



Children's House
MONTESSORI SCHOOL

Newsletter **August 2019**

A Message from the Head of School

Dear Children's House Community,

As I was getting ready to start a new school year, I started reflecting on the start of the last school year, my first here. I feel so much more connected to, and a part of, the community now! I was excited to meet everyone last year, and anxious to get to know you all. This summer, I truly missed seeing the students each day, and was so happy to be able to greet everyone by name as they arrived this year! For those of you who are new to our community, I hope your experience a year from now will be the same.

We have had a few hiccups to start out our year, but I know that getting through these things as a community helps our bonds grow stronger. The teachers are so committed to the nurturing and growth of the school, it is always such a pleasure to work with them! And, the outpouring of support from the parent community has been so very appreciated. Your patience and understanding during any time of transition or these unplanned events is something that makes everything so much easier.

We have two Head Teachers and one Assistant Teacher who are new to our community. Ms. Caitlyn in Primary, and Ms. Nettie in Lower Elementary are the new Head Teachers. Ms. Stephanie is the Assistant Teacher in the Toddler room, joining Ms. Tashira in her first year as Head Teacher in that environment. If you have not yet met them, please keep an eye out for them and introduce yourselves. We feel very lucky to have them on our team!

I would like to encourage anyone who can to join the Parent Organization that is forming. A school is always stronger with an active parent community. There will be roles for people who want to commit a fair amount of time, and then things for those who only have a little time available.

Each month, all of the teachers will contribute something to the Newsletter. This allows the families to not only get general reminders, but to really see what is happening in all the classroom environments. I hope you enjoy this new format!

If there is anything you are ever wondering about, or feel concerned about, please don't hesitate to contact me. I am happy to talk with you.

Take good care,
Ms. Kelly



The adolescent must never be treated as a child, for that is a stage of life that he has surpassed. It is better to treat an adolescent as if he had greater value than he actually shows than as if he had less and let him feel that his merits and self-respect are disregarded.
~Maria Montessori~

Respectful School Boundaries

When arriving at your child's classroom door, please remember that this is their environment. There will be times when you are invited into the classroom, but at drop off time, please wish your child a good day in the hallway and then approach the door when he/she is ready to enter the classroom independently.

Teachers do each have their own email addresses so parents can ask questions or inform them of something they should know about. Please remember that when teachers go home, many have families, and it is important for them to have time to devote to their families. Outside of the school hours (7:30-5:30), teachers may not respond to emails. Unless it is an emergency, please do not expect a response outside of these hours.



Middle School with Ms. Tara

Our middle school students made the best of the situation last week and were able to start the school year off-campus on a variety of educational field trips related to our regular curriculum.

We were fortunate enough to learn about our local Deland community's history by touring the Historic Mural Walk through downtown. We viewed more than a dozen murals painted by local artists depicting what life looked like throughout the years.

We then began learning how we are currently effecting our local environment through field trips to the UF Agricultural Extension, the Volusia County Transfer Station and the Marine Science Center in Ponce Inlet. Students learned how we can positively take care of our gardens through the use of purposeful methods that are beneficial for butterflies, saw the impact of how trash is a problem for our local governments to deal with, and how trash can adversely affect our local marine animals when it ends up in the waterways they call home.

We finished the week visiting our local state park in DeLeon Springs, learning about the history of the park, and enjoying swimming and fishing together before heading home for the weekend.

Starting the year with field trips proved to be a great way to get reacquainted after being apart for the summer, and have made us even more grateful to be in our classrooms this week.



Lower Elementary with Ms. Nettie

Our first two weeks in Lower Elementary have been fantastic! The children have been getting reacquainted with familiar lessons and friends they missed over the summer. We have established classroom agreements, participated in community building exercises, and we have even started our first chapter book read aloud. The changes to the classroom environment have been a success so far and we love working at the new tables - thank you Mr. Heeren! We are excited to

What's Growing in the Garden?

In Florida, August is the beginning of the gardening year. Coming back to school at this time perfectly coincides with our regional growing cycle. This is the time when we are laying the ground work for the garden to be able to provide fruits and vegetables for our school community. It's time to dig the beds, start seeds and get things ready to grow vegetables and flowers as the heat subsides. The primary garden is a busy place as we head into September!

This year, due to funds we raised from last year's plant sale, we were able to purchase soil and plants before school started. With the success of our plant sale, we hit the ground running! Onward and upward!

