

Online Learning: Primary Offerings Fall 2020

Group Zoom Meetings

We have found that meeting in small groups of 4-8 (rather than the whole or half the class) allows children to feel more connection during our meetings. What we all miss most right now, and children especially, is social connection. In large groups, it is hard to hear, hard to get a chance to speak, hard to focus on faces on the screen, and the relationship becomes reduced to the teacher talking and the children listening. Small groups allow children to listen to each other, have conversations with friends and teachers, to ask and answer questions, to practice accountability, and to feel connected.

Offering a meeting in the same small group each week offers stability, consistency and routine. It allows them to warm up and spend quality time together. And it allows us to follow their lead- to bring the meeting to a close when they are fidgety and ready, or to extend the lesson if they are fully engaged and eager for more. They also allow us to present lessons and assess a child's engagement, reception and understanding of new concepts and work. This fall, lessons will make up a large part of our group zoom meetings (see Zoom Schedule below).

Some children do not like Zoom, and that is okay. Each meeting will be recorded and posted to Google Classroom where your child can watch it later without the pressure of it being "live." This can alleviate your child's stress around Zooming, and your stress around getting your child to sit in front of the computer when they don't want to. We want these to be fun, so that when your child comes to school, they have positive and happy associations with their guide and friends!

Read Aloud

The primary team will collaborate to bring regular Read Alouds to primary children. On any given day, you may hear Elizabeth, Eric, Shauna or Heather read a story or sing a song. As in the classroom, our books will reflect what we are learning about that week. These Read Alouds will be recorded and posted on Google Classroom throughout the week for children to watch. This was very popular last year, with children requesting to watch their favorite stories/songs over and over!

Recorded Lessons

The primary teachers will be working closely on curriculum to provide consistency, as well as opportunities to post relevant lessons to Google Classroom for children across classrooms to re-watch after their Zoom meeting is over. Being able to watch a lesson again is an extremely helpful tool in learning new concepts. In the classroom, we have the ability to offer points of interest or adjustments as a child works through a new lesson. In order to support this during Online Learning, we will record some lessons and post them on Google Classroom for children to watch and re-watch. This will be utilized most often for older children practicing more challenging lessons. You may see Eric give Elizabeth a lesson with the Movable Alphabet, or

Elizabeth giving Eric a lesson on the Addition Finger Charts, or you may see them working together to draw and write the names of the planets. Each week will bring new work!

Weekly Printables and Packets

The beauty of the Montessori environment is that every single thing in it is created to support the Primary child's development! The challenge during Distance Learning is how to translate these materials to something you can easily manage at home. And so, each week, we will offer a digital packet of materials that align with our lessons for the week. The packets might offer practice for writing, or materials for math practice, they might have work for writing and coloring the parts of a flower or fish, or making a map of the world. The packets will be designed according to each group, and will be reflections of the work we do in the classroom. If you do not have access to a printer, we will create a physical packet for you to pick up.

Google Classroom

Google Classroom is a place where we can offer an array of resources in one spot. Here we already have many **parent resources** for preparing the home environment, establishing schedules and routine, as well as articles that offer parent support. We will post our **read alouds** and our **recorded zoom meetings**. We will post our weekly **printables and packets** here. There are also ideas for **art projects** and **science experiments**. We will maintain some of what we posted during the spring, as well as making room for what the fall will bring.

Office Hours

Although we are all going through a global pandemic, each family's experience is unique, and the ways it affects us (parents and children alike) is going to look different as well. We are not able to *follow the child* the way we are accustomed to doing in the classroom, and so we need to create new channels to support children and families where they are right now- and that means connecting with you and hearing from you. Our hope in opening up these chunks of time is that we can make time to talk to you about what your family is going through and what your child needs. It is how we can *follow the child* and *follow the family* and offer the individualized and personalized experience that Montessori and Cedars embody. During this time of learning from home, you are not expected to turn into a teacher overnight, but we realize that many parents do feel that pressure. So we have created blocks of time throughout the week where we are here to support you. We will publish our Office Hours as we get closer to the start of school.

Online Learning: Zoom Schedule Fall 2020

This fall, our online curriculum will be primarily focused around working with children and maintaining regular connection throughout the week. We will continue to meet with children via Zoom in small groups to foster close interpersonal connection, social-emotional development, depth of conversation and learning, and strong engagement with lessons. This means teachers will dedicate the majority of their time to building and translating curriculum, and engaging in Zoom meetings with children. We will divide into 3-4 groups of children, depending on the number of children enrolled in each classroom. These groups will be created based on age, academic ability, social-emotional ability and needs (more on this below). This is a basic outline of a Primary child's weekly schedule. You will receive information about your child's group closer to the beginning of school.

Group A: ages 3-4

- Monday meeting: Sensorial, Practical life, Geography, Biology/Botany, or beginning Language lessons
- Wednesday meeting: Sensorial, Practical life, Geography, Biology/Botany, or beginning Language lessons
- Friday Lunch Club: lunch date with group and guide or assistant guide

Group B: ages 4-5

- Monday meeting: some Sensorial and Practical Life lessons; more Geography, Biology/Botany, Math, or Language lessons
- Wednesday meeting: some Sensorial and Practical Life lessons; more Geography, Biology/Botany, Math, or Language lessons
- Friday Lunch Club: lunch date with group and guide or assistant guide

Group C: ages 5-6

- Monday meeting: Lessons with Math, Language, Geography, or Biology/Botany
- Tuesday meeting: Lessons with Math, Language, Geography, or Biology/Botany
- Wednesday meeting: Lessons with Math, Language, Geography, or Biology/Botany
- Thursday meeting: Lessons with Math, Language, Geography, or Biology/Botany
- Friday Lunch Club: lunch date with group and guide or assistant guide

Note: These groups are subject to change as we observe and assess where each child is in terms of ability and needs, and which group is most appropriate for them at that moment. We foresee that these groups will be initially formed based on age, and will soon be adjusted based on ability. Adjustments will be made as we get to know new children and observe where they are. With this in mind, the cohorts are outlined according to age groups, but the foundation of *following the child* is understanding that all 3-year-olds are not at the same place, all 4-year-olds

are not at the same place, all 5-year-olds are not at the same place, etc., and our duty as a guides is to meet each child where they are. Additional group(s) may be added based on enrollment.