



Clay-Platte Children's House Montessori School

Elementary

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tax ID # 43 088 7803

Office hours:	8:00am – 5:00pm
Main Building hours:	7:00am – 6:00pm
Hill House hours:	8:00am – 3:45pm

***“Whoever touches the life of the child,
touches the most sensitive point of a whole
which has roots in the most distant past and climbs toward the infinite
future.”***

Maria Montessori

Mission Statement

The mission of Clay-Platte Children's House (CPCH) Montessori School is to educate young people to their fullest potential, instilling a deep sense of personal independence and responsibility to self, others and to our Earth by employing the philosophy and methods of Dr. Maria Montessori.

Statement of Purpose

Our purpose is to provide, through the Montessori philosophy and curriculum, an environment where each child will be free to function and develop individually, naturally and sequentially into the whole child that lies within, realizing the full potential of his/her innate talents.

Goals

To facilitate each individual child in the development of:

- A real joy of learning
- Independence
- Self confidence
- Self discipline
- Self motivation – the ability to choose
- The ability to learn through personal discovery
- Concentration
- Responsibility
- An attachment to reality
- A love of order
- An appreciation of silence
- The ability to solve problems

Parent Responsibilities

Attend Montessori parent orientation meeting and familiarize yourself with the basic Montessori philosophy at the elementary level. Two good videos to watch are *Montessori Madness Fast Draw* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GcgN01Eh5IA>) and *Imagine a School: Montessori for Elementary Age Learners* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cBs73rff0n0>)

Read all school communication and notices. Return forms requiring parent's signature promptly. Continually update all school emergency forms.

Become involved. Research has demonstrated children benefit greatly when parents are involved in their school experiences.

Communicate with the school. It is important your child's teacher be aware of any changes in the home that may affect his/her feelings at school.

Trust us!

Important School Information at a Glance

Allergies – In order to provide a safe environment for our students with severe nut allergies, the elementary will continue to be a “loose” nut free environment while the upper elementary and middle school will allow “loose” nuts under supervision. Nut butters, to include peanut butter, are allowed.

Arrival – The school day begins promptly at 8:30am. Each child should be in the classroom; belongings put away and ready to begin by this time.

Bad Weather Closing - We will close when both Park Hill R5 and North Kansas City School districts are closed due to road conditions. We will be listed on television stations as “Clay-Platte Montessori School”. A “One Call Now” message will go out to all families.

Child Abuse Policy - A staff member suspecting possible child abuse or neglect is mandated by law to report to the Director/Owner, who in turn, must notify the Missouri Division of Family Services.

Emergency and Safety Procedures - As a staff, we regularly go over emergency and safety procedures for bad weather, fire, lock down emergency, or other school emergency. Routes are established and marked for evacuation, depending on the emergency at the time in each classroom. Drills for each are practices regularly.

First Aid and CPR - All Clay-Platte teachers and administration are certified in First Aid and CPR.

Health and Well Child – We follow guidelines placed by the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services. A child may not attend school with the following symptoms:

- Fever
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Body rash
- Sore throat and swollen glands
- Severe coughing
- Eye discharge
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Irritability or continuous crying requiring more attention than can be provided without hurting the health and safety of other children

When Fever-free for 24 Hours without Medication and other symptoms are gone, a child may return to school. Because we are not qualified to determine the communicability of infections and illnesses, we may require your child’s treating physician provide us with a re-admission statement.

We can only administer doctor-prescribed medications to a child. It is necessary to complete a medication form indicating the name of the child, the medication, the amount and time to be given. These forms are available in the office. At no time should medications be packed in a lunch box or backpack.

Immunizations - It is required by Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services that we have proof of each student's immunization records on file.

Montessori Parent Teacher Organization - The MPTO is instituted to foster community among staff and families. Anyone who is a part of the Clay-Platte Montessori community may belong to the organization and is encouraged to volunteer. Look for information from MPTO regarding special events and activities sponsored throughout the year.

