

Welcome to Mount Madonna Preschool/Kindergarten

The goal of this handbook is to help orient you to the Mount Madonna Pre-school/Kindergarten. It contains information that relates solely to the Pre/K. It is meant to be a supplement to the All-school Parent Handbook which contains school wide policies, guidelines, calendars, tuition information, philosophy, etc. Please read both to be sure you are fully informed about your child's school. Keep it for future reference.

We want to ensure the very best experience for your child at the MMS Pre/K. We believe that each parent and child has a unique and valuable contribution to make. Your participation and feedback are invaluable.

Welcome!

Purpose, Philosophy and Goals

At Mount Madonna Pre-School/Kindergarten, we strive to provide a loving, safe and healthy learning environment where young children are nurtured and encouraged to develop at their own pace. We provide an environment designed to delight, intrigue, and stimulate the while child while developing multicultural awareness.

The child is our "curriculum". We strive to "educate" (from the Latin "educare" which means to bring forth).

We cultivate:

1. The child's imaginative and creative forces through storytelling, art, music, movement, dramatizations, and materials in the classroom.
2. The child's appreciation of aesthetic beauty through daily interaction with a surrounding environment that is expansive and rich in natural beauty, with nature hikes, forest adventures, and gardening activities. Inherent in this approach comes an increasing sense of respect and responsibility for the environment.
3. The child's innate social skills and sense of valuing self and others in a school community setting through the practice of conflict resolution activities and cooperative games and learning situations.
4. The child's thinking skills through the exploration of numbers and letters, free choice times, delving into the "scientific method" of observing, guessing, wondering and interacting. We ask many questions like, "What do you think would happen if...?", "Why is it that...?", and "How come...?"

We offer the opportunity for children to develop inner discipline through individual free choice in a developmentally and carefully prepared classroom environment.

We are committed to nurturing feelings of self-worth, confidence, and a growing independence within each child, building towards the realization that each person is responsible for his/her own actions.

We are committed to being educated by the children, their sense of wonder, joy, whole-hearted presence, spontaneity, fun, purity, and forgiveness topped with unconditional love.

Daily Schedule

8:50 am	Bus arrives/children are dropped off
9:00 – 9:30	Morning walk
9:30 am-10:45 am	Indoor time; this can include individual and/or group lessons, snack, free choice and circle times.
10:45 am-12:00 pm	Outdoor play time
12:00 pm-1:00 pm	Lunch time/free play
1:00 pm-1:45 pm	Rest time/quiet time; children who fall asleep may rest until 2:45 pm
1:45 pm-2:45 pm	Indoor time; this can include language arts, science activities, art, free choice, and a closing circle
2:50 pm-3:15 pm	Outdoor free play and snack
3:15 pm	Children leave school

Curriculum

We believe that children learn through play, practical life, experience, and observing and interacting with their environment. Our program offers a wide variety of experiences from which children can choose, which promote individual growth. Therefore, there are specially designated "individual free choice" times built into the daily curriculum to facilitate this important aspect of their growth. We're also encouraging group participation and cooperative activities. Many of the learning experiences are presented thematically through the arts, hands-on learning materials, circle times, holiday celebrations, and field trips. The lessons are presented to the children in four different styles: individually, in small groups, large groups, and as a whole group. Each child's needs are carefully considered when a lesson is introduced. Each child is individually assessed and will be challenged at that level.

Reading Readiness

As you know, there is a tremendous amount of pressure these days for young children to learn how to read in kindergarten, even in preschool. Although there is no doubt that many children can be taught to read at such a young age, there is a growing body of evidence that supports the wisdom of following the child's more natural inclination toward active play and exploration at this young age. These age appropriate experiences provide a strong framework of practical skills on which to build academically as the child grows older.

Mount Madonna School begins formal reading instruction in 1st grade. The Preschool/Kindergarten supports the child's natural progression to becoming readers by teaching the reading readiness skills that will assist them in this endeavor. The specific reading readiness skills that are taught in our classroom include exercises in visual discrimination (matching lessons in which the child progresses from the concrete to the abstract...for example, matching two objects that are the same, matching an object to a picture of the object, matching picture to picture, matching silhouettes, matching halves to wholes, etc.), working from left to right in lessons throughout the room, an introduction to the letters and their corresponding sounds, drawing journals, finger plays, songs, story telling and book time. We also provide opportunities for the child to explore books on his or her own or with a teacher. We provide the child with some basic tools for decoding and we employ "key words" in which the sight word approach is taught. Our classroom contains Montessori reading cards which help the child with blending simple three letter words and the ABC board which reinforces the initial consonant concept. In addition to these direct reading readiness teaching methods, our classroom has a strong music, movement, and dramatic arts program, all of which support the child's appreciation of sequence, repetition and symbolic representation. For the child that is

interested in learning to read or is already reading there are ample opportunities within the classroom for them to develop and practice these skills.

Writing

Children love to write! First though, the child needs the hand strength to hold the writing implement. This strength can be developed through painting, drawing with pencils, crayons, pens and markers, writing and drawing on chalkboards, working with clay, using pegboards, sorting objects, using scissors, clothespins, etc. anything that makes use of the "pincer" grasp which will facilitate the correct grip needed later on for successful letter formation.

Engaging the imagination through encouraging children to draw and paint and work with clay and the resulting stories from these pictures and creations helps to set the stage for the understanding of pictorial representation leading to the symbolic representation of our letter system that will ultimately support their fluency in expressing themselves.

When a child becomes interested in learning the alphabet we offer the child the **sounds** of the letters, and use **only lower case** letters in order not to cause later confusion.

Think about it. When a child learns capital letters, and the names of the letters she is not at all prepared to learn to read and write. Almost all writing and reading is of lower case letters, "b" instead of "B". The sounds are what we need to read. "Sss instead of "es" for the letter "s".

Therefore we suggest that as they begin writing letters they are encouraged to write in lower case, including their name (except, of course, for the beginning capital letter).

Learning capitals and names of letters, although taught first for many years, is what makes learning to read and write so difficult for children.

The most important thing to remember is to follow the child's interest and to keep learning natural and enjoyable.

Disciplinary Procedures

It is our belief that true discipline, to be real and lasting, must come from within. In the process of helping the children develop inner discipline, we offer them purposeful activity that calls to their need to learn and grow. We do this through educational manipulatives of various kinds: art, music, drama, movement, and many opportunities for play both inside and outside the classroom. Ultimately, this program helps to develop their concentration through "work/play" that is both purposeful and enjoyable. We believe that if the environment is appropriately prepared to truly meet the needs of the child, the question of discipline will be answered by the child him/herself.

However, there are many times when inappropriate behavior is displayed. Inappropriate, as it is used here, simply means disturbing other children, destructive or potentially dangerous handling of materials, and/or generally doing or saying anything that will cause harm to oneself, others, or the classroom environment. When this behavior occurs, we look for the underlying cause and use active listening or other conflict resolution techniques to help the child express the need and the problem. The teacher facilitates the child's effort to work out problems, get needs met, etc. We teach children to use words to express needs and wants and emphasize that children must respect the needs and wants of others. Furthermore, we explain the inappropriate behavior and remind him/her of the alternate appropriate behavior and/or redirect the child to some appropriate activity or material. If the behavior continues and the child won't or simply can't change the behavior, the inappropriate behavior and alternate

appropriate behavior are again explained and he/she is then directed to an area, apart from the rest of the children, for a "time-by-myself."

If this does not solve the problem behavior and the inappropriate behavior continues, or for serious cases of inappropriate behavior, the parents and administration are informed either by phone or by letter. A parent conference is then set up to discuss solutions to the problem. We believe that children should feel their teacher's concern about their well-being and that, with their parents, we are partners in their education.

Health Policies

In an effort to ensure a healthy environment for our children and in accordance with the County Health Department, the following health procedures will be enacted. Upon arrival at school, we will check the children to be sure no one has any communicative illness (ie: green mucus, excessive coughing, fever). If a child is found to be too ill to be at school, you will be notified and your child will be allowed to rest on a mat until you arrive to take him/her home.

Please make sure your child is in good health before sending him/her to school. This will help to protect both your child and the rest of the class. Thank you for your support in this matter.

Please note: your child should remain home if he/she has:

- Diarrhea or vomiting
- Fever
- A "bad" cold
- A constant cough
- Any contagious disease or virus (including pink eye & conjunctivitis)
- Any illness or injury which prohibits a child from actively participating in the program within the past 24 hours

Bus and Student Pick-up

We recommend sending a quiet activity for your child to do while riding on the bus. Sorry, no food or gum is allowed on the buses.

