

BarrieSchool

Barrie School Guide for Parents of Toddlers



Revised August 2020

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WELCOME

MAP OF THE UPPER CAMPUS

THE MONTESSORI TODDLER CURRICULUM

Toddler Specialist Classes Offered

Getting Familiar with Montessori Concepts

Helpful Skills for Toddlers to Have Before Starting School

Non-Walkers Safety Policy

Phase-In Schedule and Rationale

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

Car Seat and Booster Seat Policy

School Hours for Toddlers

Extended Day Options for Toddlers

CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR

Dressing for Comfort and Activity

Labeling Items

Shoes

Pants and Shorts

Party Dresses

Outdoor Play Preparations

Backpacks

What Your Child Should Bring to School – a Summary Checklist

NUTRITION

Snacks

Lunch

Lunch Tips

Beverages

PERSONAL CARE

Baby Bottles Policy

Pacifier Policy

Diapering and Toilet Learning

Part 1 – Diapering

What diapering items you should send to school

Diapering Policy

Part 2 – Using the Toilet

Nap Time

SCHOOL EVENTS AND GATHERINGS

Birthdays

Holidays/Cultural Celebrations

Montessori-Wide Events

COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN SCHOOL AND HOME

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Pets in the Classrooms

Barrie Montessori Toddler Biting Policy

All About Biting

ILLNESS - WHEN TO KEEP YOUR CHILD HOME FROM SCHOOL

What are important signs of illness?

What should I do if my child has any of these signs?

When may my child return to school after an illness?

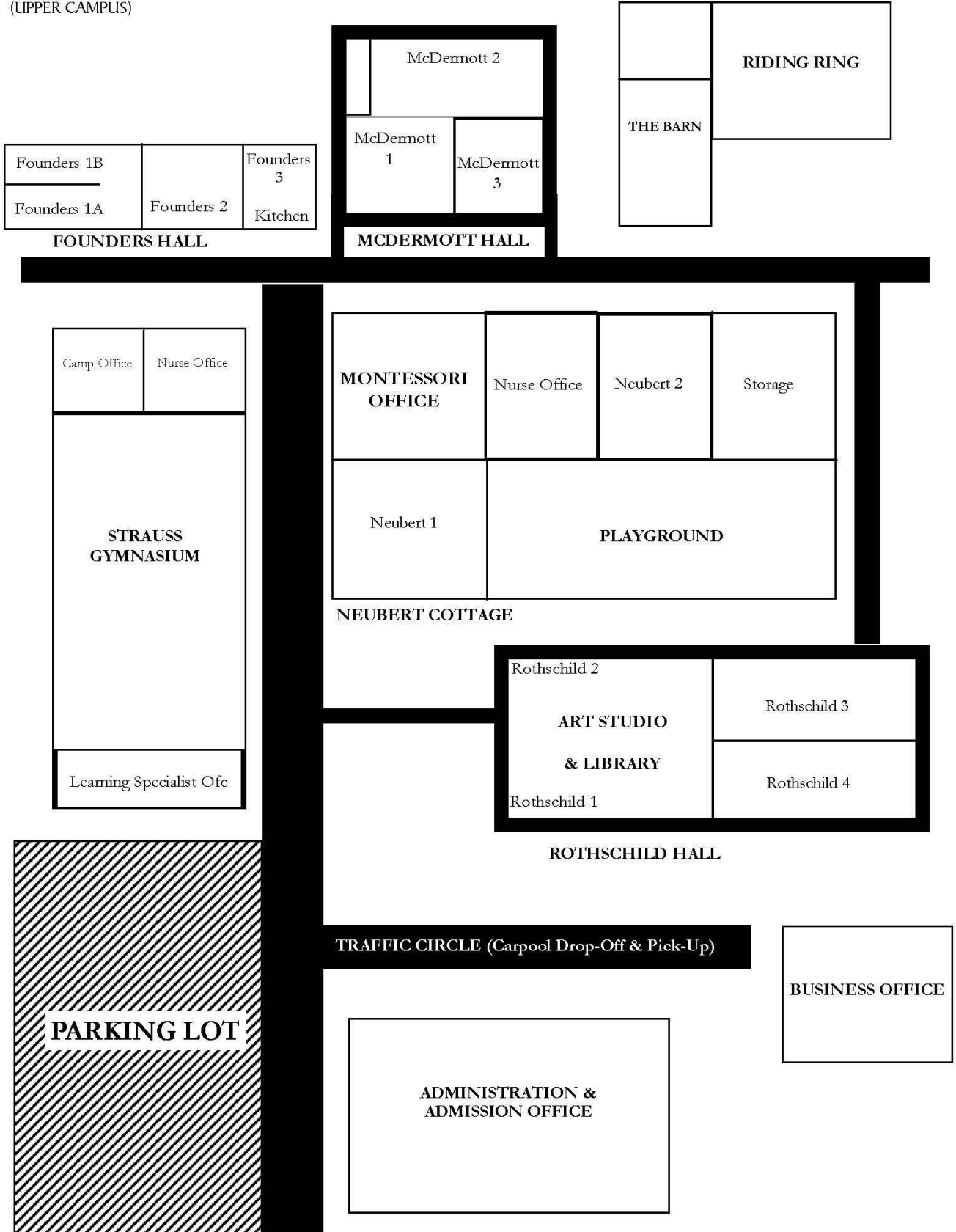
What will happen if my child becomes ill at school?

CHILDCARE LICENSING

WHO TO CONTACT FOR WHAT

MONTESSORI

(UPPER CAMPUS)



WELCOME TO BARRIE'S TODDLER PROGRAM!