Outdoor Environment - Fresh air stimulates good health. The environment surrounding the school provides opportunities for learning and recreation that are utilized every day. Please be certain your child comes to school with appropriate clothing for the weather. The school follows the schedule below for outdoor attire:

60 degrees or above	coat is optional
40 – 60 degrees	warm jacket or coat
Below 40 degrees	warm coat, hat, mittens or gloves
Snow	warm coat, snow pants, snow boots, hat, gloves

A child will only be permitted to stay indoors with a written doctor's note.

Remember – There is never any bad weather, only inappropriate clothing.

Personal Property - We ask that personal items be kept at home as we cannot guarantee against being broken or lost. They also tend to become a distraction during work time.

Recommended Books

Paula Polk Lillard Montessori: A Modern Approach

Dr. Angelene Lillard Maria Montessori: The Science Behind the Genius

Jane Nelson Positive Discipline

Maria Montessori Many titles

Aline Wolf Nurturing the Spirit

Trevor Eissler Montessori Madness

ELEMENTARY 2015-16

The Montessori educational journey continues with the elementary experience which builds upon each student's previous experiences, moving from concrete learning to much more elaborate and abstract learning, meeting each child's developmental needs along the way. The Montessori elementary environment provides balance for the child's developing imagination and abstraction with concrete, hands-on materials. Because the areas of study in the elementary program are so fully integrated, the child's curiosity is stirred by the environment and the lessons within it. This curiosity, combined with the teachers' specialized training and intimate knowledge of the individual child's personalities and learning levels, provides a rich learning experience.

COSMIC EDUCATION: THE HEART OF THE MONTESSORI CURRICULUM

Dr. Montessori recognized that all of science and history tell portions of the same story: the continuing creation of the universe. Cosmic Education tells that story. In a uniquely Montessori way, children are offered knowledge and experiences in geography, history, and biology, to name a few. "Learning" the academic subject matter, however, is secondary to a loftier educational and life goal!

What is Cosmic Education?

Cosmic Education is not itself "the curriculum" but rather a way of presenting stories that open up lines of inquiry which correspond to traditional elementary academic subjects.

"The purpose is not to create walking encyclopedias of knowledge... The 'stuff' the students learn is almost incidental to the enrichment of the context they gain for understanding themselves and their place in the universe." M. Montessori

Cosmic Education launches youngsters into society with practice in thinking about who they are as individuals, as part of the human species, as citizens of a nation, of members of a planetary ecology, and so on.

"Cosmic Education is intended to help each of us search for our cosmic task as a species and as individuals. To do this, we must understand ourselves in context. It is only against the background of our place in the universe, our relationships with other living organisms, and our understanding of human unity within cultural diversity, that we can attempt to answer the question, 'Who am I?'" M. Montessori

Why is Cosmic Education ideally suited for elementary students?

Maria Montessori recognized four major stages, or planes of development. From about age six to twelve, children are moving through the second plane. Some key characteristics of these children include an interest in wider social experiences, a movement from the material level to the abstract, and a heightened engagement in moral development.

Wider social experiences: Cosmic Education satisfies children's developing awareness of the larger community, offering them all of human history at a time in their development when they are preoccupied with "going out" to meet the world.

“Children in the second plane of development are no longer content to remain inside their homes and schools, or to limit their experiences to what they feel inside themselves... Cosmic Education addresses the broad scope of that outward journey into all of reality.” M. Montessori

Material level to the abstract: Designed first and foremost to inspire children’s imaginations, the lessons of The Great Stories allow for cross-pollination between sensorial experience and abstract thinking. As children work with the activities to which the stories have led them, they discover such concepts as repeating patterns of life (biology), the laws of nature (physics, chemistry), people’s common vital needs (cultural geography), and much more.

“The story part is the principal job of the teacher; the study part is primarily the job of the students... Once the impressionistic lessons have been given, the children are ready to pursue a subject as far as their interest will carry them.” M. Montessori

Moral Development: Many psychologists agree that children reach a new level of moral development around age six or seven. During the second plane of development, the child becomes keenly concerned with justice, fairness, right and wrong – the conscience is beginning to develop.