Children will always be put on their regularly scheduled bus unless there is a written note signed by the parent stating that there is a bus or ride change for that day. This is true for children that are picked up by parents as well. Again, if there is a change in the regular routine, there must be a note to verify this fact. If for some reason you do not know of the bus/ride change until later in the day, you may then call the Pre/K class at (408) 847-1128 and the school office at 847-2717 to inform us of the change.

Parents, please be on time when picking up children. Young children often become anxious when everyone else is leaving and they are left waiting for very long.

Communication

Once a week, parents will receive a large manila envelope with their child's name on it. Please take out the enclosures and the weekly newsflash and send only the envelope back to the school the very next day. Please do not send notes back to school in the envelope as the children don't usually check the envelope before putting them away. However, if there is something you would like to communicate, we will check the children's lunch boxes at lunch.

Our staff will send home a "newsflash" once a week to update you on our activities, themes, and events at school. We may also include parent education handouts.

Phoning the classroom:

It is often difficult for the teachers to leave the children to get to the phone. If we do not receive your call in the classroom at 847-1128, please call the school office at 847-2717 and leave a message, and they will deliver it to the teachers.

Conferences:

Formal parent/teacher conferences are scheduled once a year for preschool/kindergartners. You are also welcome to have phone conferences should the need arise.

Field Trips

Every year, we go on field trips off campus as well as visiting sites on the school campus. To ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for all participants, we maintain an extremely low student to chaperone ration. Therefore, if a field trip occurs on a day when your child does not usually attend school, he/she can come if you or another adult family member will chaperone the child(ren).

Parents' help is needed for all off-campus trips. Contact the class liaison if you're interested in chaperoning or driving.

Our field trips off campus often include a trip to:

- A pumpkin or apple ranch
- Either the Monterey Aquarium or a Museum

Our on-campus trips include:

- The Mt. Madonna Center
- Library
- Kitchen
- Garden
- Volleyball courts
- Basketball courts
- "Tipi" meadow
- Forest
- Firehouse
- Appropriate elementary, middle and/or high school productions in the Community Building

If you have an inspired idea for an age appropriate field trip, please feel free to make suggestions.

Parent Participation

Parents are encouraged and welcome to assist in the classroom. If you would like to help and have the time, please call us at (408) 847-1128.

Here are some ways you may participate:

- Pre-scheduled classroom helpers
- Donating materials
- Carpentry
- Cooking & Sewing
- Gardening and planting flowers
- Cleaning shelves
- Field trips
- Laundry (kitchen cloths, baking aprons)
- Repairing books and/or toys

- Joining a parent workday
- Cutting paper
- Painting
- Copying prepared art materials
- Helping out at special events
- Laminating classroom materials and/or binding class books

We also have a class liaison that supports the staff and provides communication between the school and parents. The class liaison is a parent who volunteers her time and energy to coordinate a plan of action and communication for their grade level. A phone tree is distributed at the beginning of each year to help facilitate this communication. The class liaison keeps herself informed of current calendar dates, information, and class activities as a resource for parents. The class liaison for your child's class will communicate with you at least once a month. Please feel free to call your class liaison if you have questions.

All parents are required to help with the Pre/K Class Sponsored event and the all school production of the "Ramayana" held at the end of the school year.

In addition to the above, parents can also help by volunteering in many other ways.

Volunteer Participation Guidelines

We welcome your assistance in the classroom. To make it a beneficial experience for all concerned, we ask that you follow a few guidelines.

1. Children should feel our presence, so be the "guide on the side rather than the sage from the stage."
2. When speaking to children, please do so positively, at eye level, and in conversational tones.
3. Please allow children to do as much as they can by themselves
4. Avoid making models for children to copy during art activities.
5. Try to state limits positively to children. For example, "Keep your hands in your lap" vs. "Don't yank his/her hair." If you have to limit a child with a "don't", also try to suggest a "do."
6. In situations of physical contact, ask the child's permission. For example, "Would you like a hug?" or "I see that you are hurt, can I pick you up?"
7. Communicate with the child(ren) positively and clearly concerning your physical boundaries. Also, to insure mutual respect, please tell the child(ren) if either their behavior or words are inappropriate. For example, "I want you to stop climbing on me." Or "It's not okay to talk to me like that."
8. Please consult with the teachers if a situation should arise and there's any doubt concerning how to handle it according to our school's philosophy or policy.

Preschool/Kindergarten Yearly Events

and

The Helpers and Materials Needed for Them

September

Back-to-School Night - refreshments, help setup

October

Field trip to the pumpkin farm - chaperones needed

Halloween Parade - helpers to assist children getting into costumes 9am

November

Pajama Day- helpers to assist with pancake making and clean up 9:00-noon

Thanksgiving Activities and Feast - helpers to assist children with crafts, help set up feast, and help clean up after feast 10:00-1:00

December

Holiday Present Making - ongoing through December....flexible times...helpers to assist children in preparing their holiday surprises for their family

Big Buddies/Little Buddies Holiday Cookie Decorating Day- helpers to supply children with icing and cookie sprinkles 2:30-3:20pm

Materials needed- butter cookie dough for 40 cookies the day before decorating day, sprinkles

Hanukah Celebration - helpers to bring in and prepare Hanukah dishes with the children, peanuts and dradles to play Hanukah games 10:00-noon

Holiday Activities and Feast - helpers to assist children with crafts, help set up feast, and help clean up after feast 10:00-1:00

January

Big Buddies/Little Buddies Bread Baking and Butter Making Day - helpers to assist children 2:30-3:20pm

Materials needed - heavy cream to make into butter

February

Cultural Awareness Unit begins - Topic T.B.A....Helpers needed to gather resources, provide and/or make costumes, help with production

Friendship Day/Red Day - please send up some *naturally* red food for children to share

Big Buddies/Little Buddies Valentine Cookie Decorating Day - helpers to supply children with icing and cookie sprinkles 2:30-3:20pm

Materials needed - butter cookie dough for 40 cookies the day before decorating day, sprinkles

March

Teddy Bear Day

April

Cultural Awareness Assembly

Fairy Day - Helpers to prep **before** fairy day -make small bags filled with fairy treasure such as flower seeds or something from nature....one for each child, paint horse shoes gold to be "unicorn shoes"....one for each child to find in the Magic Forest

Materials needed- thin 12" dowels and small wooden stars glue-gunned together to make fairy wands... one for each child to paint before Fairy Day, fairy decorations, special snack and juice to be left in Magic Forest for the children to find, flowers for decoration

Helpers needed to prepare classroom and Magic Forest before the children arrive on Fairy Day 7:30am or 8:00 -9:00am

Festival for the Environment - helpers needed to run child craft booths

May

Mother's Day Activities and Luncheon - berries, whipped cream

Father's Day Activities and Luncheon - berries, whipped cream

June

Pre/K Moving On Ceremony- helpers to prepare archway with flowers and greenery the night before or the morning of graduation, someone to sew small (3"x 5") pouches with drawstringone for each graduating kindergartener, helpers to assist with set up of end of year feast and help with clean up afterwards.

Ramayana! - details to com

Snacks & Nutrition

Two vegetarian snacks a day are provided for your child: one mid-morning and one in the latter part of the afternoon. If your child has any food allergies, please inform us in writing as well as in person. Two days a week, there are opportunities for the children to bake or cook their snack. During the morning snack, the children are independently getting their plates, serving themselves and cleaning up after themselves. This is a wonderful practical life experience in which they learn to care for themselves and the environment.

Snacks

In our efforts to offer our children high quality and nutritious snacks, afford them exposure to a wider variety of foods and to encourage their practical life skills of preparing, serving and "hosting" a snack, we are asking that you provide snack one day each month. (To make it easier we will send out a snack schedule.) We serve snack once each morning and once each afternoon. That would mean that when it is your turn you would be sending up enough for a morning as well as for an afternoon snack time for 21 children. Your child would work with the staff to help prepare it for the class, and then would help to serve it. He or she would be our 'host" that day. This would also give her/him (and the children) a chance to practice their manners-truly a Life Skills opportunity.

As we are a vegetarian community we ask that any food sent up to share be completely vegetarian. This includes snacks sent up for birthdays and potluck events. This means no ingredients including meat, chicken, fish, eggs or by-products of same. For baking, egg-replacer is available at most health food stores.