At Barrie every family is important, and we hope that your family quickly feels at home and part of the Barrie Community.

This handbook is a supplement to the Barrie School Family Guide, which answers your questions about school-wide policies and procedures. The Toddler Handbook is specific to your child 12 months- 35 months and details the practices and guidelines relating to our toddler classrooms. Please take the time to read through this information. We hope you will keep it handy and refer to it often.

The Handbook is recently updated and arranged in sections to make it easier to find what you are searching for. Look to the Table of Contents for quick referencing on information related to each topic. Toddler Teachers are always available if you need additional information.

The Toddler Team wishes your family a great year of learning and fun!

<u>1T Classes</u>			
<u>Lead Montessori Teacher</u>	<u>Montessori Intern</u>	<u>Assistant Teacher</u>	<u>Location</u>
Jill Nowacek	Rosa Castaneda	Meltrine Kilcoyne	Founders 2
Nong Kingpuwarak	-----	Chandani Uyanwaththa	Founders 1A

<u>2T Classes</u>			
<u>Lead Montessori Teacher</u>	<u>Montessori Intern</u>	<u>Assistant Teacher</u>	<u>Location</u>
Agnes Osafo	Jaqueline Alvarenga	Ameerah Clemons	Founders 1B
Bridget Uptgrow	Trevion Fullerton	-----	Founders 3
Sherita Sargusingh	-----	Andrea Romero	Neubert 2

THE MONTESSORI TODDLER CURRICULUM

The Barrie School Toddler curriculum is designed to meet the specific developmental needs of the ever-inquisitive toddler. It is our belief that children learn best by doing; therefore, the environment is set up to allow maximum participation in classroom life.

The responsibility of care of self is practiced daily, as the children learn dressing skills, toileting, and proper handwashing. The children love to participate in food prep exercises each morning and share their efforts with peers. Caring for the classroom environment, whether it's sweeping and mopping up spills or the care of classroom plants and pets, are essential organizational routines that help children assume responsibility for and pride in their learning.

The materials on the shelves offer a wide variety of choices to allow students to practice decision making by choosing independently the "work" that calls to their particular Sensitive Period, from Practical Life, Sensorial, Math, Language, and Art materials. Pre-literacy skills are an essential component of each area, as activities joyfully develop a child's concentration, eye-hand coordination, dominant hand preference, eye tracking, initial sound/object matching, patterning/sequencing, book handling, etc.

Getting Familiar with Montessori Concepts

- Freedom & Responsibility: This is the ability of the child to explore the classroom environment at free will, within the limits of safety and the avoidance of potential hazards. Students have the freedom to explore the classroom at will, utilizing available materials and activities that spur their own interests at a comfortable pace. Responsibilities are formed by building an innate understanding of the schedule, classroom expectations, peer respect, and environmental care-taking abilities.
- Sensitive Periods: Blocks of time when a child is intrinsically interested in and able to master certain tasks. There are sensitive periods for order, for minute details and objects, for the use of hands, for walking, and for language. During these periods, the child works with all his or her might at perfecting these abilities.
- A Prepared Environment: The learning environment in a Montessori program is developed to meet the needs of children based on observable behaviors, such as age range and interest. The Prepared Environment offers an array of work materials that enhances a student's understanding of their world by experimenting with aspects of the teacher-created Prepared Environment.
- Indirect Preparation for Learning: Maria Montessori developed materials that would enable young children to learn skills in steps, at levels they could master. She provided interesting, unrelated manipulative tasks through which the child could simultaneously perfect his/her dexterity and, unknowingly, master all the subskills of more complex tasks like buttoning a coat or tying a shoe.
- Work: Maria Montessori observed that children learn well by engaging in many purposeful activities of their own choosing/liking. When children can choose what they would like to do, they do not have the need to differentiate between work and play. Purposeful work is used in the classroom and outdoors.
- Work Cycle: A general work cycle begins with the choosing of an activity, utilizing the activity, then calmly returning the activity to where it originated and ready to be used by another, and then experiencing a deep sense of satisfaction. Students may repeat several work cycles in one morning.

Students are encouraged to complete a work cycle daily, building a sense of order, concentration, cooperation, and independence.

Helpful Skills for Toddlers to Have before Coming to School

For those 12 months-2 years:

- Feeding themselves (finger foods are a good choice for the youngest)
- Holding and drinking from a sippy cup or water bottle
- Walking and cruising (taking steps while holding onto a stable object)
- Sitting at a toddler-size table in a toddler-size chair
- Gesturing to communicate (shaking head yes or no, waving hello)

For those 2-3 Years:

- Following 2-step directions (example: stand up and push in your chair)
- Playing alongside peers
- Walking up and down stairs holding on
- Drinking from an open cup
- Using a spoon or fork when eating
- Able to sit during circle time

Toddler Specialist Classes Offered

The children will start specialist activities after they are comfortable at school.

Our Barrie Toddlers enjoy PE Classes each week. Each class lasts approximately 20 to 30 mins.

- Physical Education in the Strauss Gym (30 mins)

Phase-In Schedule and Rationale

We begin the year with a structured phase-in schedule. Day one will be a 30 minute visit with a parent. Day two will be 30 minutes without a parent. Day three will be 9-11am, with no lunch serviced. Monday will be 8:30-3 without extended care. Tuesday will be the first full day with extended day included.