“The characteristics of children at this age suggest that now is the time to begin, that this is the ‘sensitive period’ to implant the initial impressions on which a lifetime search for meaning can be based... Cosmic Education helps young students discover the moral imperative by which they should live their lives.” M. Montessori

It is therefore necessary that we, as Montessorians, not lose sight of this vision. It is our duty to present Montessori lessons in such a way to bring the child not just to concrete and abstract knowledge of content area, but to a higher plane of appreciation for the beauty of knowledge itself. By stressing the gratitude that we feel toward past generations in their search of knowledge, we also teach our children to respect the studies of the past, thus encouraging them along their path for knowledge, academically, personally, and spiritually

“Since it has been ... necessary to give so much to the child, let us give him a vision of the whole universe. The universe is an imposing reality, and an answer to all questions.... All things are part of the universe, and are connected with each other to form one whole unity. The idea helps the mind of the child to become focused, to stop wandering in an aimless quest for knowledge. He is satisfied having found the universal centre of himself with all things” M. Montessori

CURRICULUM

Language

In the elementary classrooms, there is an opportunity for students to learn about the language they already use. They become more aware of the structure of their language, expand their vocabulary, and become more effective communicators. Since language is the vehicle of thought, it is a key to learning. Students with a conscious awareness of their language, its logical framework and its effectiveness as a tool of understanding, will be better equipped to think and learn.

Students are given plenty of opportunities to express themselves verbally, to write purposefully, to participate in discussions to hear and listen to the spoken work, and to learn the skills needed for accomplishing their education goals effectively.

Students will practice handwriting and work on grammar. Punctuation and capitalization will be introduced as well as various vocabulary lessons. Writing in many forms will be encouraged. This will include but not be limited to letters, creative writing, journaling, poetry and reports.

Reading

Students enter the elementary program at all levels of reading and we meet them wherever they are. There will be many opportunities to practice reading and we encourage this to continue at home. The best way to become a better reader is to practice! Take trips to the library on a regular basis. Read aloud to your child; allow your child to observe you reading a variety of materials. Listen to your child read favorite poems or stories.

Keep in mind: It is important for children to have a love of reading. This will motivate them to practice and improve their reading skills. Please, do not force your child to read as this can cause discouragement.

Mathematics

This area of study begins with enumeration and the operations of numbers. This is the part of mathematics called arithmetic. Students then go beyond the basics to study fractions, measurement, graphing and set theory and topology.

The goal of the mathematics curriculum is to introduce abstract concepts on a concrete level. Once the students have understood and mastered a concept through the use of manipulative materials, the abstract problems, which are firmly grounded, are more meaningful.

Geometry

Montessori primary classrooms encourage a sensorial approach to geometry through the use of didactic material. The elementary classrooms provide further opportunities to explore geometry through the use of manipulatives. At this age level, however, students can go beyond absorbing the visual and graphic order in the study of geometry. Their learning process includes drawing, acquiring the appropriate vocabulary for the concepts being learned, and being actively involved in using their knowledge so that geometry becomes meaningful to their every day lives.

CULURAL SUBJECTS

Physical and Cultural Geography

The purpose of this field of study is to provide opportunities for students to build an awareness of our global habitat. By leaning about the natural laws governing our planet, about the vulnerability of the environment and the vast diversities in the life forms and social cultures, students can become more appreciative and responsible global citizens.

Life Sciences – Botany and Zoology

Children are given many experiences to explore the immediate environment and gain knowledge of the flora and fauna that is readily observable. In addition, the curriculum enables a student to become cognizant of the animal and plant kingdoms, in general, and the ecological relationships between the two.

In the words of Maria Montessori:

“Is it too much to say that we owe all our wealth and efficiency to the plants and creatures of the sea and land who hoarded for us in life and death, that we might live, breathe and work?”

Students who understand this message are more likely to become wise users of the Earth’s resources.

