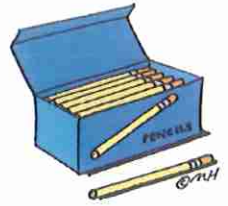




Westside Montessori School September 2011 Newsletter



Dear Parents,

Welcome to the Westside Montessori 2011-2012 school year! We are excited to be back and we look forward to learning and growing with your child.

This is the first of ten monthly newsletters that will keep you informed about all the exciting things going on here at Westside. You can also refer to the Information Boards outside both classrooms for additional notices and sign-up sheets. The teachers write daily messages on white boards, just outside the classroom doors. Please refer to them to keep up-to-date with the day-to-day activities of your child's class.

Staffing

This year we are pleased to have the following teaching staff:

In addition to being the school Principal, Ms. Bettina will be the Lead Directress and Friday Kindergarten Enrichment Teacher in the First Floor Classroom. Ms. Garland will be joining her as the Junior Directress and will head our weekly Arts and Crafts program.

In our Second Floor Classroom, Ms. Portia and Ms. Tasneem will be Co-Directresses and will be teaching the Junior Kindergarten Program on Friday Mornings.



We have four Montessori Practicum Students joining us for the whole school year. We have Ms. Kelly (AM) and Ms. Elaine (PM) in the 1st Floor Classroom and Ms. Candy (AM) and Ms. Winsy (PM) in our 2nd Floor Classroom.

We also welcome our Office Administrator, Ms. Amanda. She is in the office on a part-time basis and will be providing very essential behind-the-scenes support.

Renovations and Updates

It's been a very busy summer here at Westside! The classrooms were treated to a fresh new coat of yellow and blue paint. The children's washrooms and teachers' kitchens were renovated and look terrific. We also added fresh new play sand for the sandbox and fresh bark mulch for the playground area. Make you sure you check out the garden area too! We planted blueberry bushes, rosemary, hydrangeas, crokoscia and rudbeckia which complement the maple tree, lavender, mint and oregano beautifully.

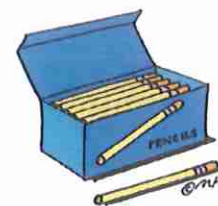
Beginning this coming term, we are teaming up with Sprouting Chefs. The Friday Enrichment classes will be planning out and planting an edible garden in the front yard. Lots of exciting things to look forward to!

Staggered Entry

Our staggered entry for new children begins on **Thursday, September 8th, 2011** and **continues through to Thursday September 15th**. They are integrated 2 or 3 at a time each day. Prior to your child starting, you will receive a phone call from one of your teachers to arrange a home visit. This is for your child's benefit and will help with the transition into a new environment. If you feel your child may be anxious about separating from you, please review our Policy on Separation Anxiety before your child starts and discuss a strategy with your Directress at the home visit. We are committed to making your child's experience at Westside a positive one.



Westside Montessori School September 2011 Newsletter



Quick Good-byes

Parents are **not** to come into the classroom. Please say your goodbyes quickly at the door. This allows for happier transition from parent (home) to teacher (school).

If your child is experiencing separation anxiety and you remain in the playground or look in through the windows, this prolongs the separation anxiety and can make it harder for your child to settle. We strongly recommend that, after dropping your child at the door, you leave the school property promptly and we will phone you if your child is unable to settle. Thank you for your cooperation.

Class Times

Our morning class times begin at **8.45am (1st Floor)** and **9.00am (2nd Floor)**. The afternoon classes begin at **12.15pm (1st Floor)** and **12.30pm (2nd Floor)**. The door to each classroom will be opened promptly at those times. There is a TEN MINUTE window for arrivals. The door is promptly closed after arrival times to allow for Circle Time which sets the tone for the day, before Specialist Classes begin. Please note that late arrivals disrupt the flow of the class and concentration of the children who have arrived on time. Please do your best to arrive promptly each and every day. **Children must always be accompanied to the door by their parent or guardian.**



Being on time for school gives the children the message that time at school and punctuality are important.

Parents and guardians are to pick-up the children from beyond the back gate. The teachers will dismiss the children once their authorized pick up person arrives. There is a FIFTEEN MINUTE window for pick-ups. Dismissal will occur between **11.30- 11.45am** for the 1st Floor morning class and **11.45 - 12.00 noon** for 2nd Floor morning class. Dismissal for the 1st and 2nd Floor afternoon classes will happen at **3.00-3.15pm** and **3.15- 3.30pm** respectively.

If you are **unavoidably** going to be late to pick up, please phone the school and let the Directresses know. Repeated late pick-ups (more than twice per term) will result in fines, as per the Parent Agreement.

Parking

There are few options for parking during drop off and pick up times. Please be aware that parking on Oak Street, in the right hand lane, is only available until 3pm daily.