We are also learning more about the benefits, both to ourselves and to our earth, of organic products. We ask that whenever possible, you send up items which are organically produced.

We hope that you will join us, as well, in our efforts to refrain from serving our children any food containing artificial flavorings, colorings or preservatives. It has been discovered that many children are sensitive to these chemicals which may impair the child's ability to focus for successful learning to occur.

We ask that you include one item from each category for 21 children

1. organic whole grains (can be muffins, crackers, bread, rolls, bagels)
2. organic fruit (dried or fresh) or vegetables
3. vegetarian protein item: hummus, peanut butter, tofu, nuts, seeds, beans, cheese, yoghurt.

Children need to bring their own nutritious lunch. No candy, sodas or gum are allowed. There is no food sharing during lunch to ensure individual nutritional needs and personal hygiene. Please include a cloth napkin for them on which to put their lunch. We encourage the use of reusable containers for their snacks, sandwiches, and drinks. We also encourage the children to recycle. Thank you for your support in our efforts.

Holidays and Special Parent Days

We are a non-sectarian institution and celebrate a variety of holidays representative of our diverse cultural heritage. Special parent visiting times at school are:

- Back to School Night
- Halloween Parade
- Thanksgiving get together (potluck lunch)

- Christmas/Chanukah (potluck lunch)
- Mid-year Conference
- Winter Music Concert (evening)
- Spring music concert (evening)
- Open House (spring time)
- Your Child's Birthday
- "Moving On" ceremony at the end of the year

Dress Code

Because of the wide range of activities, it is recommended that children be dressed in washable, comfortable clothing.

Velcro and low-top sneakers work the best (please avoid thongs, sandals, patent leather shoes, and cowboy boots).

We encourage you to dress your child in clothes that they can manage themselves. This encourages their unfolding autonomy.

Please send in a labeled change of clothes and change it according to the seasons.

Raingear (boots and a jacket) is suggested for wet weather. Please do not send umbrellas; they can be somewhat dangerous at this age. In warm, sunny weather, please send a sunhat with your child. We have found that it is best to dress your child in layers as the weather up at MMS may be very different than "in town."

Sharing Time

This is a chance for your child to tell about something important to them and/or to share something from home. We will have "sharing days" as often as possible; however, this will not be every day. If your child wishes to bring something for sharing, we have some guidelines to follow:

- It should fit inside his/her backpack, as large items are difficult on the bus and won't fit in the cubbies.
- It must stay in the backpack except during sharing time. We don't allow play with toys from home during school time, as the item(s) may be lost, stolen, or broken.
- We encourage books and items that apply to our theme that month.
- ***We discourage superheroes, transformers, and Barbie-type dolls or action figures.***
- ***We do everything we can to promote non-violence in ourselves and the children. Therefore, no tow weapons or sharp objects which could be mistaken for weapons are allowed on campus. This includes: bows and arrows, guns, swords, spears, daggers, knives, etc. Also, we do not allow guns or any other form of weapon play at school.***

Birthdays

Children enjoy celebrating their own and each other's birthdays. Please let us know if you celebrate birthdays and if you'd like your child's birthday recognized at the school. If you would like to come, we will arrange a morning birthday circle. This is an opportunity to talk about how your child has changed or what special qualities you appreciate in him/her. Pictures of your child when he/she was younger can be shared as well. Parents may bring a snack to share as a special birthday treat if you wish.

Children who have summer birthdays will be honored at a special birthday circle at the end of the year. There's also a book list available should you choose to purchase a book for the class library in honor of your child's birthday.

Criteria for Continuation

Mount Madonna School's Kindergarten is a one to two year program, a program that most will finish in one year while others may finish in two. What that really means is that it's okay for a student to spend more than one year in the kindergarten group in order to develop the skills, attitude, and behaviors requisite of success in first grade. Parent need to trust that teachers will be sensitive to their child's individual needs and skills and be able to challenge their child to develop to his/her full capability, whether in the program for one or two years.

At the end of the first semester of the first kindergarten year, the staff will conference with every Kindergarten parent to answer questions and dialogue about the child's progress. If at this time the staff feels that the child is developmentally ready, the staff will advise of this. If it is felt that the child needs more time to develop the skills necessary for successful placement in first grade, the teacher and parents will then discuss an appropriate and individualized educational plan for their second year in our Kindergarten program. Because development is so individual, no final decisions will be made until the third quarter of the school year. In regards to issues of readiness and assessment, please know that we have the student's well-being at the heart of our decisions.

Mid-year conferences are also held for all preschool families, either in person or by phone. This is an opportunity to discuss your child's progress and development.

Quiet Time

At rest time, a few of the younger children go into the "little room" to nap while the rest of the children stay in the "big room." The nappers listen to a story, have their backs rubbed if they wish, and listen to quiet music. They sleep until they awake, or we get them up at 2:45 pm.

During the 45 minute period, the other children rest quietly on their mats, also having their backs rubbed if they wish and listen to quiet music. Towards the end of this time, the children are free to look at books on their mats.

Television

There is much to be said about the "miraculous" invention of television. However the presence of it in a young child's life can often be clearly experienced within the classroom. Its influence may be quite visible or more subtly perceivable: difficulty with attention, perseverance, initiative and rhythmical activity. The one area that is most in danger is the child's imagination, the ability to create one's own inner pictures. Here in the P/K program, we try, through the environment and all the activities, to cultivate the child's imagination for it is one of the vehicles for learning and growth.

We recognize that television/video watching is in the domain of the family and that each family must decide what role television/videos will play in its children's lives. However, we do encourage you to find alternatives to television/videos for your preschool/kindergarten child. We would be happy to share ideas with you. Please consider utilizing the same caution and careful discrimination when selecting movies, computer games and other "high tech" toys. What the preschool/kindergarten child needs is you; your voice, your song, your story, your time and attention, your warmth, your tears and your laughter.

Lost and Found

Please label your child's coats, sweatshirts, backpacks, lunch boxes, and boots. If, however, something does get lost, send us a note in your child's lunch box and we'll look for the item(s). Also, you are always welcome to check our lost and found at school. After a while (approximately one month), unlabeled or unclaimed articles will be put in our extra clothes bins or given to charity.

Licensing

The facility and program is licensed by:

State of California
Department of Social Services
Community Care Licensing
4030 Moorpark Ave., Suite 216
San Jose, CA 95117
Telephone: (408) 277 1286

The Department of Licensing Agency shall have the authority to interview children or staff, and to inspect and audit child or facility records without prior consent. The licensee shall make provisions for private interviews with any child(ren) or any staff member, and for the examination of all records relating to the operation of the facility. The Department or Licensing Agency shall have the authority to observe the physical condition of the child(ren), including conditions which could indicate abuse, neglect, or inappropriate placement, and to have a licensed medical professional physically examine the child(ren).

CHILD CARE CENTER NOTIFICATION OF PARENTS' RIGHTS

PARENTS' RIGHTS

As a Parent/Authorized Representative, you have the right to:

1. Enter and inspect the child care center without advance notice whenever children are in care.
2. File a complaint against the licensee with the licensing office and review the licensee's public file kept by the licensing office.
3. Review, at the child care center, reports of licensing visits and substantiated complaints against the licensee made during the last three years.
4. Complain to the licensing office and inspect the child care center without discrimination or retaliation against you or your child.
5. Request in writing that a parent not be allowed to visit your child or take your child from the child care center, provided you have shown a certified copy of a court order.

6. Receive from the licensee the name, address and telephone number of the local licensing office.

Licensing Office Name:	Dept of Social Services Childcare Licensing	
Licensing Office Address:	2580 N. 1st St. Suite 300 San Jose, CA 95131	
Licensing Office Telephone #:	(408) 324-2148	

7. Be informed by the licensee, upon request, of the name and type of association to the child care center for any adult who has been granted a criminal record exemption, and that the name of the person may also be obtained by contacting the local licensing office.
8. Receive, from the licensee, the Caregiver Background Check Process form.

NOTE: CALIFORNIA STATE LAW PROVIDES THAT THE LICENSEE MAY DENY ACCESS TO THE CHILD CARE CENTER TO A PARENT/AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE IF THE BEHAVIOR OF THE PARENT/AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE POSES A RISK TO CHILDREN IN CARE.

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(Detach Here - Give Upper Portion to Parents)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF NOTIFICATION OF PARENTS' RIGHTS (Parent/Authorized Representative Signature Required)

I, the parent/authorized representative of _____, have received a copy of the "CHILD CARE CENTER NOTIFICATION OF PARENTS' RIGHTS" and the CAREGIVER BACKGROUND CHECK PROCESS form from the licensee.

