



Westside Montessori School November 2011 Newsletter



Dear WMS Parents,

We are well into our first term of the year. Students have prepared and shared a small Thanksgiving feast, had a few class birthday parties, school photos, Fall Book Fair, visited the Pumpkin Patch, celebrated Diwali and enjoyed a very festive Halloween (photos on the last page). What a great start to the school year!

The Five Senses Theme Continued ...

For November we will continue our study of The Five Senses. We will be investigating sight, sound, touch, taste and smell through many different learning experiences.

In December we will be studying the different Winter Holidays with art, music, and stories.

If you have books, artefacts, posters, etc. related to our theme, please feel free to send them in, labelled with your child's name.

November Composer/Artist

Our composer study this month will focus on **Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky**. In December, this will lead us into a study of one of his most famous works, The Nutcracker. If your family has CDs, books or artefacts to share related to our topics, your child is welcome to bring them in (labelled with a name). Show and Tell Tuesdays are an excellent opportunity to share art, music and artefacts related to our theme or monthly artist or composer.

This month we will be discovering the artist **Gustav Klimt**, a 20th century painter from Austria. Much of his work involves the use of gold leafing.



Class Times 2012 - 2013

We wanted to let families know early on that the Morning Class Times will be changing in September 2012. Morning classes will be starting 15 minutes earlier. Afternoon Class Times will remain the same. Times will be as follows:

1st Floor AM: 8:30 to 11:30am
2nd Floor AM: 8:45 to 11:45am

1st Floor PM: 12:15 to 3:15pm
2nd Floor PM: 12:30 to 3:30pm



Friday Kindergarten Enrichment (1st Floor):
8:30 to 11:30am

Friday Junior K-Enrichment (2nd Floor):
8:45 to 11:45am

Curriculum Evening - Language

We host one Curriculum Night each year. We rotate the topics every three years so that during your child's cycle through the

program, you have a better understanding of Montessori and our school's approach to education. During the New Families Meeting in September we introduce the Practical Life area of the classroom. This year's curriculum topic was the Reading and Writing aspect of our Language Program. Next school year's topic will be Math and the following year - Sensorial and Geometry. Thank you to everyone who attended our Parent Information Night. If you were unable to attend and would like the handout, please ask the Teachers for a copy.





Westside Montessori School November 2011 Newsletter



Classroom Additions

One of our alumni families has made it possible for us to have the *Nienhuis Montessori Bells* at the school. They will add so much to our Music Program.



There have been more updates to the school. The Specialist Room has a bright, colourful new carpet and the classes have new wooden children's chairs. We are fortunate to have so much natural light in both classrooms. The ceiling lights have been updated to a bright, natural light. There have been some **Waldorf** materials added to the classrooms. They are wonderful for creative and imaginative play, and work well in enriching the Montessori environment.



Professional Development Day

There will be no school on November 1st as the teachers will be involved in professional development activities. They will be spending time observing another Montessori school and participating in curriculum development and lesson planning.

Scholastic Book Fair

The Scholastic Book Fair was a terrific success! A special thank you to our parent volunteers: **Mardi Cassady, Heather Sage, Adriana Chen, Angela Dong, Leslie Pashby, Debbie Bevilacqua and Melanie McLean.** We raised almost \$1000, which we use towards resources and books for class libraries and the reading program.

The November Scholastic orders will be due on November 3rd.

Remembrance Day

For the week of November 7th to 10th, our focus will be on Peace, ending with a Remembrance Day unit on Thursday, November 10th. We will be making our school's traditional felt and button poppy pins.



There will be no Friday Enrichment on Remembrance Day, November 11th.

Pumpkin Patch Field Trip

What a great first Field Trip to KJM Farm! What a treat to be able to feed the goats, Sage and Basil as well as Joey, the miniature horse. It was nice to spend time at the Pumpkin Patch with the children and families and enjoy the day together. We were certainly lucky with the weather this year! The children came in last week with lots of stories about carving out pumpkins into Jack O' Lanterns and roasting pumpkin seeds.