Please be sure that you free up your work schedule to help provide a comfortable and secure start to the school year for your child. Whether your child has had previous experiences away from you or not, our long term goal for all students is that they easily separate from you without tears or anxiety so that you, too, can be fully attentive to your day's work. It is most beneficial to your child to have the same adult bring him/her to school during this period and to use the same, confident good-bye routine each day. Due to COVID all drop offs will be outside of the classroom. No adult is allowed inside. At drop off temperatures will be taken and parents need to stay six feet away from the door area.

Non-Walkers Safety Policy

The most readily visible sensitive period is for walking. Children are driven by an irresistible impulse in their attempts to walk, and so we must take special precautions within our classroom environment that protect without hindering the child's freedom to zealously master this function, especially when the child is in the pre-walking stages of crawling, pulling up, and cruising prior to fully independent walking. Using Montessori's

caution for providing freedom within limits, we reserve the right to prioritize safety concerns for non-walkers in both a developmentally appropriate indoor room assignment and an outdoor gross motor area.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

Car Seat and Booster Seat Policy

Parents must abide by legal requirements for transporting their child(ren) to and from school each day in an appropriate car seat or booster seat. Parents may utilize safety booster seats by 2.5 years old.

For both school staff and student personal safety, we ask that:

- Children unbuckle themselves, or have parents assist them
- If the child is upset to separate from his/her family member, or resistant to getting out of the car, the parent must park and walk the child in, as carpool supervisors are not permitted to carry or walk an upset child to class

We are unable to store a car or booster seat in a classroom or on campus, so please consider car/booster seat requirements when alternate drivers pick-up/drop-off your child. Walking students safely to and from the car circle up to their classrooms is full, hands-on responsibility for carpool supervisors, and it is compromised if a car seat accompanies a child. Barrie School is not responsible for loss or damage to a car/booster seat left untended on the campus.

School Hours for Toddlers

Monday through Friday 9:00 am to 3:15 pm unless your child is in the Extended Day program.

Half day options end at 12 pm

Extended Day Options for Toddlers

Barrie's Extended Day Program offers a warm and nurturing environment, which meets the social, emotional, cognitive, and physical needs of your child. While respecting the individuality of your child's development, the program fosters a sense of community within the group, encourages learning amongst the children, and enhances your child's emerging social skills. Barrie offers both drop-in and school-year extended day programming to include options for half and full-day conference and professional days. Timing of the programs are below.

7:00-8:30 am and 3:15-6:00 pm (School Days)

7:30 am-6:00 pm (Professional Development Days)

Full-time and drop-in usage of the program are available by advance arrangement with the Extended Day Director, Jennifer Protil jprotil@barrie.org, or the Business Office, Ashley Thomas athomas@barrie.com.

Arrival in the Morning

Morning drop-off begins at 8:30 a.m., with the school day beginning promptly at 9:00 a.m. If you need to drop off your child early, Morning Extended Day begins at 7:00 a.m. There is a drop-in fee if you have not signed up for this service. Should you arrive after 9:00 a.m., please park, sign-in at the Lower School Office, and then walk your child to the classroom or specialist activity, as the case may be.

Drop Off Tips

We believe that a brief but loving good-bye is the simplest, easiest transition from you to the classroom. We encourage you to help foster your child's independence by saying good-bye with a quick hug and confidently exiting their sight. Let your child take care of his/her things. It is crucial during the early weeks of the school year to not stay in sight for long.

Due to COVID adults may not enter the classroom. All drop offs will be outside the room and the child will walk in independently after temperatures are being checked.

Dismissal

Children are walked to the car pick-up circle to wait for the car pick-up to begin at 3:15 pm. Car pick-up begins as soon as all the classes are safely in the car pick up circle, and continues until 3:30 pm. If you need to pick up your child from the classroom prior to 3:15 pm, please arrive before 2:40 pm, as the bridge closes between 2:45-3:10 pm during dismissal. Go to the Lower School Office to sign out your child, and then wait outside the classroom until your child can be brought out to you. If you choose the car circle, you need to stay in your car and allow the teacher to put your child into their car seat to allow the flow to continue.

CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR

Dressing for Comfort and Activity

Because the children participate in many daily activities, both indoors and out, it is important that they are dressed in comfortable, durable, weather-appropriate play clothes that will adapt to food spills, paint, sand, and water play. Getting dirty is to be expected. Children will be taught to put his/her clothing on and off without assistance; let's set them up for success!

Commercial clothing and accessories are clothes or items marketed to children by the corporations of Disney, Marvel, Hasbro, etc. We discourage these clothes for school because the outfits tend to control or influence children's play. If a little boy is wearing Iron Man, he tends to want to imitate that behavior during play, often exclusively. If a little girl is wearing Jasmine, Elsa, etc., those movie scenarios tend to dominate her play. Please try to choose noncommercial clothing and accessories and avoid clothes, backpacks, lunch boxes, etc. with the commercialized figures often associated with movie scripts or video games.

Labeling All Items

Everything that comes into school needs to have your child's name visible for the teacher to see what belongs to each child. We encourage you to purchase personalized, waterproof and washable name labels for your child's belongings; they can be purchased online at a very reasonable price. You can also write your child's name on each piece of clothing with an indelible marker. Please also write your child's name on the outside of his/her lunchbox.

Should your child lose clothing or other possessions, check the Lower School Office for the Lost and Found. Barrie is not responsible for lost or damaged items.

Shoes

Children go for walks along wooded paths, so sturdy, closed-toe footwear is essential. Shoes with Velcro closures are preferred. Rain/snow boots are also needed. For the classroom, children will need one pair of indoor shoes or slippers that will stay at school. Choose a pair that is easy for your child to independently put

on and take off. Please keep indoor shoes as simple as possible – crocs or slippers are fine - and refrain from designs with characters, lights, sounds, etc.

