more information about your child's growth in the classroom.

Gifts and Giving at Christots

Christots Montessori School is funded by preschool tuition and donations. We are dependent on your gifts of time, talent and treasure to provide an outstanding educational experience for our children. Christots asks families for their financial support because together we can build a program comparable to the finest Montessori schools in the world.

By contributing to our school's financial health, we strengthen current programs, implement program enhancements and cover capital costs. Just as we've decided to make our children's education a priority, it is essential that we all understand the need to make regular giving a priority.

Every year, Christots Montessori families and friends are invited to participate in the annual fundraisers. As paid, these monies go directly into the operating budget. Participation does not impact enrollment. However, Christots must conduct a successful fundraising campaign to operate its current budget.

Field Trips

The school encourages field trips for five year olds to augment classroom studies at least two times a year. The amount and extent of the field trip depends on the age of the children. Notification in advance will be given to parents so they may sign a permission slip allowing the child to attend. If for any reason you do not wish your child to attend please inform the teacher as soon as possible and alternate arrangements will be made for the child the day of the trip. Field trips will vary in the summer and younger children will have at least two field trips to the nature center.

Car seats must be provided until the child is 40 pounds and is five years of age. Christots will not transport any child not meeting the above state requirements.

Footwear

Three types of footwear are required at Christots.

Slippers – are worn in the classrooms. Because we use our floor as a work surface, it is important to keep it as sanitary as possible. The slippers should be simple and functional (no cartoon characters allowed), easy for the child to put on and small enough to fit in our cabinets (ballet slippers, crocs). Please put your child's name on each slipper so that mix-ups do not occur. (Unnamed articles are automatically put in the lost and found at the end of the day.)

Shoes – which are easy for the child to put on and take off and which offer good support for the child's growing feet. For very young children, shoes with Velcro fasteners work best. Please do not send your child to school in cowboy /girl boots, suede hiking boots, or fancy patent leather pumps. High-top tennis shoes may only be worn by children who can easily put them on and take them off. When a child wears shoes that he can put on himself, his self-confidence increases.

Boots - are a necessity at Christots during wet and/or snowy weather. Please fit your child with boots that he can easily put on and pull off. Ones that must be pulled on over shoes are very difficult for children.

Lost and Found

Two baskets containing lost and found items are located at Christots, one upstairs and one downstairs. Please check these containers regularly especially during the winter months. Unclaimed articles are given to Goodwill.

Lunch/ Snack

Christots is a nut and pork free school. Lunch is a quiet, social time when good manners and polite conversation are encouraged. The children participate in setting the table, preparing for lunch and tidying up after lunch.

Each week the menu will be posted on the board at each entrance as well as on the website.

Fruit juices are 100% juice with no sugar added. Milk is 2% and water is always available. Please do not send candy or any food with high sugar content.

Education on good nutritional habits and the damage that sugar does to one's teeth is a part of the curriculum. Lunch time discussion frequently centers on the eating of food that is good for our bodies. Your child may be away from home for up to ten (10) hours during the day, and it is extremely important that the food which he consumes foster excellent growth and development. We serve milk with no hormones, real butter and whole grains.

We offer a nutritional snack of two food groups. Most often they include fresh fruits and vegetables. We only offer complex carbohydrates two times a week.

In Case of FIRE

- The signal to leave the building is a continuous blast by the alarm for several minutes.
- Children will follow the teacher out of the classroom to the back fence of playground.
- The Director and Administrator will check all rooms, then follow the classes out, and check the roll sheet, accounting for every person.
- The signal to return is given verbally to all groups.
- When safety has been established, the class returns.

A fire drill is given each month.

In Case of TORNADO

- Tornado drills are the first Wednesday of each month at 11am. At that time we will have a tornado drill.
- All children will be escorted to the basement until the all clear siren is given.

A tornado drill is given each month.

Mysterious Objects??

If perchance a piece of school equipment shows up at home, please send it back. Because all of our Montessori apparatus is imported, it is very expensive and difficult to duplicate. Some things that seem inconsequential are really an important part of the material best loved by your child, and, out of fascination, children often want to take a piece of Christots home with them. Please do not scold, or embarrass her. Just slip the object in an envelope and give it to a staff member.