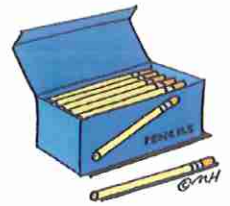
Please note that there is **absolutely NO PARKING OR DRIVING** through the back lanes behind the school. **Parents are responsible for ensuring that EVERYONE listed on the Authorized Pick-up form is aware of this rule.**



City By-laws allow for us to park on West 26th Avenue and West King Edward (north of the school) for up to 10 minutes in the "Residential Parking Only" areas. Our neighbour at 1050 West 26th (with a monkey tree in her front yard) has mobility problems and needs access to the front of the property at all times. If you could refrain from parking in front of her house, we would appreciate it.



Westside Montessori School September 2011 Newsletter



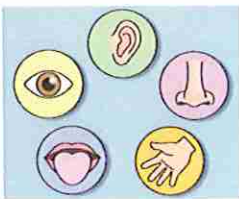
Parent Information Night

Parent Information Night will be held in the 2nd Floor classroom on **Thursday, September 15th, 2011**, from 7.30 pm - 8.30pm. At the meeting we will discuss Westside Montessori School policies and procedures; encouraging independence, snack, themes, our Phonics and Reading program and the Practical Life area of the classroom. We will also be introducing our Yoga, French and Music programs and all of our teachers. These information evenings are an excellent time to learn more about the mechanics of the school and the Montessori approach. They are also the perfect time to connect with other parents in your child's class. There will also be a short question and answer period at the end. Light refreshments will be provided. **Do plan to attend.**

Class Lists

Class lists will be sent home at the end of Gradual Entry. The Directresses will check with you to see if your information is correct and whether or not you want your family's phone number and email to be included on the list. Lists will be distributed mid month.

This Year's Themes



This year we will be focussing on two different themes: the Five Senses and the Solar System. During the months of October and November we will be exploring our five senses and how they allow us to explore the world around us. Following this, we will take our study out of this world as we learn more about the Solar System. We welcome books, artifacts, learning materials, etc. that enhance our themes.

September

This month we will be focusing on building classroom community and encouraging our returning students to help climatize the new children into the Montessori environment. We will be establishing and reviewing basic rules and routines as well as presenting many lessons on Grace and Courtesy (manners in the classroom).

Specialist Classes

Our specialist class schedule and teachers this school year are as follows:

MONDAYS: Yoga (Ms. Laura Rivere)

TUESDAYS: French (Madame Anna Britton)

WEDNESDAYS: Music (Ms. Jen Kuhl)

Specialist classes will begin on September 12th. The children go to specialists in groups of ten, alternating classes, for half an hour at a time. To learn more about our teachers, refer to our website: www.westsidemontessori.ca.

Music and Art Appreciation

Beginning in October, we will listen to the music of a different composer and learn about their life. We will also look at the work of a different artist each month, exploring their artistic techniques and unique life.

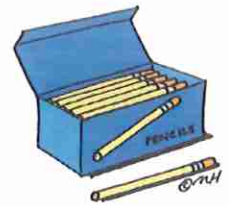
Label Everything

Let's keep our Lost n' Found clear by labelling all the children's belongings, including clothing, accessories (hats), etc. Unless there are special circumstances, there isn't a need to bring a bag to school.





Westside Montessori School September 2011 Newsletter



Special Snack Sign-Up

Please check your classrooms notice board next Monday, September 12th for the special snack sign up sheet. Please also note the special snack suggestion sheet on the notice board. A bag will be sent home with your child in the beginning of the week that you are due to provide special snack. **Please be aware that this is a strictly Peanut and Nut free environment.**

Scholastic Book Club



We are happy to offer Scholastic Book Clubs once again this year. Each Scholastic book order families make helps provide new and exciting books and learning materials for our classrooms. We thank you for your support!

Order forms will go home at the beginning of every month and are asked to be returned by the tenth of the same month. However, because of our start date, the deadline this for September will be the 15th. Please return completed forms with a cheque made payable to Scholastic Canada.

We had a very successful first Scholastic Book Fair last June and raised about \$1000 for new books and learning materials! Thank you for all your efforts and support. A special THANK YOU to our amazing volunteer parents who helped make the book fair possible!

Questions and Concerns?

The teachers at Westside Montessori School are committed to providing the happiest and safest environment for your children. If you

have any questions regarding your child or our program, please do not hesitate to make an appointment with your child's teachers to discuss things with them.

Voicemail and Email

Please note our email addresses:

The Office email:

westsidemontessorischool@gmail.com

Teachers' email:

wmsclassrooms@gmail.com

When phoning the school (604.731.6594) you now have 3 choices:

- You may leave a message for the Office/Admin/Accounts etc. by pressing #0 or stay on the line.
- To leave a message for the teachers upstairs press #1. (i.e. child absence, lateness, sickness, progress update queries, etc.)
- To leave a message for the teachers downstairs press #2. (i.e. child absence, lateness, sickness, progress update queries, etc.)

Mark Your Calendars ...

Sept 1 st - 6 th	Home Visits scheduled
Sept 7 th	Returning Students Start
Sept 8 th - 15 th	New Children Gradual Entry
Sept 9 th	Friday Enrichment Begins
Sept 15 th	Scholastic orders due
Sept 15 th	Parent Information Night (Meet the Teachers) 7.30pm - 8.30pm