Pants and Shorts

Pants that are easily pulled up and down help with independence. Elastic waists work best with diapers, and older toddlers can get pants off quickly to prevent a toileting accident when nature is quick to call!

Party Dresses

There's a time and a place for everything, so please save those expensive, incredibly gorgeous dresses for more formal occasions. We'd hate to limit a child's experience because of their clothing.

Outdoor Play Preparations

Fresh air and exercise are important to a child's good health. Weather permitting, we take all of the children outside daily. We carefully monitor outdoor activities and provide adequate water and shade. Sunscreen can be applied at home to start the day. During extreme weather, we provide indoor activities.

If your child is not well enough to participate in outdoor activities, s/he should probably not be at school.

Waterproof insulated boots, hats, waterproof mittens, and warm coats are required for winter. Boots and rain gear are needed for rain showers in fall and spring.

Backpacks

When choosing a backpack for school, be sure to purchase a backpack large enough to hold a lunchbox, extra clothes, and nap items. Large backpacks that can hold these items make it more convenient for the children to get to the car pick up area. If your child goes to Extended Day, you want a backpack spot that can hold an extra diaper or change of clothes to travel back and forth.

What Your Child Should Bring to School – A Summary Checklist

- Two changes of name-labeled clothes, including shirts, pants, socks, underwear to keep at school
- One pair of labeled waterproof boots to be left at school; snow boots for winter season; indoor slippers or soft shoes
- One labeled lunchbox (foods to be heated need to be sent in microwaveable containers)
- Daily, one extra piece of whole fruit for "Fruit Snack" at the end of the day
- A backpack that will hold a lunchbox, clothes, nap linens
- Bug spray and sunscreen to keep at school, labeled
- Diapers and wipes, replenished often
- Reusable Wet bag
- Non-breakable, name-labeled water bottle

NUTRITION

Water

Bottled water is available all-day to regularly refill water bottles brought from home.

Snacks

A morning snack is provided daily. Please let us know if your child has any allergies.

Please send a prepared, cut up fruit for afternoon snack.

Lunch

Our teachers make every effort to ensure that mealtime is pleasant and a social learning experience. They will model table manners and trying new foods for the children as they enjoy lunch with the children.

We begin lunch around 11:30 am. We encourage the children to help set up the lunch table, pour drinking water, and open any food containers by themselves. Please remember to include two cloth napkins (one to use as a placemat and one to use as a personal napkin) and eating utensils each day. We encourage the children to eat at least one half of their sandwich or main dish.

When preparing your child's bag lunch, remember to pack a food item from each of these food groups: protein, carbohydrate, fruit, and vegetable. Sugary treats will not be served to your child if they are included in the lunch.

Children are encouraged to be as independent as possible with the eating and packing up of their lunches. We ask the children to put uneaten portions back in their lunchboxes so you are aware of what is being eaten. You can discuss with your children what they like and would prefer to eat at school.

Lunch Tips

- Children are not permitted to share food at school during lunchtime
- Find containers that are easy for your child to open
- Candy and gum are not allowed
- Choking is a hazard in toddlers. Round, hard, thick and sticky, and smooth foods are implicated in choking incidents in young children. Examples include raw carrot rounds, whole grapes, hard candy, nuts, popcorn, and chunks of meat that are larger than what can be swallowed whole. Foods that present a risk for choking should be avoided or cut/modified at home to reduce choking risk. For example, whole grapes should be cut into bite-sized pieces. Information on choking and food safety can be found at: <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/preschoolers-food-safety>

Beverages

You may send in a daily drink (e.g., juice box, thermos of juice or milk), although we do provide water at snack times and 1% milk at lunch, as well as cups for all beverages. Soda is not allowed.

Parents who wish for us to provide their breast milk will need to provide it in a storage container that is labeled with the toddler's name and date the milk was expressed. It will be placed in either the freezer or the refrigerator, as needed. Teachers will look to these storage guidelines to determine if expressed milk can be given. The guidelines include:

- If at room temperature (up to 78 degrees) = 6-8 hours

- Refrigerated (39 degrees or lower) – up to 5 days from date milk was expressed
- Freezer with separate doors from refrigerator – stored no more than 3 months from date expressed; we do encourage expressed milk to be frozen in an effort to conserve it for a longer period of time.
- If children are breastfed after the age of 12 months, the introduction of cow milk will be at the mother's discretion. Breastfed children will receive breast milk in a cup.

PERSONAL CARE

Baby Bottles Policy

Our policy is not to allow baby bottles in school, and we are happy to help your child learn how to drink from a cup. Between 9-12 months of age is the recommended time frame to wean a child off of a bottle and to introduce sippy cups/cups by 6 months. We provide individual cups for each child, and we will guide your child in their use.

Research supports the risks of prolonging the use of baby bottles

- Prolonged usage of a feeding bottle can cause teeth damage; decay happens when sweetened liquids like milk or formula cling to baby teeth for a long time, especially as saliva production slows at night. Bacteria in the mouth thrive on this sugar and make acids that attack the delicate teeth.
- Early loss of baby teeth can cause developmental delays, such as self-feeding, the ability to learn how to chew, speech problems and crooked permanent teeth
- Bottle usage sometimes causes toddlers to avoid eating solid food, thereby not meeting nutritional needs
- Milk that collects in bedtime bottle feeding drains into the Eustachian canals and cause hearing delays; never allow your child to fall asleep with a bottle containing anything but water.

