



# BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

*Welcome to Back-To-School Night! This event is an opportunity for parents to hear from the Director, Meher VanGroenou the philosophy of M5C and hear from your child's teacher the classroom curriculum for the school-year. We're very pleased to have you here with us tonight, if you have any questions, please free to ask them this evening.*

Below are additional Q & As. If you have any other questions, feel free to ask.

### 1. **Why does M5C have a 3-year age span in each class?**

Maria Montessori's scientific research shows that children go through different planes of development. That is to say during the age 0 to 6, a child develops different abilities at each plane of development. Montessori divides the planes from 0 to 3 and 3 to 6 years of ages. The pace of development may be different for each child. During the three-year span, the child integrates the physical, emotional, social, and mental development and at the pinnacle of the plane the child reaches another level of understanding. The growth is spiral and each step is based on what they have learned previously. Like the development of a butterfly the child comes out changed.

### 2. **What does it mean my child is in the toddler program?**

The first plane of development is the child's growth between ages 0 to 3 years, according to the science research of Maria Montessori. During this period the young child's needs are much different than the child entering the next plane of development, 3 to 6 years of age. They are learning the control and coordination of their movements and strength of their muscles, fine motor coordination, eye/hand coordination, whole hand grasp, balance, grace in movement. These are all things that are the basis for their further development. Children acquire language during this period as well and learn to express themselves and communicate. They learn to listen and follow direction. Many different activities are geared toward the needs of this level of development in the Tulip room (toddler room).

### 3. **What does it mean that my child is in "pre-school"?**

We do not separate the children under the labels of "pre-school", "transitional kindergarten" or "kindergarten". In traditional schools, 3-year-olds will be called preschoolers, 4-year olds are called TK children and the 5+ year olds are called kindergarteners. In a Montessori classroom the 3 – 6 years olds are keep together. The classrooms have sequential materials that children can engage with no matter what age they are. During this period each child may have different needs at any given time. The scaffolding (learning method) happens as a continuum giving children a chance to learn at their own pace. That is the reasons why children go so much further in their growth by the time they are ready to go into first grade.

### 4. **Does M5C have a TK program / what does that consist of?**

M5C typically has three classrooms that include the 4-year olds (transitional kindergarteners). We believe that keeping the children 3 – 6 years together gives children more freedom to grow at their own pace. The 3 classrooms are the Rose Room the Sunflower Room and the Marigold Room. Each class has all the materials corresponding to the needs

of the 2<sup>nd</sup> plane of development of the ages 3 – 6. This way a 3-year old child may be doing work beyond his/her preschool needs and a five year old kindergartener may enjoy the “playing” or bead stringing for that day. As per Montessori, “growth during this plane of development is a continuum.”

**5. What is the curriculum of the M5C Kindergarten program?**

The younger children under 5, still need a nap or rest period in the afternoon, while the child 5+ age is full of energy and curiosity to explore more. The kindergartener child is integrating the physical coordination, language, and social skills and the intellectual learning to become ready for elementary school challenges.

In order to meet the needs of all 5 and 6 year olds of all three classrooms, we offer the “Evergreen Program” where the Kindergarteners come together after lunch and have more advanced curriculum. In the morning these children are in their respective classrooms, working with concrete materials. The Evergreen Program offers those extensions, forwards the math and language curriculum through the exploration of the world around them – that includes Geography, Botany, Zoology and science experiments. The kindergarten child is putting together and mastering his/her knowledge she/he has learned so far.

**6. Will I have the opportunity to observe my child in the classroom?**

Typically, we invite parents twice during the school-year to come and observe their child in the classroom and meet with the lead teacher for a conference. Each class has a two-week schedule in which parents should sign-up for a Classroom Observation and Teacher Conference. The first conference period starts in October. However, like all our Events this year, we will have to restructure the process due to COVID-19 capacity restrictions. We will provide you with an update on the Class Observations & Teacher Conferences within the next couple of weeks.

**7. When can I meet with my child’s teacher(s)?**

The teachers are available for a quick conversation at pick-up and drop-off times. But you can always call the school and leave a message for the teacher and she will call you back if your question/topic is personal or requires more than a quick conversation.

**8. Can I volunteer in the classroom?**

As you know, we have a 6-hour work commitment for parents each school-year. Again, because of COVID-19 restrictions we will have to restructure this process to provide plenty of opportunities for you to volunteer. We are coming up with some great ideas that we’ll share with you next week. In the meantime, if you have any ideas, please free to email us at [Montessori.ins@gmail.com](mailto:Montessori.ins@gmail.com).

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