



Woodland Hill

MONTESSORI SCHOOL

Toddler I (AM) and II (PM) Phase-In

We are so excited to welcome you and your child to the Woodland Hill Toddler Program. This time is important for the children as they become familiar with their new environment, ground rules, teachers, and classmates. After many years of working with toddlers, we have developed a schedule and method for helping them adjust that has been very successful. We appreciate your cooperation during the phase-in process.

The schedule for the first two weeks of school is attached. The children have been divided into two groups to facilitate their adjustment to the classroom. If your child is returning to the Toddler I (AM) or Toddler II (PM) program, they will still phase-in following the attached schedule. Children will attend for shorter periods of time during phase-in. This allows them to absorb the information and new experiences gradually, so they do not become overwhelmed. We find that by giving them this time during phase-in, the entire adjustment to school becomes much easier.

- Please plan to have **one parent** (or other person close to your child) available during the entire phase-in process.
- We ask that you come prepared with a book, magazine, or other “work” to occupy yourself during phase-in (silenced phones for e-mail, texting, etc. are fine, but please no laptops or tablet computers.)
- We conduct our phase-in in our outdoor, fenced classroom area. We place adult chairs outside for you to settle into and be as uninteresting as possible. Boring is good!
- Your presence will allow your child to feel comfortable, but by being “occupied” you will encourage them to try out this new environment and start connecting with the teachers. The teachers will be looking for signs that your child is ready for you to step away. When you and the teachers decide that your child is ready to accept your departure, we encourage you to say goodbye and move to your car, for a period of time. Although some children will cry when their parent says goodbye, it is an important part of the process. A quick goodbye is best with a set routine so your child knows what to expect.
- Two kisses and a hug, a high five and a wave, whatever you and your child decide will signal goodbye. Lingering after you have completed this ritual is confusing for your child – they are looking for your confidence and comfort with this new arrangement so that they can move forward.

- For the first couple of times you step out, please remain nearby so that we can call you back in if necessary.
- Eventually the children will be saying goodbye to you at the toddler door upon arrival.
- If your child is crying when you leave, that does not necessarily mean that they are not ready. Please feel free to call (518.283.5400) after 10 or 15 minutes to check and see how they are doing. Most likely they will be spending time with a teacher or happily engaged in an activity.
- If your child is returning to the toddler room, the phase-in process may be very short or non-existent. We will follow your child's lead; if they are saying goodbye at the door, please let them go. They will most likely complain when you return after only an hour.

To help keep things running smoothly we ask that you pay particular attention to your child's arrival and dismissal times. We have only a little time to refresh the classroom between groups and late pick-ups will make things difficult for the staff. We recognize that the Phase-in schedule may be stressful for parents; we genuinely appreciate your support. This is an investment of your time that really pays off. We know that you share our goal of a smooth and comfortable transition.

Thank you!

Ashley Campion, Tina Claus, and Lourdes Ortega