Westside Montessori School November 2011 Newsletter



Parent Observations



The Fall Term Parent Observation Days are scheduled for Tues., Nov. 15th to Thurs., Nov. 17th. A sign up sheet for Observation Days will be posted on Monday, Nov. 7th. The observations are **15 minutes long** and are an opportunity for parents to discreetly observe the children in the classroom setting.

Please note that we have a Children's Evening near the end of the year where the children show parents their classroom and work on favourite materials together. The observations are not a participation day. We do our best to keep disruption of the 20 observations per class to a minimum, so that the children can go through the work cycle as they would in a regular day. We ask that younger siblings not attend observations, as it can be quite disruptive. In the past, some parents with younger siblings have made arrangements with one another and have booked their observations back-to-back, and have taken turns minding each other's children in the playground.

If both parents wish to observe, they may sign up for the same time slot and come in together. Parents will notice 2 white adult observation chairs in designated places in the classroom. Observation guidelines will be posted on the information boards. Instead of a classroom observation, parents can choose to observe a Specialist Class: Yoga (Mondays), French (Tuesdays) or Music (Wednesdays). Arrangements can be made with the teachers.

Progress Reports - Fall Term

On Tuesday, November 22nd, a summary of your child's activities in the classroom and some written observations from their Directresses will be sent home. This report coupled with the Parent Observations will help to focus discussion during the Conferences.

Parent / Teacher Conferences

Parent / Teacher Conferences are November 23rd and 24th. The sign up sheet for Parent/Teacher Conferences will be posted on November 7th. Conferences are a good opportunity to discuss your observations, progress reports and any questions or concerns you may have. There is no school on P/T Conference Days. We ask that children not attend these meetings so that the adults can speak freely.

Winter Concert

Our Winter Concert is on Thursday, December 15th. More details regarding clothing, songs and lines (if applicable) will follow. Please let the teachers know as soon as possible if your child will not be here for the concert. We ask that the children arrive 15 minutes before the start time, to allow for a practice session. Concert times are as follows:



- 1st Floor AM:** Children's arrival - 9am
Concert starts at 9:15am
- 2nd Floor AM:** Children's arrival - 10:15am
Concert starts at 10:30am
- 1st Floor PM:** Children's arrival - 12:15pm
Concert starts at 12:30pm
- 2nd Floor PM:** Children's arrival - 1:45pm
Concert starts at 2pm



Westside Montessori School November 2011 Newsletter



Snow Days



The decision to close the school in the event of a heavy snowfall is based on driving conditions and the safety of our families and staff. If the school is closed, an email will go out to all families no later than 7:00am on the day in question and notification of a Snow Day will be posted online, on the school's website calendar (<http://www.westsidemontessori.ca/calendar>). You can also listen to school closure reports on *News 1130 (1130AM)* or watch *Global TV morning news*.

When the school stays open, we will run as normal a class day as possible. If a staff member is unable to commute, we may combine classes where necessary, while still following adult to child VCH guidelines.

There will be no broadcast message if the school is open. If conditions are dangerous where you live, please make your own decision on whether or not to bring your child to school. Regular procedures regarding absences apply (call or email to let us know that your child will not be attending).

Alternate Adults for Pick-Up

It is up to parents to let alternate adults picking up the children know the school pick-up routine - to wait behind gate for a teacher to dismiss the child (teachers aware of in writing or in the pick-up list of alternate pick-up person). Everyone is asked to wait beyond the gate and not to come into the premises for added security. It can be quite alarming for the teachers when unfamiliar adults come right into the playground area.

Playground Sandbox

The sunny weather looks like it might be behind us for much of the season. On rainy or damp days, the sandbox will be closed. We will open it when weather permits.



Mark Your Calendars ...

Nov 1 st	Professional Development Day (No School)
Nov 3 rd	Unicef Envelopes and Scholastic Book Orders Due
Nov 7 th	Observation & P/T Conference Sign Up Sheets Posted
Nov 11 th	Remembrance Day (School Closed)
Nov 14 th	Midterm Break (School Closed)
Nov 15 th - 17 th	Parent Observation Week
Nov 22 nd	Progress Reports
Nov 23 rd - 24 th	P/T Conferences
Dec 9 th	Last Day of Friday Enrichment before Winter Break
Dec 14 th	Last Day of Regular Classes Before Winter Break
Dec 15 th	Winter Concerts