Naps and Rest Time

Following lunch and recess there is an opportunity for children to nap or rest. Cots are available for any child needing to nap. A crib sheet and blanket should be labeled and provided to the class. Parents will be responsible for laundering the blanket the first of every month or if your child is ill. We encourage our younger children to rest daily so that a pleasant dinner time and evening can be enjoyed by each family. However, children who no longer need a nap are not requested to sleep and will enjoy an afternoon story time and quiet work time in the classroom instead. If a parent feels a daily nap is necessary for the child, please make your wishes known to the teacher.

Non-School Related Items at School

Experience has shown that toys are best left at home. There is always the possibility of a treasured toy being lost and/or broken at school. **Primary:** Do not send "sippy" cups or stuffed animals, as these tend to cause problems. Encourage your child to bring an educational book or objects from nature. None of these items should be brought to the playground. Please keep all TOYS at home.

Parent Meetings

Parent meetings are held throughout the school year. Our first gathering of the year is a Fall Potluck. This is followed by several parent nights which include 'Take Your Parent to School night' which provides an overview of the Montessori classroom materials and how the child works in the environment. New parents are required to attend the first two parent nights of the school year. All parents are encouraged to attend as many as possible throughout the year to get to know other families and their children.

Christots has a traditional Thanksgiving/Christmas Feast every year. The event is held at an off-site location. The children perform a Holiday program and everyone is invited to stay for a holiday feast. Parents volunteer to purchase and cook hams and turkeys as well as sides for the feast.

Christots has an organized PTA. The PTA meets once a month throughout the school year. All parents are encouraged to attend.

Outdoor Play

We go outside every day at Christots unless it is raining, snowing or extremely hot or cold. Children need outdoor exercise and the opportunity to expend energy. It is a good idea to leave a jacket at school because it is usually a few degrees cooler on the playground than in town.

Outside Rules

- Keep the woodchips or sand on the ground.
- One at a time on the monkey bars, left to right order facing the bars.
- Sit on picnic benches and chairs.
- Go down the slide on bottom only, feet first and only one at a time.
- No rough physical contact.
- Children need to park tricycles and wagons when they are finished.
- Gardening and yard tools are placed back in the shed when they are finished.
- Be respectful of nature.

Parent Participation/Volunteers

Parents are invited to participate in our program in a variety of ways. They are invited to help in the classroom on a regular basis or to come in and share a special interest or skill. Parents are often needed to go with students on fieldtrips. Twice a year we have a 'beautifying day' to help spruce up the grounds as well as inside the classroom. We also welcome

parents to share family cultural traditions throughout the year. Please contact your child's teacher with your level of interest.

Sharing

We do conduct a 'show and tell' session at our group times. Allowable items include flowers for the table, a carrot for the rabbit, specimens from nature, books and items from a vacation. Toys, dolls, money, candy, jewelry, cosmetics, gum or stickers should remain at home.

Suggestion Box

Have great ideas... insight? We would love to hear about it. Please place your suggestion in the Noah's Ark located by the front door in the downstairs room.

Swimming

Children five years and older attend swimming lessons given by the American Red Cross and swim once a week at the Shawnee Pool or beach in the summer. The younger children have a water play day at Christots.

Swimming gear includes a swimsuit (one piece only), a towel, a comb, and a pair of pool shoes (no flip flops unless they have a strap on the back). All items must be kept at Christots throughout the swim season except for laundering on Fridays.

Work Days

Parents are encouraged to participate in at least one or two workdays throughout the year to help improve the school environment. (Spring/Summer)

Tobacco Policy

By state law no person is allowed to possess any form of tobacco on school grounds, or in any vehicle while transporting children.

Visitor Regulations

All visitors must check in at the office. All parents visiting campus during school hours must check in at the office.

“The secret of good teaching is to regard the child's intelligence as a fertile field in which seeds may be sown, to grow under the heat of flaming imagination.”

Maria Montessori