History

History, in the Montessori curriculum, is the cultural subject that unifies the child’s knowledge of the world. It provides the cosmic view that enables a student to acquire a concept of self in time and space. While the earth sciences build a detailed view of our planet, history places that planet in the context of the universe. While botany and zoology teach about the flora and fauna of our planet, history shows how mankind is par of the same evolution of life on earth.

Against this background, the major goal of the history curriculum is to help each child develop a self concept that is meaningful because it includes a realization that we are an integral part of our world, important to the process of perfecting that world, and vulnerable to other forces at work in the universe. Such knowledge can only contribute to a conscious awareness and respect for the cosmos.

Physical Science

The practical life skills acquired in Montessori primary classrooms will become most useful in the elementary when students are engaged in experimentation.

Physical science is the study of those natural phenomena that influence our daily lives. From a very early age, children are implicitly aware of the law of gravity, that ice will melt or that fire burns, but they can only observe these phenomena. At the elementary age, they typically want to know why things happen and love to cause them, rather than wait to see nature’s demonstrations. For these reason, children need opportunities to conduct experiments in a safe, controlled environment. The student scientist’s work is not complete until the results of the experience are duly recorded.

ADDITIONAL CURRICULUM

Practical Life

Practical Life continues to be important in the elementary. These “lessons in life” revolve around taking care of themselves and their environment. This work helps to build a child’s attention to detail and helps organizational skills. Additional Practical Life activities include sewing, cooking, crafts and gardening.

Music

In addition to exposure to daily music in the classroom, a specialized instructor provides music lessons for our students. Through an interactive approach to music, the instructor inspires students to learn and become more motivated to excel. This is a wonderful way to boost confidence.

Foreign Language

Foreign language lessons are given to all students. The classes are conducted once a week and students are encouraged to continue their individual studies between classes. Not only is conversational language introduced but also the various cultures that speak the language are explored.

Physical Education

Though the students have the opportunity for physical expression each day, a physical education class is also offered. During this time, the students are introduced to calisthenics, gymnastics, athletics and team sports. It is important for students to dress appropriately for these activities.

Art

Art lessons are provided each week that combine art history and each child’s own unique abilities. By learning about well known artists from a variety of cultural backgrounds and the specific style of the artist, students are inspired to use their own imagination to create.

Field Trips and Spring Trips

We participate in field trips that enhance the student’s educational experience. Traditionally, we do the following but also remain open to other possibilities:

- After 6 weeks of school, travel and exploration of a nearby location in Missouri or Kansas
- Theater performance
- Earth works (3rd year students)
- Spring Trips (These trips occur the last two days of school.)

“Going Out” Trips

Montessori elementary education is designed to open up the universe to the child. In the classroom, we can only provide a glimpse and a key to open up these studies. We encourage children to explore their personal interests and activities by visiting experts and special locations. In Montessori, this work is referred to as “Going Out.” Sometimes

this work is done by an individual child or sometimes it is done with a small group. It is the children's responsibility to plan, organize, budget and request adult assistance with these trips. This is area where we will need parent volunteers to assist in making the children's experience a success.

*****ADDITIONAL INFORMATION*****

Birthday Celebrations

We celebrate each child's life. This involves the student sharing the story of their life and an optional healthy treat. A summer birthday can easily be accommodated on a day during the school year.

Social/Emotional Development and Discipline

When working with children's social and emotional development, we use best practices in Montessori education, child psychology, positive discipline and peace education. This approach involves action on behalf of the child and the community of children as well as open-ended inquiry and learning. How a conflict is resolved will be tailored to the specifics of the situation. The focus will always be on the physical and emotional safety of the children while also allowing children to explore and practice their abilities and knowledge in conflict resolution.

Children's behavior reflects how well their needs are being met. A sense of belonging is a critical need for children. Our role as the adults in a child's life is to help the child find healthy and age-appropriate ways to meet this need to belong. There are many ways in which we provide opportunities for this development in a Montessori classroom. There are lessons in grace and courtesy, collaborative work in groups of mixed gender and age, and daily interactions and guidelines that help to balance the needs of the child and the community.