So far, the students have helped to weed the butterfly garden, plant new flowers, and dig composted cow manure and top soil into our planting beds. They have helped to plant a tomato and a few pepper plants. We planted carrot seeds and mustard green seeds just this week. We are busy gathering supplies to start taking cuttings and propagating plants. Once the weather cools off slightly we will plant lettuce and snap pea seeds and transplant in some more tomatoes, peppers and flowers that have started from seed at Ms. Jessica's house. Make your own, grow your own!

I am often asked at the beginning of the year if there is anything the garden needs, and the answer is, yes! The number one thing we need is soil. We are always accepting donations of bags of Black Kow composted cow manure. Not only do we add this to the beds to recharge them before planting, but throughout the year, whenever we plant, we add a little Black Kow to help the new plants establish. Black Kow can be purchased at Lowes for around \$5.00. Bags of topsoil, garden soil and potting soil are also needed, but please no Miracle Grow products (not good due to the added chemical fertilizers). Sta-Green products are slightly less expensive and available at Lowes. And as we come into fall, Lowes and other garden centers should be stocking cool weather crops like lettuce, chard, kale, broccoli, etc. These are always welcome in our garden. There is always room for flowers and herbs, too!

Have you met our new chickens yet? Ms. Sharon raised them from chicks at her home this summer, and recently introduced the to our brood. Welcome Betty and Bella!



A garden is a grand teacher. It teaches patience and careful watchfulness; it teaches industry and thrift; above all it teaches entire trust.

~Gertrude Jekyll~

Primary with Ms. Amy and Ms. Morgan

In Ms. Amy's class the 2019 school year started with a big break. That is Ms. Amy broke her arm the day before school started! Fresh from the ER she came to school to greet her students, and in true Montessori fashion she was still giving lessons.

Now at the end of week two, we are all settling in nicely. The class is diving into letters and reading work from the start, to produce some great readers. A strong foundation in reading will take them far in every area!

We have an amazing group of students and look forward to a great year.

From the Reading Nook

Ms. Blessing worked last year as the Orton-Gillingham Reading Specialist in the school. This year, we have a parent (who is also a former Children's House staff member and public school teacher), Alicia Winchell, who will be working alongside Ms. Blessing. Ms. Alicia is starting the Orton-Gillingham training so they will both use the same approach. Each month, they will offer book selections as well as tips for supporting your child's literacy learning and love of reading.

Welcome back to another school year! During the summer our routines and procedures can become laid back or even non-existent. Our children love spending time with us and as such this natural reward can be offered to make the 'get ready for school' and 'get ready for bed' routines smoother. If your child struggles to get ready, offer to stay with them during this time and talk about what reading topic interests them. You can look through the online or in person public library catalog to find books that will interest your child(ren). You can use these get ready times to read aloud to them and discuss the reading. As the routines get smoother you can encourage your child(ren) that when finished you can have the read alongside time as well. We recommend aiming for 15-20 minutes of daily read aloud time to your child(ren) and 15-20 minutes of daily read alongside time with your child(ren). After reading to your child(ren) discuss what was read; the characters, setting and events of the story. After reading alongside your child(ren) discuss what was read and how reading is a lifelong habit that we all wish to instill. This reading time will come to be expected by your child(ren) and will give you time to discuss other interests as well. Try to incorporate this time into your daily routine and I hope you find smoother routines as a result!

All of these titles can be found/reserved through the online and in person Volusia County library catalog.

Toddler Room:

1. *Happy Little School: little lift-a-flap* by Ginger Swift
2. *Bear's Big Day* by Salina Yoon
3. *Spot Loves School* by Eric Hill

Primary Rooms:

1. *Phoebe Sounds it Out* by Julie Zwillich
2. *Not this Bear: a first day of school story* by Alyssa Satin Capucilli
3. *Kate and Nate are running late* by Kate Egan

Lower Elementary Rooms:

1. *Judy Moody was in a Mood* by Megan McDonald
2. *The Magician's Hat* by Malcolm Mitchell
3. *The Adventures of Glibb Redundant* by Ken Blanton

Upper Elementary:

1. *Road Trip* by Gary Paulsen and Jim Paulsen
2. *President of the Whole Fifth Grade* by Sherri Winston
3. *Real Friends* by Shannon Hale

Middle School:

1. *Totally Middle School: tales of friends, family, and fitting in* by Betsy Groban
2. *Merci Saurez Changes Gears* by Meg Medina
3. *Scat* by Carl Hiaasen



Don't forget to clip your box tops or scan your receipts! Please bring any clipped box tops to school by October 18.