Tips for introducing a sippy cup at home

- Give children an opportunity to play and experiment with cups during the weaning process
- Look for a sippy cup that is sturdy, spill-proof, weighted on the bottom so it won't tip over, and easy to grab.
- Let the child take her/his time getting sippy cup acclimated. Then try holding the cup to your youngster's mouth and letting a few drops trickle in. Remember to let the child swallow before offering more – otherwise, s/he might gag or the fluid may trickle right back out of his/her mouth.
- <https://www.whattoexpect.com/first-year/ask-heidi/introducing-sippy-cup.aspx>

Pacifier Policy

For regulated health reasons, our policy is that pacifiers are not allowed in school, though you may choose to continue them at home. In a group setting, sterilization procedures to appropriately clean dropped pacifiers, as well as the risk of cross-contamination, severely limits our ability to permit the use of pacifiers.

Research supports the risks of prolonging the use of pacifiers

The long-term use of a pacifier (past the age of two) influences the shape of the mouth and the alignment of the teeth, because as babies and toddlers mature physically, their jaws grow around anything held inside on a repeat basis, according to the [American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry \(AAPD\)](#).

Pacifiers impede normal development of tongue and lip muscles and movements due to the unnatural position imposed on these structures by the presence of the pacifier. Many speech-language pathologists recommend stopping pacifier use by 12-18 months of age, which is when speech and language development really begins to “take off.”

Pacifier sucking may impair the functioning of the Eustachian tube by changing its patency, and the pressure balance between the nasopharynx and the middle ear, causing chronic otitis media.

(<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov>)

Tips for Eliminating the Use of Pacifiers

- Avoid using a pacifier as a way to stop your infant or toddler from crying. Pacifiers are meant to satisfy intense sucking needs– not to delay or avoid nurturing a child or responding to his or her needs.
- At bedtime, encourage your child to use a small, stuffed animal or other “lovey” to comfort him/herself. Start early with letting him/her help you put the pacifier in a box on a shelf when the child awakes, and encourage him/her to cuddle the stuffed animal instead.
- If you let your child walk around with a pacifier in his/her mouth, it’s best to teach them they can only use it while sitting down or in a particularly stressful situation (like visiting the doctor). Most toddlers want to wander around, but if they are taught they must sit with their pacifiers, they may give them up on their own.
- Prepare your child for getting rid of his/her pacifier. Set a special date (their birthday, Christmas, etc.) and let your child put stickers on a calendar as a countdown while gradually decreasing the pacifier’s use. Be sure to offer lots of attention and a substitute for comfort when needed. Many children will respond to these suggestions and get rid of their pacifiers with minimal tears, and the benefits far outweigh a few “fussy” days. <https://scpitc.org>
- By two years old, a child can get quite attached to a pacifier and can even start to see it as part of themselves. So ideally, it would be best to get rid of the pacifier in the first 12 to 18 months.

DIAPERING AND TOILET LEARNING

Part I – Diapering

Diapering is a basic caregiving routine. It is done with respect and the cooperation of your toddler. We diaper with your child standing up. This allows the participation of your child in the pulling up and down of their pants during diaper changes. This is an early awareness of future toileting independence.

What diapering items you should send to school

A one-month supply of diapers and wipes should be sent in on the first day of each month:

- A full sleeve of diapers; recommended amounts:
 - Half-day students: 1 regular pack of 25 diapers and an 80-count Wipes
 - Full-day students: 1 double pack of 50 diapers and 160-count Wipes
 - Extended day students: 1 triple pack of 75 diapers and 160-count Wipes
- Diaper cream (optional) marked with your child’s name

- A box or large pack of wipes labelled with your child's name
- Diapers are checked and changed throughout the day. You will be notified through the Kaymbu Daily Note of your child's elimination, especially concerning BMs.

Diapering Policy

OCC policy is to check diapers every ½ hour for children under the age of three and every hour for children over the age of three. For the health, wellness, and safety of the children, we do not allow for the use of cloth diapers. Only disposable diapers are permitted and need to be supplied by the family. In the case that a child has soiled their clothing, his/her clothes will be placed in a bag and sent home to be washed.

Please note: Children must be fully toilet trained before moving up to a Primary Classroom. They may not return to a Toddler Class, but must remain at home until the toileting process is complete. Primary Classes are not licensed for diapering.

Part II – Using the Toilet

Toilet learning is one of the most basic physical needs of young children. It could also be one of the most challenging to accomplish. Here at Barrie, we work hand in hand with families to help accomplish this step in your toddler's life.

We will watch and observe for signs of readiness, both physical and emotional. We are interested in your thoughts and observations as well. Together we will decide on the best time to jump in with both feet and begin the toileting journey.

Some readiness signs to watch for are:

- A toddlers' recognition that they have just eliminated
- A toddler's discomfort with a soiled diaper
- A toddler's interest and willingness to sit on the toilet
- A toddler's ability to remain dry for an extended period

Each child is an individual, so the time frame for learning how to use the toilet will be different for each child. Therefore, awareness of the signs of readiness are important to success. Some children will be ready at 18 months, while others may not show signs of readiness until closer to two years of age.

When you and your child's teacher decide to begin the process with your toddler, the use of cotton training pants is recommended. Pull-Ups do not allow the child to feel sufficiently wet. The feeling of wetness is necessary for your child's understanding that an accident has occurred. Your child should be dressed for success! No onesies, belts, overalls, or snap/buttons pants should be worn. The use of easy elastic waist pants is the best choice for the early days of toileting.

Please discuss your toddler's individual needs with your classroom teacher, so that a plan and appropriate expectations can be communicated. Your teacher will be happy to guide your family through the process.