Social conflicts that naturally arise in an environment are looked at as "teachable moments" for the teacher to observe and respond with the appropriate support for the situation. In any situation involving a conflict between children, everyone is part of the solution. Focusing on only one child or the other can be harmful and is not productive in the emotional and social development of all involved. A teacher will observe a situation carefully before intervening, allowing the children to have the opportunity to solve the problem on their own. If an adult needs to intervene, it will be done in a way that empowers the children and allows knowledge and growth so future situations can be solved without the adult.

If at any time a child gives or receives aggression perceived by the teacher as excessive, whether it is physical or verbal, the teacher will respond in any of the following ways: changes in the prepared environment, redirection to materials, discussion, mediation, problem-solving sessions, relationship coaching and/or natural or logical consequences, as deemed appropriate. The teacher will contact parents of the children involved and share any excessive aggression that results in an incident. Teachers will describe what was actually observed or reported, what they expect to see in children in a particular situation and how they worked with or will work with the children to develop a plan of action to develop positive change. They will talk with the parents on how to support the children at home and throughout subsequent school days.

When a child receives or gives aggression repeatedly, the teacher will get help from the director, and together, they will meet with the parents to decide a plan of action that will assist the child in replacing a negative pattern with a neutral or positive pattern.

If the school concludes that the children and their families need more support than the school can give, the school may require that the family engage outside professionals to work with the child. Depending on the area(s) of development that need support, such professionals could include family counselors, children's counselors, occupational therapists, parenting educators, or academic tutors. If the family is not willing or able for any reason to engage the needed professionals, it may be necessary that the family withdraw the child from the school.

The school will do its best to ensure that all communications from the school in relation to children's conflicts are respectful, professional and offered in the spirit of working together. The school will expect the same from parents. Because solutions to conflicts often involve working with several families and the whole community of children, the school needs to know that all parents are modeling respect for others and a willingness to cooperate with the teachers, the administration, and the other children and families – both in speech and in actions.

Homework

Montessori students are not given homework in the traditional sense, but they are encouraged to be productive at home as well as in school. Home projects are self-directed learning experiences that can be done at home and if the child would like, are presented in the classroom to their peers.

*****Creative Arts / Construction**

- Knit, crochet, spin, weave, sew, quilt, hook rugs, embroider, tie-dye, beadwork, paint
- Take an art class. Prepare an art project to teach to the class in the fall.
- Get a good book on tying knots and learn as many knots as you can.
- Find an adult who has a lot of tools and likes to build or repair things.
- Learn photography – how to take a really good picture.
- Learn a new song to teach the class. Bring a copy of the words when you teach it to us.
- Visit one of the art museums in town.
- Go to symphony concerts and concerts of folk music from other countries.

*****Language / Words / Literature**

- Schedule a weekly trip to the public library
- Take trips to bookstores.
- Write a description of a friend, a friend's house, a pet, a favorite place, vacation spot, etc.
- Interview your family and relatives. Start a family newsletter.
- Enter an essay, story, or poetry contest. Submit your work to magazines that publish student work.
- Practice telling stories.

HOMEWORK continued

- Find a newspaper article you want to read and discuss with your family. Set aside a specific time and place for the discussion.
- Have a family reading time. Everybody reads whatever they want in the same room.

- Have a read-aloud time. One person could read while the others clean up from dinner.
- At the bookstore, look for books of crossword puzzles, anagrams, and other word games
- Play great board games such as Scrabble, UpWords, Boggle, or Word Thief.
- Listen to books on tape while driving around on errands or on vacation.
- Read and write poetry. Memorize a poem a week.
- Instead of phoning, write letters to your friends

***Math / Numbers / Geometry

- Comparison shopping: figuring price per pound, calling various stores, etc. When you shop at the grocery store, take along a pad and pencil; keep a running total of the cost of items you buy.

Check your answer against the cash register receipt you get when you pay for your items.

