

Children's House Classroom Observation Guide

Welcome, we hope you enjoy your visit and this opportunity for a glimpse into what life is like in a Montessori classroom. Observations are intended to be a way to view the entire classroom as a wonderful working community. Therefore, we will have a chair for you to sit in with a view of the room rather than exclusively working with your child. This will give you an opportunity to watch your child and their classmates as they interact and work in the Montessori environment.

Basics of Classroom Observations:

- An adult sized chair will be available for you to sit upon entering the room. This seat will provide a good view for observing the entire classroom.
- Children may say hello or ask what you are doing. Continue to observe after a quick smile or hello. A gentle reminder to go back to their work may be expressed.
- You are welcome to observe for approximately 20 minutes.

Making the Most Out of Your Observation:

- **Visual Perspective:** Try to view both your child and the entire classroom as a whole. Observe the freedom of movement which is purposely designed within the work cycle.
- **Auditory Perspective:** Listen to the noise level as it rises and falls. Observe the hum of children working together, the quiet of focused concentration, and the excitement of discovery.
- **Learning:** Notice that children learn in different ways. Some work cooperatively, some work independently, while others seem to move around the room watching. When children watch others they can gain as much knowledge as when they work independently or with others.
- **Child-Child Interaction:** Listen to the way the children communicate with each other. Listen for moments and grace and courtesy during conversations.
- **Teacher-Child Interaction:** See how the teachers interact with the children. Notice when a teacher may step in to assist or mindfully waits for the child to make his own discovery. Look for interactions that reflect respect of learning individuality.
- **Sociability:** Watch how different age levels interact with each other. See older children helping younger children. Younger children inspired to try a new things by watching older peers. See social activities and children learn the give and take of creating relationships and forming a community.