Nap Time

The children go down for a daily nap at approximately 12:30 pm and rest until 2:30 pm. Children are required to rest their bodies during nap time. Children who do not sleep remain on their cots and quietly look at books while they rest.

Cots are provided; we do not use cribs at school, though you may choose to use them at home. We will provide a fitted bottom sheet, but you will need to provide a small blanket and a tote bag to hold these personal items. You may also choose to send in a small pillow and/or stuffed animal for your child to use at nap time.

Transitional objects, like small blankies and stuffed animals, often help children adjust to or feel safe in a new environment. Please consider these factors when helping your child choose appropriate items to bring from home:

- Items should be able to fit into a child's cubby
- Items should not present choking hazards or encourage aggressive behavior (superhero or war toys)
- Bedding will be sent home once a week to be home laundered; pillows and stuffed animals can remain at school

SCHOOL EVENTS AND GATHERINGS

Birthdays

We celebrate birthdays at morning snack time with a special ceremony. Please give us advance notice of when you would like to have your child's birthday acknowledged in the classroom. On the day we are celebrating your child's birthday, please send in a photograph for each year of your child's life. Birthday treats due to COVID will need to be brought in by each child, from their own home. Teacher's will notify parents beforehand and work out details. We can't share any food during this time and would still like to celebrate with the class.

Holidays/Cultural Celebrations

We acknowledge various holidays and cultural celebrations throughout the year. We do not discuss the religious aspects of any holidays or cultural celebrations. If you would like to have a particular holiday or cultural celebration acknowledged in the classroom, please let us know so we can plan ahead. You are welcome to share your knowledge of any particular holidays or cultural celebrations with the class.

Lower School Events

Due to COVID: All of these events will look different- please be patient and wait to hear about things as regulations change.

- Back to Barrie Night: During this event, parents can expect to receive important start of school information, sign forms, sign up to volunteer, meet teachers and administrators, and learn about all things Barrie. This is an adults-only program with no childcare provided.
- International Children's Day: On this special day in October, each child may choose to dress in any country's cultural attire that they would like to represent. Parents are welcome to join. We have a parade where most of the Montessori children will walk around the circle. Following the parade is an assembly with music. Lunchtime is a potluck, each child brings food that represents a country of their choosing. Because all food is shared with everyone in the class, children with allergies should bring a lunch. Please label the food you bring with the ingredients it contains so that potential allergens can be avoided.
- Montessori Mornings: These are parent participation events held twice a year. You are welcome to come into the classroom and spend time with your child. During this time, you are there to observe and be a part of your child's class. Please be mindful and respect the environment.

- Song Fest: In the winter, before we leave for our break we will have a Song Fest where the toddlers sing a few songs together as a full group. We will have a potluck and enjoy food together. Please send the ingredient list for children with allergies.
- Grandparents/Special Friends Day: This day is a time for Grandparents or a Special Friend to come into the classroom. The morning is similar to Montessori Mornings, with a Head of School presentation to start the day.
- Thanksgiving Feast: This event is a gathering that the entire toddler community participates in together. Each classroom makes a dish to share and we celebrate Thanksgiving in one room with all the toddlers.
- End of the Year Toddler Celebration: This event is held on the last day of school; it is a time to celebrate the entire school year and say goodbye to each other. This is a full toddler Community Potluck.
- Parent Education Nights: There will be several opportunities throughout the school year to participate in Parent Education gatherings. Next Steps Night is one where you can learn about the next level and what it looks like. Flyers will be sent out on other Parent Education nights. Bridget Uptgrow, buptgrow@barrie.org, is the parent education coordinator for the school.
- Our Wide Use of the Campus:
 - This 45 acres of land has many places for the toddlers to explore
 - In the woods, there are shallow creek spots to throw rocks into the creek. There are many fallen down trees that the children can climb over. There are also several paths that can be walked throughout the campus.
 - The field is an open area before you drive over the bridge that can be used as well, offering lots of freedom for movement. The children love running back and forth.
 - The Horse Barn and Horse Field are always a favorite spot to visit. Being able to have horses on campus gives the children a great opportunity to enjoy horses at any time of the year.
 - On rainy days, if the toddlers aren't jumping in puddles they often go to the pavilion to play.
 - The Toddler Playground is a fenced-in area located behind Neubert Cottage where the children can have outdoor play time. There will also be opportunities to explore the Primary Playground that is located behind Founders and McDermott Halls. We have a second one that can be used, behind the primary building on the pebbles, as well.
 - There is a car coaster on the side of Founders Hall with which the children learn to take turns going up and down on. This coaster is a ride that they then push back and put the incline for the next friend.
 - One classroom has an outdoor deck that all the classrooms can use. There are some outdoor activities in this space.
 - The amphitheater is a spot where the whole school can meet; we use this space to let the toddlers test their balance and climb up and down. They also enjoy dancing on the stage.
 - The pond is a great place to explore and watch wild animals in their natural habitat. There is a great spot to practice balancing.
 - The Strauss Gym can be used in case of inclement weather; it gives the children the freedom to run and explore with balls or other materials that are provided.
 - In the Makerspace on the lower campus, there are Lego, pegs and other open-ended materials for the toddler to explore
 - There are several trails around campus that can be walked and used to explore the woods:

- The lower campus Gazebo is a place where the toddlers can explore and roll down a small hill
- Basketball Island, next to the creek and lower campus field, is an open area that gives lots of shade while toddlers explore
- The Bridge, with its safety bars, allows children to stand over the creek as they throw leaves down to watch them float away
- The Campfire Circle is a spot where toddlers climb up and over tree stumps and dance on the platforms

COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN TODDLER TEACHERS AND HOME

You will receive a phone call and/or email should the teacher or nurse need to notify you of an accident or illness that happens during the school day.