- Measure things around the house Take trips to the park, etc., to measure things there.
- Help with the family budget. Record the family expenditures for a week. Help your parents write the checks when they pay the bills (they'll have to sign the checks).
- Play good "thinking" games such as chess or checkers.
- Make up math problems for yourself to work.
- Work on memorizing all your multiplication, division, addition, and subtraction facts. Once you've mastered your math facts, work on speed.

***Nature / Plants / Animals

- Whenever you travel to a new city, visit the local zoo or the local natural history museum.
- Before you travel to another part of the country or to a different country, read about the biomes there. Read about their climate, animals, and plants. While you're there, look for things you read about.
- Go camping with your family or friends.
- Learn more about nutrition.
- Make a botany map of your back yard. Place each plant in its place on the map.
- Go berry picking on a local farm.

***History / Geography

- Help plan the family vacation. Research the landmarks, geography, culture, special attractions of the area you'll be visiting. Map out the route you'll take.
- Make a map of your house and gardens. Make a detailed map of your room.
- Pick a continent you'd like to know more about. Using an atlas, make flash cards of all the countries in that continent. On one side of the card Have the country's name; on the other side, the country's capitol city.
- Interview someone from another country. Ask them about their country's history, landmarks, cities, agriculture, industries, religions, festivals, form of government, famous scientists, famous artists and writers, etc.

***Health and Exercise

- Play on a team. Practice a sport or physical skill.
- Hiking, biking, skating, swimming, walking, Caving, climbing, canoeing, snorkeling, running, gymnastics, basketball.
- Spend as much time outdoors as possible.
- Work on developing the habit of drinking enough water each day minimum ounces of water you need each day

***Community Service

- Keep a scrapbook of newspaper articles on issues you care about in the community or world.
- Participate in an environmental clean up. This might be as simple as going to the park with your family or friends and filling up a big trash bag with all the trash you can pick up. Save recyclable bottles and plastic in a separate bag to recycle later.

Media

While media—both audio and visual—is inevitable and necessary, we would like all families to be aware that most video media has a measurable, negative impact on a child’s ability to concentrate. We ask that every child be given an hour of screen-free time before bed. This allows the brain to begin production of melatonin, a hormone required for sleep.

Snack and Lunch

Students may get hungry during the morning and are encouraged to take a snack break. Snacks should be small, quick and nutritious. All students will need to bring a lunch from home unless they would like to participate in pizza lunch or a catered lunch (if offered).

Lunch time offers a great opportunity to practice grace and courtesy. Students take turns setting the tables, preparing for lunch. Good manners are practiced and expected.

Students function best with proper nutrition. Please make sure your child has a good breakfast before coming to school. Please – no candy, gum, soda or other sugary drinks.

Outdoor Clothing

Every day after lunch, students spend time outside either in the backyard or across the bridge in the meadow. There are also many classroom lessons that are completed outside so it is very important to have your child dress appropriately for the weather.

Grace, Courtesy and Positive Discipline

Practice in grace and courtesy continues through the elementary years. The goal is to develop responsible and peaceful citizens of the world. By the time children begin their elementary years, they should have a good sense of self-control. Opportunities to practice in this area are available daily with the emphasis on respect for self, others and the environment.

When a child is having a difficult time with respect, a quiet area will be offered so the child can have time to gather thoughts and gain back some self-control. If this does not help the situation, the child will be escorted on a walk to the main office where a place for quiet activity will be offered. A call will be made to parents to inform them of the situation.

Our classroom has an area where children can meet to resolve their differences, usually called “the peace area”. The purpose of this space is to provide a quiet place with no distractions where verbal resolutions can be met. The remainder of the class is not involved in the problem and is not subjected to a disruption.

Communication

It is important for directors and parents to work together and form a partnership to promote clear communication between the child’s home environment and school environment. Children are better encouraged to reach their full potential when parents

and directors are in accord. Frequent exchanges, either verbal or written, can enable parents and directors to work together. Formal conferences are scheduled in the fall and spring.

Parent Volunteer Opportunities

There are many opportunities for parents to get involved. Our classroom needs include listening to readers, Friday Lunch, chaperones for field trips and drivers for “Going Out” trips. Please speak with a classroom director to get further information.