Name of Child Care Center

Signature (Parent/Authorized Representative)

Date

NOTE: This Acknowledgement must be kept in child's file and a copy of the Notification given to parent/authorized representative.

PERSONAL RIGHTS

Child Care Facilities

Personal Rights, See Section 101223 for waiver conditions applicable to Child Care Centers.

- (a) Child Care Facilities. Each child receiving services from a child care facility shall have rights which include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - (1) To be accorded dignity in his/her personal relationships with staff and other persons.
 - (2) To be accorded safe, healthful and comfortable accommodations, furnishings and equipment to meet his/her needs.
 - (3) To be free from corporal or unusual punishment, infliction of pain, humiliation, intimidation, ridicule, coercion, threat, mental abuse, or other actions of a punitive nature, including but not limited to: interference with daily living functions, including eating, sleeping, or toileting; or withholding of shelter, clothing, medication or aids to physical functioning.
 - (4) To be informed, and to have his/her authorized representative, if any, informed by the licensee of the provisions of law regarding complaints including, but not limited to, the address and telephone number of the complaint receiving unit of the licensing agency and of information regarding confidentiality.
 - (5) To be free to attend religious services or activities of his/her choice and to have visits from the spiritual advisor of his/her choice. Attendance at religious services, either in or outside the facility, shall be on a completely voluntary basis. In child care facilities, decisions concerning attendance at religious services or visits from spiritual advisors shall be made by the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the child.
 - (6) Not to be locked in any room, building, or facility premises by day or night.
 - (7) Not to be placed in any restraining device, except a supportive restraint approved in advance by the licensing agency.

THE REPRESENTATIVE/PARENT/GUARDIAN HAS THE RIGHT TO BE INFORMED OF THE APPROPRIATE LICENSING AGENCY TO CONTACT REGARDING COMPLAINTS, WHICH IS:

NAME	Dept of Social Services		
	Childcare Licensing		
ADDRESS	2580 N. 1st St. Suite 300		
	San Jose, CA 95131		
CITY	(408) 324-2148	ZIP CODE	AREA CODE/TELEPHONE NUMBER

DETACH HERE

TO: PARENT/GUARDIAN/CHILD OR AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE:

PLACE IN CHILD'S FILE

Upon satisfactory and full disclosure of the personal rights as explained, complete the following acknowledgment:

ACKNOWLEDGMENT: I/We have been personally advised of, and have received a copy of the personal rights contained in the California Code of Regulations, Title 22, at the time of admission to:

(PRINT THE NAME OF THE FACILITY)	(PRINT THE ADDRESS OF THE FACILITY)
(PRINT THE NAME OF THE CHILD)	
(SIGNATURE OF THE REPRESENTATIVE/PARENT/GUARDIAN)	
(TITLE OF THE REPRESENTATIVE/PARENT/GUARDIAN)	(DATE)

PHYSICIAN'S REPORT—CHILD CARE CENTERS (CHILD'S PRE-ADMISSION HEALTH EVALUATION)

PART A – PARENT'S CONSENT (TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENT)

_____, born _____ is being studied for readiness to enter
(NAME OF CHILD) (BIRTH DATE)
_____. This Child Care Center/School provides a program which extends from ____ : ____
(NAME OF CHILD CARE CENTER/SCHOOL)
a.m./p.m. to _____ a.m./p.m. , _____ days a week.

Please provide a report on above-named child using the form below. I hereby authorize release of medical information contained in this report to the above-named Child Care Center.

(SIGNATURE OF PARENT, GUARDIAN, OR CHILD'S AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE)

(TODAY'S DATE)

PART B – PHYSICIAN'S REPORT (TO BE COMPLETED BY PHYSICIAN)

Problems of which you should be aware:

Hearing: _____ Allergies: medicine: _____
Vision: _____ insect stings: _____
Developmental: _____ food: _____
Language/Speech: _____ asthma: _____
other: _____

Other (Include behavioral concerns): _____

Comments/Explanations: _____

MEDICATION PRESCRIBED/SPECIAL ROUTINES/RESTRICTIONS FOR THIS CHILD: _____

IMMUNIZATION HISTORY: (Fill out or enclose California Immunization Record, PM-298.)

VACCINE	DATE EACH DOSE WAS GIVEN				
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
POLIO (OPV OR IPV)	/ /	/ /	/ /	/ /	/ /
DTP/DTaP/ DT/Td (DIPHTHERIA, TETANUS AND [ACELLULAR] PERTUSSIS OR TETANUS AND DIPHTHERIA ONLY)	/ /	/ /	/ /	/ /	/ /
MMR (MEASLES, MUMPS, AND RUBELLA)	/ /	/ /			
(REQUIRED FOR CHILD CARE ONLY)					
HIB MENINGITIS (HAEMOPHILUS B)	/ /	/ /	/ /	/ /	
HEPATITIS B	/ /	/ /	/ /		
VARICELLA (CHICKENPOX)	/ /	/ /			

SCREENING OF TB RISK FACTORS (listing on reverse side)

- Risk factors not present; TB skin test not required.
- Risk factors present; Mantoux TB skin test performed (unless previous positive skin test documented).
___ Communicable TB disease not present.

I have have not reviewed the above information with the parent/guardian.

Physician: _____
Address: _____
Telephone: _____

Date of Physical Exam: _____
Date This Form Completed: _____
Signature _____

Physician Physician's Assistant Nurse Practitioner

MOUNT MADONNA PRESCHOOL/KINDERGARTEN

Admissions Agreement

Program Activities

The goal of Mount Madonna Preschool/Kindergarten is to provide a nurturing, safe environment in which children between the ages of 3 and 6 can develop and grow to their full potential as physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually balanced individuals. Appropriate learning activities are offered to promote this growth. Children learn social skills through group interaction and adult guidance. The child's *carefully prepared* environment provides meaningful experiences in helping our students to develop age appropriate skills in all areas. This environment is enriched by Montessori and other developmental principles and materials that stimulate and guide the children throughout their development. The program includes five main avenues of development: sensorial, language, mathematics, motor development, and creative arts.

Two-Year Kindergarten

In preparation for elementary education, Mount Madonna School has a kindergarten program which some children might finish in one year while others will finish in two years. A main advantage of this program is that it allows each child to develop at his or her individual rate and does not tie elementary entry to a fixed birth date. Admission into the kindergarten class will be based on age AND the child's development and skills at the time of application to the program. This will necessarily involve parent input, input from any pre-school or other program the child has previously attended, and our own professional appraisal of the appropriate placement. The evaluation process for each child will be individually based, i.e., individual readiness, maturity and development.

Eligibility

- Mount Madonna Preschool accepts children from the ages of 3 to 6 years.
- We accept children with physical or other limitations on an individual basis, contingent on our ability to meet their needs.
- We accept subsidized payments from Social Service Agencies.
- Children should be toilet trained to qualify for admission.
- We maintain a policy of non-discrimination regarding race, creed, color, sex, sexual preference, national origin or handicaps.
- We reserve the right to refuse service to anyone not respecting the school or failing to abide by its policies.

Enrollment

- All registration forms and fees must be returned before a child may attend school.
- Enrollment requires filling out an emergency information card, a health history, an immunization record, and records from any previous schools. We are also required to have a physician's report on the health of your child and signed documents pertaining to our state licensing.
- Parents must update any and all changes that may occur regarding the above information including phone numbers, emergency contacts, custody situations, etc. This information is vital in offering a secure environment for the children.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

CAREGIVER BACKGROUND CHECK PROCESS CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

The California Department of Social Services works to protect the safety of children in child care by licensing child care centers and family child care homes. Our highest priority is to be sure that children are in safe and healthy child care settings. California law requires a background check for any adult who owns, lives in, or works in a licensed child care home or center. Each of these adults must submit fingerprints so that a background check can be done to see if they have any history of crime. If we find that a person has been convicted of a crime other than a minor traffic violation, he/she cannot work or live in the licensed child care home or center unless approved by the Department. This approval is called an exemption.

A person convicted of a crime such as murder, rape, torture, kidnapping, crimes of sexual violence or molestation against children **cannot by law be given an exemption that would allow them to own, live in or work in** a licensed child care home or center. If the crime was a felony or a serious misdemeanor, the person must leave the facility while the request is being reviewed. If the crime is less serious, he/she may be allowed to remain in the licensed child care home or center while the exemption request is being reviewed.