Toddler teachers send home a monthly newsletter which contains the dates of upcoming activities and celebrations. There will always be a daily electronic communication that contains information about your child's day.

We use Transparent Classroom and Parent Square in the classroom to securely take and store photos of your child for our records and to give you a visual glimpse of your child's day. You can download the app onto your phone through the App Store.

A weekly school-wide email is sent from the Interim Head of the Lower School. This email will contain upcoming events and reminders.

Teachers usually check email daily from 1:30 to 2:15, while the children are napping. We will get back to you within 24 hours. If you need to get a message to us immediately, please call the Lower School Office (301-576-2832).

Parent-Teacher Conferences occur twice per year, in October and April. You will hear from us should we need to meet with you any earlier and, of course, please contact us if you have any questions or concerns.

Student Progress Reports for the toddler level are narrative in format and are sent out two times a year, in January and in June.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Pets in the Classrooms

Parents are always informed of the presence of a pet in the classroom. We follow strict OCC guidelines regarding pets. Classroom and visiting pets are chosen carefully, considering first any student allergies, then the animal's health, temperament, hygiene, risk of disease transmission, and willingness to be a friendly companion for children.

Biting Policy

Very young children occasionally respond to conflict by biting. Biting is a natural developmental stage that is quite common in the toddler years. It is usually a temporary stage that is outgrown in time. At Barrie, we work with students on conflict resolution in order to help children learn more acceptable ways to resolve conflict. In addition to modeling and scaffolding for children who need support in this area, the following steps are taken in order to cease biting behavior:

- For the first and second occurrence: Parents of both children are notified by teachers or nurse of the incident. For privacy purposes, we do not disclose the names of the children involved.
- For the child who was bitten, the teacher or nurse will evaluate for injury (teeth marks, broken skin, bruising), and appropriate first aid procedures are taken. The teacher or nurse will contact parents and send home a medical incident report to the family of the child.

There are several things the teachers do to prevent biting from happening again:

- The teacher will keep the focus of caring attention on the bitten child first.
- Modeling empathy, the teacher will tell the biting child that “biting hurts” and biting is unacceptable and dangerous.
- The teacher will help the child who is biting work on resolving conflict or frustration in a more appropriate manner, including using language if the child is able.
- Parents of older toddlers (2+) are asked to encourage their child to practice using words to express anger/frustration and to practice asking for help from an adult.

For continued occurrences: Notification procedures are followed. The case will then be referred to the Student Services Support Team (SSST), who will set up a consultation with the teacher and an observation during class time. The parents of the child who bit will then be asked to meet with the head of the lower school and the classroom teacher; a member of the SSST may also attend. A follow-up plan will be put in place. This may include, but not be limited to, shadowing the child, referral to outside professionals, and short term removal from school. In the most extreme cases where community safety is a concern, a disciplinary response (including permanent removal from school) may be considered.

All About Biting: Most Common Reasons and Solutions for Biting

Biting is very common among groups of young children. It can be an emotionally-charged problem for parents and caregivers. As children develop, they will encounter tension- and anxiety-producing situations and depending upon where a child is in their development, the child may manifest some unacceptable behaviors. Try to remain calm when biting occurs. Understanding why the young child bites is the first step in preventing biting as well as teaching the child alternatives to biting.

The Experimental Biter: It is not uncommon for a toddler to explore their world, including people, by biting. Toddlers place many items in their mouths to learn more about them. Teach the child that some things can be bitten, like toys and food, and some things cannot be bitten, like people and animals. Another example of the Experimental Biter is the toddler who wants to learn about cause and effect. This child is wondering, ‘What will happen when I bite my friend or mommy?’

The Teething Biter: infants and toddlers experience a lot of discomfort when their teething. A natural response is to apply pressure to their gums by biting on things. It is not unusual for a teething child to bear down on another. Provide appropriate items for the child to use to satisfy discomfort by supplying soft rings or other appropriate items.

The Social Biter: Many times a toddler bites when they are trying to interact with another child. These young children have not yet developed the social skills to indicate, ‘Hi, I want to play with you.’ So sometimes they approach a friend with a bite to say hello. Watch young children very closely to assist them in positive interactions with their friends.

The Frustrated Biter: Young children are often confronted with situations that are frustrating, like when a friend takes their toy, or you are unable to respond to their needs as quickly as they would like. These toddlers

lack the social and emotional skills to cope with their feelings in an acceptable way. They also lack the language skills to communicate their feelings, like anger or frustration. At these times it is not unusual for a toddler to attempt to deal with these strong feelings by biting whoever's nearby. Notice when a child is struggling with frustration and be ready to intervene. It is also important to provide words for the child to help him learn how to express his/her feelings, like "That's mine!" or "No! Don't push me!" or "You are too close to me!"

The Threatened Biter: When some young children feel a sense of danger they respond by biting as a self-defense. For some children, biting is a way to try to gain a sense of control over their lives, especially when they are feeling overwhelmed by the environment or unexpected events. Provide the toddler with nurturing support, to help them understand that he and his possessions are safe.

The Imitative Biter: Imitation is one of the many ways young children learn, so it is not unusual for a child to observe another bite and try it out for themselves. Offer the child many examples of loving, kind behavior. Never bite the child to demonstrate how it feels to be bitten.

The Attention Seeking Biter: Children love attention, especially from adults. Provide lots of positive attention to young children each day. When adults give lots of attention for negative behavior, such as biting, children learn that biting is a good way to get your attention.

