

Milestones for Primary Readiness

In transitioning from home, a community of toddlers, or another childcare setting into a Montessori Primary classroom, with its mixed age grouping of children 3 to 6 years old, a child embarks on an exciting new stage of growth and awareness. With the best interest of the child in mind—and to help ensure a smooth transition at this remarkable time of life—candidates for the Primary classroom should be demonstrating the following developmental and behavioral benchmarks 3-6 months prior to their first day in Primary:

Self-Care

- Dresses/undresses self.
- Puts on socks and shoes independently.
- Uses restroom with little or no assistance (occasional accidents okay). **(Must be wearing underwear consistently for three months prior to their first day in Primary) ****
- Washes hands without help.
- Uses eating utensils efficiently.
- Cleans up after self.

Social/Emotional

- Identifies and recognizes feelings in self and others.
- Responsive to guidance.
- Respects others' space and bodies.
- Displays feelings of empathy, comforts others.
- Increasingly independent and is capable of self-regulation.
- Able to sit for longer periods of time for group instruction (i.e., during Circle time).
- Able to follow group instructions for line up and transitions.
- Able to facilitate and participate in community – move from parallel play to interactive play with peers.

Language/Communication

- Articulates feelings and uses words to ask for needs ("I'm hungry" or "I need to use the potty") and sets boundaries with peers ("I don't like that" or "I'm playing with that").
- Broad vocabulary (Increases from 300 to approx. 1,200 understandable words between ages two and three) – should have around 3,000 words total.
- Forming and understanding more complex sentences (3-5 words long).
- Initiates and responds to simple conversations with peers.
- Able to follow multiple sequential directions independently with minimal teacher reminders (Example: 1. After snack, walk plate to trashcan, dump leftovers in garbage; 2. Wash plate; 3. Place plate on drying rack; 4. Push in chair; 5. Wipe table; 6. Wash hands and/or face; 7. Choose a work).
- Independent problem-solving in new situations (Example: drop plate, spill food = go get broom, sweep into dustpan, throw in trash).

**** IMPORTANT: Children who are not completely potty-trained will not be able to start the program in August (even if already enrolled in the program).** We are happy to provide guidance and support in this area prior to your child's start, and will be assessing children for readiness closer to the start of the school year. If we determine that your child is not demonstrating readiness, their enrollment will be deferred. If you have any questions or concerns about your child's readiness for Primary in this or any other area at anytime during the enrollment process, please call the office right away to speak with our Admissions Director or Head of School.

If you are interested in learning more about our Primary program or any of our other available programs, please visit the [Programs page](#) of our website.