How the Exemption Request is Reviewed

We request information from police departments, the FBI and the courts about the person's record. We consider the type of crime, how many crimes there were, how long ago the crime happened and whether the person has been honest in what they told us.

The person who needs the exemption must provide information about:

- The crime
- What they have done to change their life and obey the law
- Whether they are working, going to school, or receiving training
- Whether they have successfully completed a counseling or rehabilitation program

The person also gives us reference letters from people who aren't related to them who know about their history and their life now.

We look at all these things very carefully in making our decision on exemptions. By law this information cannot be shared with the public.

How to Obtain More Information

As a parent or authorized representative of a child in licensed child care, you have the right to ask the licensed child care home or center whether anyone working or living there has an exemption. If you request this information, and there is a person with an exemption, the child care home or center must tell you the person's name and how he or she is involved with the home or center and give you the name, address, and telephone number of the local licensing office. You may also get the person's name by contacting the local licensing office. You may find the address and phone number on our website. The website address is <http://cclid.ca.gov/docs/maps/state.htm>

Make sure that your children know you want to be told about someone who does something confusing to them, like touching, or giving them gifts. Reassure your child and explain they will not be blamed for whatever an adult does to them.

Choosing a Preschool, Child Care Center or Family Daycare

Although the vast majority of this nation's preschools, child care centers and family daycare centers are perfectly safe, recent reports of child sexual abuse in these settings are a source of great concern.

- Find out if the program is reputable and whether any complaints have been made by contacting the State Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division, child care information and referral services or other child care community agencies.
- Find out as much as you can about the teachers and caretakers. Talk to other parents who have used the program.
- Learn about the school's or center's hiring policies and practices. Ask how the organization recruits and selects staff. Find out whether they examine references and employment histories before hiring decisions are made.
- Ask if the center or school welcomes and supports parental participation. Be sensitive to the attitude and degree of openness about such participation.
- Make sure you have the right to drop in and visit the program at any time.
- Make sure you are informed about every planned outing. Never give the organization blanket permission to take your child off the premises.
- Prohibit, in writing, the release of your child to anyone without your explicit authorization. Make sure the program knows who will pick up your child on any given day.



Courtesy of

Office of Criminal Justice Planning
1130 K Street, Suite 300, Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 324-9100

For more information on this program in your community, contact:

**CHILD
SEXUAL
ABUSE
PREVENTION**

**TIPS TO
PARENTS**

OFFICE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE PLANNING



STATE OF CALIFORNIA
PETE WILSON
GOVERNOR

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
PETE WILSON
GOVERNOR

RecHB/Sec8Forms/SexAbusePrev/L303

Listen and Talk With Your Children

Good communication between you and your children is the most important way to keep them safe from sexual abuse. A trusting and loving relationship creates a climate in which children are not afraid to confide in their parents. This may be difficult, especially for working parents and parents of adolescents.

- Talk to your children every day and take time to listen and observe. Learn as many details as possible about your children's activities and feelings. Encourage them to share their concerns.
- Explain to your children that they have the right to say no to anyone who might try to touch them.
- Tell your children that some adults may try to hurt them or make them do things they do not feel comfortable doing. Often these adults tell children to keep what they are doing a secret.
- Explain that some adults may even threaten children by saying their parents will be hurt if the children ever tell the secret. Tell your children that an adult who does this is wrong.
- Tell your children that some adults they know, trust and love (such as a friend, a babysitter, a relative or a teacher) might try to touch them inappropriately. Try not to scare your children. Tell them that most adults never do this and are deeply concerned about protecting children from harm.

Safety Rules Start Early

- Children are taught how to cross the street, not to play with matches, and water safety. Precautions about sexual abuse can and should be included in these general discussions.
- Information can be introduced as early as age two. Even young children can understand these concepts.
- Children, provided with accurate information at an early age, can learn to avoid or stop sexual advances. An unprepared child may be too confused or ashamed even to admit an assault has taken place.

Finally, do not blame yourself. Sexual abuse is a fact in our society. Many individuals who molest children find work or are involved in community activities which give them access to children. The vast majority of abuse occurs in situations where the child knows and trusts the adult. Remember, a community and national consciousness is needed before we can stamp out sexual molestation.

If You Think Your Child Has Been Abused . . .

- Believe the child. Children rarely lie about sexual abuse.
- Commend the child for telling you about the experience.
- Assure the child that you will protect him or her.
- Express your support for the child. Children's greatest fear is that they are at fault and responsible for the incident. Helping your child remove self-blame is of paramount importance.
- Recognize that your acceptance is important to the child. Control your own reaction. Do not express your horror about the abuse.
- Do not go to the school or program where your child says something happened to talk about your concern. Instead, report the suspected abuse to a social services agency and/or the police.
- Find a specialized agency that evaluates sexual abuse victims—a hospital, child welfare agency, community mental health program or child abuse treatment center. Keep asking until you find a group or an individual with appropriate knowledge to assist you.
- Search for a physician with the experience and training to detect and recognize sexual abuse when you seek a medical examination. Community sexual abuse treatment programs, children's hospitals and medical societies may be sources for referrals.
- Talk with other parents to ascertain if their children exhibit unusual behavior or physical symptoms.
- Remember that taking action is important because other children will continue to be at risk if nothing is done. Child sexual abuse is a community concern.

- Teach your children what touches are good and what touches are bad. Discuss the fact that touches may be confusing at times, and they may not be sure if the touches are good or bad.

• Teach children a basic working vocabulary for parts of the body.

- Begin discussions slowly and clarify the child's understanding of words. Children's concepts can be very different from adults. Answer questions fully for the age level of the child.
- Problem-solving games, story telling and role playing are ways to talk to children.
- At a minimum, children should be taught to say no, to run away and tell a trusted adult, and to keep telling until someone helps them. Discuss with them whom they can trust.

Observe Physical and Behavioral Signs

Children who are too frightened to talk about sexual molestation may exhibit a variety of physical and behavioral signals. Parents are responsible for noticing symptoms of abuse. Any of these signs are significant:

- Changes in behavior such as withdrawal, fearful-ness, crying without provocation.
- Appetite disturbances.
- Recurrent nightmares, disturbed sleep patterns or fear of the dark.
- Returning to more infantile behavior such as bedwetting, thumb sucking or excessive crying.
- Torn or stained underclothing.
- Vaginal or rectal bleeding, pain, itching, swollen genitals, vaginal discharge or sexually transmitted diseases.
- Unusual interest in or knowledge of sexual matters, expressing affection in ways inappropriate for a child of that age.
- Fear of a person or an intense dislike at being left somewhere or with someone.
- Other behavioral signals such as aggressive or disruptive behavior, running away, failing in school or delinquent behavior.



491 Summit Road * Watsonville * CA 95076 * 408.847.2717 * Fax 408.847.5633
Email - school@mountmadonna.org * www.MountMadonnaSchool.org

Dear Parents/Guardians,

As you may know know, the Mount Madonna Preschool/Kindergarten is a state licensed facility, and is also accredited by CAIS. Per our licensing, we need to receive the following documents before he/she can start school at Mount Madonna:

- Parent Signature - Cover Letter (this page)
- Child Care Center Notification of Parents' Rights
- Personal Rights
- Physicians Report – Child Care Centers (signed by a parent **and** physicians' office)

We are also providing the following forms to you. We ask that you please read them, but they do not need to be returned:

- Preschool/Kindergarten Admissions Agreement
- Preschool/Kindergarten Program Statement
- Child Abuse Prevention pamphlet
- Caregiver Background Check Process
- Pre/K Handbook

We have a sign-in/sign-out policy for your child. If you are not bringing your child in person and wish to designate the MMS staff members as "responsible" people to sign your child in and out, please designate and sign and date the section "A" below.

We are also required to post the children's snack schedule one week in advance for public preview. We will need to know what snacks you will be sending and we will contact you ahead of time to receive that information so that we can post this both in our weekly newsflash and on our snack area wall inside the classroom so as to comply with this licensing requirements.

Thank you for your support in this. We strive to continue making our environment educational, fun-filled and safe so all can enjoy peace of mind, knowing that each child's well-being is conscientiously tended.

With Love,
Sarojani and Staff

A) If I do not bring my child in person, I designate any member of the MMS Pre/K staff to sign-in and/or sign-out my child from school.

Parent's Signature _____ Date _____

B) I have read and understand the above statements and enclosed forms.