The Power Biter: Toddlers have a strong need for independence and control. Very often the response children get for biting helps to satisfy this need. Provide many opportunities for the toddler to make simple choices throughout the day. This will help the toddler feel the sense of control they need. It is also important to reinforce all the toddler's attempts at positive social behavior each day.

Resources that offer support for toddler biting and other common toddler issues:

- www.pepparent.org offers local classes to help with a multitude of common parent and child issues
- www.handinhandparenting.org is a great website that addresses many common toddler issues, including biting
- www.janetlansbury.com for information on biting as well as a wide variety of topics relating to infants & toddlers
- www.zerotothree.org is a website created by the National Center for Infants, Toddlers, and Families. They have a wonderful and thorough section on common behavior challenges.
- <http://ceep.crc.uiuc.edu/poptopics/biting.html> is a Clearinghouse on Early Education and Parenting

Helpful Books on the Subject for Adult Reads:

- *The Montessori Toddler: A Parent's Guide to Raising a Curious and Responsible Human Being*, by Simone Davies
- *1, 2, 3, The Toddler Years*, by Irene Van der Zande
- *The Secret Lives of Toddlers, A Parent's Guide to the Wonderful, Terrible, Fascinating Behavior of Children Ages 1 to 3*, by Jana Murphy
- *The Biting Solution*, by Lisa Poelle

Great Children's Books on Biting:

- *Teeth Are Not for Biting*, by Elizabeth Verdick (also others in this series on hitting, kicking, etc.)
- *No Biting*, by Karen Katz
- *No Biting, Louise*, by Margie Palatini

ILLNESS – WHEN TO KEEP YOUR CHILD HOME FROM SCHOOL

Due to COVID-19 please check the School Health Services Handbook under the community tab on the website for more details.

Deciding when to keep a sick child at home from school is not always easy, especially with toddlers. While it is important for children to attend school and not miss instructional days, when a child is truly sick, they need to stay home in the care of an adult to get well and to prevent spreading illness to others within the classroom.

What are important signs of illness?

- A temperature of 100°F
- Sore throat
- Nausea or vomiting
- Rash or infection of the skin
- Diarrhea
- Red or pink eye
- Persistent/severe headache
- Stomach pain (severe/persistent)
- Uncontrollable cough
- Loss of energy or decrease in activity

What should I do if my child has any of these signs?

If your child has any of these symptoms, your child is not permitted at school until he or she is clear of these symptoms for 24 hours.

If the symptoms are severe or persist for more than 24 hours, you should contact your pediatrician. There may be times that your child does not show signs of the above-noted symptoms but may be ill and not feeling well. It is up to you to be alert to your child's health and to decide when it is best to send him/her to school even if the symptoms above are not present. Please let the Lower School Office know if your student will be out due to an illness by calling 301-576-2832 or sending an email montessorifrontoffice@barrie.org

When may my child return to school after an illness?

The Centers for Disease Control recommends that individuals stay home “until at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit or 37.8 degrees Celsius) or signs of a fever (chills, feeling very warm, flushed appearance, or sweating) without the use of fever-reducing medicine.”

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/school/guidance.htm>

Generally, your child may return to school when s/he is free of signs of illness. However, there may be times when it is necessary for your child to see your source of medical care before returning to school. Please call the school nurse if you have any questions regarding a specific condition.

What will happen if my child becomes ill at school?

If your child complains of being sick or is not well enough to participate in classroom activities, we will contact you directly. Therefore, it is important that you provide the school with up-to-date contact information and current phone numbers in case it is necessary to contact you to pick up your child.

SAFETY PROCEDURES

While the Montessori philosophy allows for “freedom within limits,” and we want to encourage students to feel comfortable and to explore in their environment, we keep the safety of our students foremost in mind at Barrie.

We have a number of safety procedures in place:

- Exterior classroom doors are locked during the school day, 9:00 am-6:00 pm; they are unlocked 8:30-9:00 am for arrival.
- We have a sign-in and sign-out procedure in the Lower School Office for parents dropping off and picking up students outside of the established arrival and dismissal hours of the school day. We also have a sign-out sheet in the office for families taking their students out for an appointment in the middle of the day with plans to return later. This procedure ensures that the correct person is picking up the student in the afternoon and also gives us a sense of which students are in the building at any given time.
- We keep a current parent authorization file that strictly regulates who may pick up a child from school; if a person is not on our list, we will not release the child to that person. If we do not recognize a person picking up a child, the teacher will photocopy a photo ID and call the parent(s) before releasing the child.
- All staff are vigilant to watch for people we do not recognize. All visitors (including current parents) are asked to sign-in at the Lower School, Upper School, or Administration Offices where they will be issued a badge identifying them as a visitor.
- We practice emergency drills once a month with an alarm notification.
- In the event of a schoolwide emergency or unannounced school closure, parents will be notified using the school text message emergency notification system.
- We utilize head counts numerous times throughout the school day, particularly when children are in transition (i.e., when children leave the playground and once they arrive back in class)
- Our school has an Emergency Action Plan, with which teachers and staff are annually trained.

CHILD CARE LICENSING

Our Toddler and Primary classes are licensed by the Office of Child Care. Oversight relates to our facility, staff, health and safety, nutrition, staff-to-child ratios, and record keeping. Licensing requires annual inspections as well as maintaining additional paperwork with the Office of Childcare. The license is posted in the Lower School Office where the regulation and Barrie documentation is also available.

WHO TO CONTACT

Please visit [Who to Contact](#) for school-wide contact information.