Have you seen the new library? A healthy school needs to have an active library. While in the Spanish/Technology classroom, the library was untouched. We moved it to a public area, and I would encourage you to explore it! Many thanks to everyone who has helped, with special thanks to Ms. Blessing and Ms. Alicia who have worked long hours, and are still working, to make it organized and beautiful.



"The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go."
~ Dr. Seuss ~

Musically Speaking....



We are in full gear now, and children of all ages are moving, singing, dancing, and playing instruments.

Elementary students will begin to study various Classical, Romantic, and Contemporary composers in preparation for a field trip to experience the Young People's Concert at the Orlando Philharmonic, on Wednesday, October 2.

Thanks to Anthony Wild/"Kids Rock the Nation", and their gift of instruments, the third grade classes will be learning to play the Ukulele this year. Upper elementary too can learn Ukulele or continue in guitar studies.

Middle School students will be offered "Instrument Making" and/or "Creating/Writing" music for unconventional instruments like trashcans, hubcaps, pots and pans, 50 gallon drums and more. Music studies will also tie into their United Nations endeavors.

There will be no after-school classes this Fall, though beginning piano/flute/guitar lessons are available. Please contact Ms. Deborah for more information.



"Some people think music education is a privilege, but I think it's essential to being human."

~Jewel~

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Don't forget to go to [smile.amazon.com](https://www.smile.amazon.com) for your amazon shopping, and connect with us (DeLand Montessori School). Each sale done this way helps the school.

Upper Elementary with Ms. Esther and Mr. Keegan

As you all know, our school year started with some unexpected surprises and excitement. Fortunately, we were able to move up the trips that were originally planned for later in the year, and our students hit the ground running! On Monday and Tuesday, we visited historical murals in downtown DeLand. On Wednesday we spent the morning learning from Florida Master Gardeners about native plants and wildlife, and then in the afternoon we learned how Volusia County manages trash and recycling when we visited the transfer station. On Thursday we used our fresh knowledge of the impact of trash in our community by doing a little beach clean-up, and then spent the day with the amazing educators at the Marine Science Center in Ponce Inlet. We finished our week with a trip to DeLeon Springs where we were able to use the Junior Park Ranger program to conduct some research before jumping in the crisp, cool spring water. The students beautifully represented themselves and our school while out in the community. We are all happy to be back in our building this week where the students have already been hard at work in their lessons and follow-up work. We are so incredibly proud of this amazing group of students and we are excited to see all that they will accomplish this year. Thank you to all of our parents and staff who have helped by cleaning, acting as drivers or chaperones, moving furniture, or donating books this week. Our school community is truly magical and we are grateful for each and every one of you!





Spirit Night!

Friday, September 6

5:00-9:00

20% of their sales will be donated to the school (with the flyer sent by email)

Toddler with Ms. Tashira and Ms. Stephanie

Our youngest members of Children's House had a wonderful beginning in the Toddler Class! We've been exploring the classroom, getting to know our new friends, and having a lot of fun. We have been learning about colors and shapes! We are going to have a great year of new adventures!!



“One test of the correctness of educational procedure is the happiness of the child.”

~Maria Montessori~

Lower Elementary with Ms. Princess and Ms. Nikki

The first day of school was a joyful reunion for our returning children and families and an opportunity to extend a warm welcome to our new students and families.

All of the children seemed very excited to be back in school and ready for a great year. They are working very hard on lessons they were familiar with last year and new lessons they were given during orientation several weeks ago.

New friendships have been made and old ones rekindled. It is a pleasure watching the children work together in and out of the classroom, with the older children assisting the younger students. This is a very important aspect in the Montessori Elementary classroom.

Ms. Nikki and I are looking forward to guiding, supporting and getting to know your child as they get to know us better and build long term relationships.

Primary with Ms. Caitlyn and Ms. Cori

Things have been going so well and we're so excited for the month of September. All of the children are beautifully settling in to their routine, and truly enjoying finding their places amongst their peers. This month we will be continuing to master lots of Grace and Courtesy lessons as well as diving into the wonderful and fascinating world of space!