Parents' Names (printed) _____

Childs Name (printed) _____

Parent's Signature _____ Date _____

MMS Preschool/Kindergarten Program Statement

Mt. Madonna School's Preschool/Kindergarten program exists within a combined classroom of children between the ages of 3 and 6 years old. It is our experience that by three years of age, a child often has the verbal and social skills needed to function successfully in our type of classroom situation. Children who will turn three years old by September 1st will be considered for admission with the first prerequisites being that they are toilet trained and are verbal enough to express themselves (ie: their wants and needs). The next questions concerning "readiness" for our program are in regards to their ability to understand and be able to follow age-appropriate directions and to interact positively with the other children, the materials and the teachers.

Children who turn five years old by September 1st are eligible for acceptance into our Kindergarten program. (Those born after September 1st may be accepted into the preschool program.) Mount Madonna School's Kindergarten is a one- to two-year program, a program that some will finish in one year while others will finish in two. Each child is truly unique and will develop guided by their own internal biological and mental time clocks.

What this really means is that it's okay for a student to spend more than one year in the Kindergarten group in order to develop the skills, attitude and behaviors requisite of success in first grade. In the second Kindergarten year, the learning will necessarily be on a higher level. Parents need to trust that teachers will be sensitive to their child's individual needs and skills and be able to challenge their child to develop to his/her full capability, whether in the program for one or two years.

At the end of the first semester of the first Kindergarten year, the staff will conference with every Kindergarten parent to answer questions and to dialogue about the child's progress. If at this time, the staff feels that a child is acquiring the social and academic prerequisites for first grade and is developmentally ready, the staff will advise parents of this. If it is felt that the child needs more time to develop the skills necessary for a successful placement in first grade, the teachers and parents will then discuss an appropriate and individualized educational plan for their second year in our Kindergarten program. Because development is so individual, no final decisions will be made until the third quarter of the school year. In regards to issues of readiness and assessment, please know that we have the student's well-being at the heart of our decisions.

Welcome to Mount Madonna Preschool/Kindergarten

The goal of this handbook is to help orient you to the Mount Madonna Preschool/Kindergarten. It contains information that relates solely to the Pre/K. It is meant to be a supplement to the All-school Parent Handbook which contains school wide policies, guidelines, calendars, tuition information, philosophy, etc. Please read both to be sure you are fully informed about your child's school. Keep it for future reference.

We want to ensure the very best experience for your child at the MMS Pre/K. We believe that each parent and child has a unique and valuable contribution to make. Your participation and feedback are invaluable.

Welcome!

Purpose, Philosophy and Goals

At Mount Madonna Pre-School/Kindergarten, we strive to provide a loving, safe and healthy learning environment where young children are nurtured and encouraged to develop at their own pace. We provide an environment designed to delight, intrigue, and stimulate the whole child while developing multicultural awareness.

The child is our "curriculum" whom we strive to educate (from the Latin "educare" which means to bring forth).

We cultivate:

1. The child's imaginative and creative forces through storytelling, art, music, movement, dramatizations, and materials in the classroom.
2. The child's appreciation of aesthetic beauty through daily interaction with a surrounding environment that is expansive and rich in natural beauty, with nature hikes, forest adventures, and gardening activities. Inherent in this approach comes an increasing sense of respect and responsibility for the environment.
3. The child's innate social skills and sense of valuing self and others in a school community setting through the practice of conflict resolution activities and cooperative games and learning situations.
4. The child's thinking skills through the exploration of numbers and letters, free choice times, delving into the scientific method of observing, guessing, wondering and interacting. We encourage asking many questions about what if, why, and how.

We offer the opportunity for children to develop inner discipline through individual free choice in a developmentally and carefully prepared classroom environment.

We are committed to nurturing feelings of self-worth, confidence, and a growing independence within each child, building towards the realization that each person is responsible for his/her own actions.

We are committed to being educated by the children, their sense of wonder, joy, whole-hearted presence, spontaneity, fun, purity, and forgiveness topped with unconditional love.

Daily Schedule

8:50 am	Bus arrives/children are dropped off
9:00 – 10:00	Morning walk/ Circle time
10:00 am- 11:15 am	Indoor time; this includes individual and group lessons, snack and individual free choice.
11:15 am-12:00 pm	Outdoor play time
12:00 pm-1:00 pm	Lunch time/free play
1:00 pm-2:00 pm	Rest time/quiet time; children who fall asleep may rest until 2:45 pm
2:00 pm-2:55 pm	Indoor time; this includes art, free choice, and a closing circle
2:55 pm-3:15 pm	Snack and outdoor free play
3:15 pm	Children leave school

Curriculum

We believe that children learn through play, practical life experience, and observing and interacting with their environment. Our program offers a wide variety of experiences from which children can choose which promote individual growth. Therefore, there are specially designated individual free choice times built into the daily curriculum to facilitate this important aspect of their growth. We also encourage group participation and cooperative activities. The learning experiences are presented thematically through the arts, hands-on learning materials, circle times, holiday celebrations, and adventures around our beautiful campus. The lessons are presented to the children in four different styles: individually, in small groups, large groups, and as a whole group. Each child's needs are carefully considered when a lesson is introduced. Each child is individually assessed and will be challenged at that level.

Reading Readiness

There is a tremendous amount of pressure these days for young children to learn how to read in kindergarten, even in preschool. Although there is no doubt that many children can be taught to read at such a young age, there is a growing body of evidence that supports the wisdom of following the child's more natural inclination toward active play and exploration at this young age. These age appropriate experiences provide a strong framework of practical skills on which to build academically as the child grows older. Mount Madonna School begins formal reading instruction in 1st grade. The Preschool/Kindergarten supports the child's natural progression to becoming readers by teaching the reading readiness skills that will assist them in this endeavor.

Writing

Children love to write, but first they need the hand strength to hold the writing implement. This strength is developed in our classroom through practical life experiences such as painting, drawing with pencils and crayons, writing and drawing on chalkboards, working with clay and play dough, sorting objects, and using scissors, clothespins, tongs etc., anything that makes use of the pincer grasp which will facilitate the correct grip needed later on for successful letter formation.

Engaging the imagination through encouraging children to draw and paint and work with clay and the resulting stories from these pictures and creations helps to set the stage for the understanding of pictorial representation leading to the symbolic representation of our letter system that will ultimately support their fluency in expressing themselves.

When a child becomes interested in learning the alphabet we offer the child the sounds of the letters, and use only lower case letters in order not to cause later confusion. The sounds are what we teach to read, for example “Sss” instead of “es” for the letter “s”.

Therefore we suggest that as they become interested in writing letters at home they are encouraged to write in lower case, including their name (except, of course, for the beginning capital letter).

The most important thing to remember is to follow the child’s interest and to keep learning natural and enjoyable.

In addition to the above activities, **the kindergarten curriculum includes:**

1. Character Development and Service Learning

The principal of positive character development is interwoven throughout the kindergarten curriculum. Our dynamic program offers many opportunities for the children to hone their social-emotional skills and gain the confidence and sense of self worth that provide a solid foundation to grow upon. Throughout our days the children are guided through the conflict resolution skills of expressing their ideas and feelings and listening to the ideas and feelings of others. Self regulation and personal awareness are cultivated through activities such as taking calming breaths and short mindfulness moments. Before enjoying snack together we take a moment to offer a song of gratitude. Circle time and group lessons provide opportunities for the children to develop the skills of active listening, turn taking and idea sharing. Literature, storytelling and discussions provide a venue for the children’s exposure to positive values and different ways of living in the world. An attitude of reverence for the natural world is fostered by spending plenty of time exploring our beautiful outdoor campus. The children compost and recycle in our classroom and partner with our 5th grade big buddies in their yearly service learning environmental project and campus clean ups.

2. Language Arts

Our kindergarten language arts program provides the children with the reading readiness skills needed for academic success through imaginative, hands-on and creative pursuits. Through seasonal songs, finger plays, rhymes and circle time games the children explore language and gain phonemic awareness in an auditory and kinesthetic venue. Through daily story time and weekly story circle the children are exposed to new ideas and vocabulary while gaining the skills of verbal comprehension and sequencing. The building blocks of the abc’s are taught through our weekly Sound Book lesson where the sounds are explored through story, movement and art. Weekly entries in their Drawing Journals, as well as the many seasonal books that they create, help the children to associate the written word with its corresponding image and allow them the pleasure of reading their own books. The fine motor skills needed to learn how to write are supported through the beautiful Montessori lessons that cultivate visual discrimination, movement from left to right and hand-eye coordination.

3. Math

Our kindergarten math program provides the children with an introduction to basic mathematical concepts through hands-on and engaging activities. The children explore a number each week utilizing story, movement and art as they create their own Golden Number counting book. They practice the formation of each number by tracing the number on sandpaper, drawing the number in sand, writing the number with a pencil on a number strip and forming the number out of bread dough that is then baked and enjoyed. The skills of number sense and mathematical reasoning are taught with the beautiful manipulatives found in our Montessori math lessons. These lessons cover one to one correspondence, an introduction to addition and

subtraction, working with teen numbers, counting by tens up to 100 and on the hour time telling. The children are introduced to the basic geometric shapes by working with metal insets and pattern blocks. Group math lessons cover graphing, patterns, measurement and estimation.

4. Science

Our kindergarten science curriculum utilizes our rich outdoor environment. Life science is introduced through the study of plants and animals that can be found in close proximity to our classroom during regular science walks. The children observe and note changes to fruit trees, wheat, local grasses and various animals noticing their similarities and differences in addition to their growth patterns. The children also complete life cycle books that illustrate this process. Physical science allows the children to use their senses to actively make predictions about elements while noticing qualities such as sinking and floating during hands-on experiments. Earth science gives the children greater appreciation of their local ecosystem through the study of weather and seasonal changes in addition to land and water formations. Through investigation and experimentation with field trips and activities as baking, oobleck and volcano making, the children gain a greater understanding and appreciation for our natural world.

5. Social Studies

Our kindergarten social studies program provides a foundation for the children to see themselves in the broader context of a community and cultivates in them a sense of global citizenship. Through stories, songs and shared experiences the children express and share who they are and, in turn, learn from their similarities and differences. Every year the children engage in an in depth study of a different culture. The year's culture is explored through food preparation, art, science, bookmaking, storytelling, music, dance and literature culminating in a performance in our Cultural Awareness assembly. Through this study the children gain an understanding of the universal similarities between all people and the differences that make each person unique.

Disciplinary Procedures

It is our belief that true discipline, to be real and lasting, must come from within. In the process of helping the children develop inner discipline, we offer them purposeful activity that calls to their need to learn and grow. We do this through educational manipulatives of various kinds: art, music, drama, movement, and many opportunities for play both inside and outside the classroom. Ultimately, this program helps to develop their concentration through work/play that is both purposeful and enjoyable. We believe that if the environment is appropriately prepared to truly meet the needs of the child, the question of discipline will be answered by the child.

However, there are times when inappropriate behavior is displayed. Inappropriate, as it is used here, simply means disturbing other children, destructive or potentially dangerous handling of materials, and/or generally doing or saying anything that will cause harm to oneself, others, or the classroom environment. When this behavior occurs, we look for the underlying cause and use active listening or other conflict resolution techniques to help the child express the need and the problem. The teacher facilitates the child's effort to work out problems or to have their needs addressed. We teach children to use words to express needs and wants and emphasize that children must respect the needs and wants of others. Furthermore, we explain the inappropriate behavior and remind him/her of the alternate appropriate behavior and/or redirect the child to some appropriate activity or material. If the behavior continues and the child will not or simply cannot change the behavior, the inappropriate behavior and alternate appropriate behavior are again explained and he/she is then brought by the teacher to an area apart from the rest of the children to take a break.

If this does not solve the problem behavior and the inappropriate behavior continues, or for serious cases of inappropriate behavior, the parents and administration are informed either by phone or by letter. A parent conference is then set up to discuss solutions to the problem. We believe that children should feel their teacher's concern about their well-being and that, with their parents, we are partners in their education.

Health Policies

In an effort to ensure a healthy environment for our children and in accordance with the County Health Department, the following health procedures will be enacted. Upon arrival at school, we will check the children to be sure no one has any communicative illness (ie: green mucus, excessive coughing, fever). If a child is found to be too ill to be at school, you will be notified and your child will be allowed to rest on a mat until you arrive to take him/her home.

Please make sure your child is in good health before sending him/her to school. This will help to protect both your child and the rest of the class. Thank you for your support in this matter.

Please note: your child should remain home if he/she has:

- **Diarrhea or vomiting**
- **Fever**
- **A "bad" cold**
- **A constant cough**
- **Any contagious disease or virus (including pink eye & conjunctivitis)**
- **Any illness or injury within the past 24 hours which prohibits a child from actively participating in the program**

Bus and Student Pick-up

We recommend sending a quiet activity for your child to do while riding on the bus. Sorry, no food or gum is allowed on the buses.

Children will always be put on their regularly scheduled bus unless there is a written note signed by the parent stating that there is a bus or ride change for that day. This is true for children that are picked up by parents as well. Again, if there is a change in the regular routine, there must be a note to verify this fact. If for some reason you do not know of the bus/ride change until later in the day, you may then call the Pre/K class at (408) 847-1128 and the school office at (408) 847-2717 to inform us of the change.

Please be on time when picking up children at 3:15. Young children often become anxious when everyone else is leaving and they are left waiting for very long.

Communication

Our staff will email a newsflash once a week to update you on our activities, themes, and events at school.

Occasionally a large manila envelope with their child's name on it will be sent home. Please take out the artwork and parent communication and send only the envelope back to the school the very next day. **Please do not send notes back to school in the envelope** as the children don't usually check the envelope before putting them away. **However, if there is something you would like to communicate, we will check the children's lunch boxes at lunch.**

Phoning the classroom:

It is often difficult for the teachers to leave the children to get to the phone. If we do not receive your call in the classroom at (408) 847-1128, please call the school office at (408) 847-2717 and leave a message, and they will deliver it to the teachers.

Conferences:

Formal parent/teacher conferences are scheduled once a year in January for preschool/kindergartners. You are also welcome to arrange a phone conference or after school meetings should the need arise.

Field Trips

Every year, we go on field trips off campus as well as visiting sites on the school campus. To ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for all participants, we maintain an extremely low student to chaperone ration. Therefore, if a field trip occurs on a day when your child does not usually attend school, he/she can come if you or another adult family member will chaperone your child. Parental help is needed for all off-campus trips.

Our field trips off campus include:

- A visit to an organic farm
- A beach clean-up or other related community service activity with our 5th grade Big Buddies

Our on-campus trips include:

- The "Fairy Forest" located across the street from the Mount Madonna Center Community Building
- The "Big Swing" located in the Oaks campground
- Various trails and playgrounds around our school campus
- The Mount Madonna Center Garden and the Elementary Garden
- The Mount Madonna Center Firehouse
- Appropriate elementary, middle and/or high school productions

If you have an inspired idea for an age appropriate field trip, please feel free to make suggestions.

Parent Participation

Parents are encouraged and welcome to assist in the classroom. If you would like to help and have the time, please let us know.

Here are some ways you may participate:

- Pre-scheduled classroom helpers
- Donating materials
- Carpentry
- Cooking and sewing
- Gardening and planting flowers
- Cleaning shelves/washing dishes
- Field trips
- Laundry (kitchen cloths, baking aprons)
- Repairing books and/or toys
- Joining a parent workday
- Cutting paper
- Copying prepared art materials
- Helping out at special events

We also have a class liaison that supports the staff and provides communication between the school and parents. The class liaison is a parent who volunteers their time and energy to communicate with you at least once a month to keep you informed about upcoming class and school events. Please feel free to call your class liaison if you have questions.

All parents are required to help with the Pre/K Class Sponsored event and the all school production of the Ramayana held at the end of the school year.

Volunteer Participation Guidelines

We welcome your assistance in the classroom. To make it a beneficial experience for all concerned, we ask that you follow a few guidelines.

1. Children should feel our presence, so be the "guide on the side" rather than the "sage from the stage."
2. When speaking to children, please do so positively, at eye level, and in conversational tones.
3. Please allow children to do as much as they can by themselves
4. Avoid making models for children to copy during art activities.
5. Try to state limits positively to children. For example, "Keep your hands in your lap" vs. "Don't yank his/her hair." If you have to limit a child with a "don't", also try to suggest a "do."
6. In situations of physical contact, ask the child's permission. For example, "Would you like a hug?" or "I see that you are hurt, can I help you get up?"
7. Communicate positively and clearly concerning your physical boundaries. Also, to insure mutual respect, please tell the child if either their behavior or words are inappropriate. For example, "I want you to stop climbing on me." Or "It's not okay to talk to me like that."
8. Please consult with the teachers if a situation should arise and there is any doubt concerning how to handle it according to our school's philosophy or policy.

Preschool/Kindergarten Yearly Events

September

Back-to-School Night

October

Field trip to the organic farm - chaperones needed

Halloween Parade - helpers welcome to assist children getting into costumes 9am

November

Pajama Day/ Fall Parent Day- helpers needed to assist with pancake making and clean up 9:00-noon

Thanksgiving Activities and Vegetarian Potluck - helpers needed to assist children with crafts, help set up potluck, and help clean up after potluck 10:00-1:00

December

Holiday Present Making - ongoing through December....flexible times...helpers welcome to assist children in preparing their holiday surprises for their family

Big Buddies/Little Buddies Holiday Cookie Decorating Day- helpers welcome 2:30-3:20pm

Hanukah Celebration - helpers welcome

Holiday Activities and Vegetarian Potluck - helpers needed to assist children with crafts, help set up potluck, and help clean up after potluck 10:00-1:00

Winter Concert 7:30 pm

January

Big Buddies/Little Buddies Bread Baking and Butter Making Day - helpers welcome to assist children 2:30-3:20pm

February

Cultural Awareness Unit begins- Topic T.B.A....Helpers needed to gather resources, provide and/or make costumes, help with production

Friendship Day/Red Day – parents are welcome to send up some *naturally* red food for children to share

March

Cultural Awareness Assembly- helpers needed to help children in and out of costumes

April

Fairy Day - Helpers to prep **before** fairy day -make small bags filled with fairy treasure such as flower seeds, small crystals or something from nature....one for each child, paint horse shoes gold to be “unicorn shoes”....one for each child to find in the Magic Forest

Help to set up fairy decorations, bring special snack and juice to be left in Magic Forest for the children to find, flowers for decoration

Summit for the Planet eco Carnival – helpers needed to run child craft booths

May

Spring Parent Day 9:00am - noon

June

Pre/K Moving On Ceremony- helpers needed to prepare archway with flowers and greenery the afternoon before or the morning of graduation, someone to sew small (3”x 5”) pouches with drawstringone for each graduating kindergartener, helpers needed to assist with set up of end of year vegetarian potluck and help with clean up afterwards.

Ramayana! – parent help needed with supervision, dressing the children in costumes and face painting

Snacks & Nutrition

Two vegetarian snacks a day are provided for your child: one mid-morning and one in the latter part of the afternoon. **If your child has any food allergies, please inform us in writing as well as in person.** Two days a week, there are opportunities for the children to bake or cook their snack. During the morning snack, the children are independently getting their plates, serving themselves and cleaning up after themselves. This is a wonderful practical life experience in which they learn to care for themselves and the environment.

In our efforts to offer our children high quality and nutritious snacks and to afford them exposure to a wider variety of foods we are asking that you provide snack one day each month. We will send out a snack schedule indicating when it will be your snack day. On your snack day please send up enough food for morning as well as afternoon snack for 21 children.

As we are a vegetarian community we ask that any food sent up to share be completely vegetarian. This includes snacks sent up for birthdays and potluck events. This means no ingredients including meat, chicken or fish or by-products of same.

We are also learning more about the benefits, both to ourselves and to our earth, of organic products. We ask that whenever possible, you send up items which are organically produced. We hope that you will join us, as well, in our efforts to refrain from serving our children any food containing artificial flavorings, colorings or preservatives.

We ask that you include one item from each category for 21 children .

1. organic whole grains (can be muffins, crackers, bread, rolls, bagels, etc.)
2. organic fruit or vegetables
3. vegetarian protein item: nut or sunflower seed butter, cheese, yogurt, etc.

Children need to bring their own nutritious lunch. No candy, sodas or gum are allowed. Meat products are allowed in your child's lunch. There is no food sharing during lunch to ensure individual nutritional needs and personal hygiene. Please include a cloth napkin for them on which to put their lunch. We encourage the use of reusable containers for their snacks, sandwiches, and drinks. We also encourage the children to recycle.

Thank you for your support in our efforts.

Dress Code

Because of the wide range of activities, it is recommended that children be dressed in washable, comfortable clothing.

Velcro and low-top sneakers work the best (please avoid flip flops, sandals, patent leather shoes, and cowboy boots).

We encourage you to dress your child in clothes that they can manage themselves. This encourages their autonomy.

Please send in a labeled change of clothes and change it according to the seasons.

Raingear (boots and a jacket) is suggested for wet weather. Please do not send umbrellas; they can be somewhat dangerous at this age. In warm, sunny weather, please send a sunhat with your child. We have found that it is best to dress your child in layers as the weather up at MMS may be very different than the surrounding areas.

Birthdays

Children enjoy celebrating their own and each other's birthdays. Please let us know if you'd like your child's birthday recognized at the school. If you would like to come, we will arrange a morning or afternoon birthday circle. This is an opportunity to talk about how your child has changed and what special qualities you appreciate in him/her. Pictures of your child when he/she was younger can be shared as well. Parents may bring a snack to share as a special birthday treat if you wish.

Children who have summer birthdays will be honored at a special birthday circle at the end of the year. There's also a book list available should you choose to purchase a book for the class library in honor of your child's birthday.

Criteria for Continuation

Mount Madonna School's Kindergarten is a one to two year program, a program that most will finish in one year while others may finish in two. What that really means is that it's okay for a student to spend more than one year in the kindergarten group in order to develop the skills, attitude, and behaviors requisite of success in first grade. Parent need to trust that teachers will be sensitive to their child's individual needs and skills and be able to challenge their child to develop to his/her full capability, whether in the program for one or two years.

At the end of the first semester of the first Kindergarten year, the staff will conference with every Kindergarten parent to answer questions and dialogue about the child's progress. If at

this time the staff feels that the child is developmentally ready, the staff will advise of this. If it is felt that the child needs more time to develop the skills necessary for successful placement in first grade, the teacher and parents will then discuss an appropriate and individualized educational plan for their second year in our Kindergarten program. Because development is so individual, no final decisions will be made until the third quarter of the school year. In regards to issues of readiness and assessment, please know that we have the student's well-being at the heart of our decisions.

Mid-year conferences are also held for all preschool families, either in person or by phone. This is an opportunity to discuss your child's progress and development.

Quiet Time

At rest time, a few of the younger children go into the little room to nap while the rest of the children stay in the big room. The nappers listen to a story, have their backs rubbed if they wish, and listen to quiet music. They sleep until they awake, or we get them up at 2:45 pm.

During this period, the other children rest quietly on their mats playing quietly with the children near them or looking at books while back rubs and foot rubs are offered. Then the teacher lights the story time candle and reads books to the children.

The children are welcome to keep one soft rest time toy at school to play with at rest time.

Television and "Screen time"

There is much to be said about the miraculous invention of television and the many screen devices now available for children. However the presence of it in a young child's life can often be clearly experienced within the classroom. Its influence may be quite visible or more subtly perceivable: difficulty with attention, perseverance, initiative and rhythmical activity. The one area that is most in danger is the child's imagination, the ability to create one's own inner pictures. Here in the Pre/K program, we try, through the environment and all the activities, to cultivate the child's imagination for it is a very important vehicle for learning and growth.

We recognize that television/video watching/screen time is in the domain of the family and that each family must decide what role these activities will play in its children's lives. However, we do encourage you to find alternative activities for your preschool/kindergarten child. We would be happy to share ideas with you. Please utilize caution and careful discrimination when selecting movies, computer games and other high tech toys. What the preschool/kindergarten child needs is you; your voice, your song, your story, your time and attention, your warmth, your tears and your laughter.

Lost and Found

Please label your child's coats, sweatshirts, backpacks, lunch boxes, napkins and boots. If, however, something is lost, send us a note in your child's lunch box and we'll look for the item(s). Also, you are always welcome to check our lost and found at school. After a while (approximately one month), unlabeled or unclaimed articles will be put in our extra clothes bins or given to charity.

Licensing

The facility and program is licensed by:
State of California

SAN JOSE REGIONAL OFFICE
2580 N. First Street, Suite 300, MS 29-08
San Jose, CA 95131
(408) 324-2148
FAX (408) 324-2160

The Department of Licensing Agency shall have the authority to interview children or staff, and to inspect and audit child or facility records without prior consent. The licensee shall make provisions for private interviews with any child(ren) or any staff member, and for the examination of all records relating to the operation of the facility. The Department or Licensing Agency shall have the authority to observe the physical condition of the child(ren), including conditions which could indicate abuse, neglect, or inappropriate placement, and to have a licensed medical professional physically examine the child(ren).