

Signs of Readiness for the Mixed-Age Primary Classroom

"Little children, from the moment they are weaned, are making their way toward independence." -Maria Montessori

We are often asked by prospective parents if their child is ready for a preschool environment. In order to attend, children must be toileting independently and have outgrown the need to place objects in their mouths. Other skills we find necessary for success are listed below. We know that children develop at an individual pace, so please look at this list simply as things that will need to be worked on and practiced before and during your child's time at Fairview. Independence is a goal toward which we will work every day, and consistency at home, from you, is incredibly helpful.

- Child realizes the need to use the restroom and can undress, wipe, get dressed and wash hands.
- Child is able to dress/undress (shoes, socks, jackets, etc.) and eat, using utensils, without help from an adult.
- Child is able to sit on the line for short group lessons.
- Child can follow simple directions.
- Child can communicate simple needs and wants.
- Child separate from parents and walk into the school without being carried (some school anxiety is normal!).
- Child can be redirected with minimum frustration.
- Child exhibits some amount of movement and impulse control.

Curating independence in a child takes time and patience on your part. It is ok to become frustrated; it is a process! Children take their social and emotional cues from you, the adults in their lives, and it will serve them well to see you working through the very same emotions. Below are Benchmarks of Independence, generously shared by Jarrow Montessori School in Boulder.

Benchmarks of Independence

PRIMARY (Ages 3-6 years)

CARE OF SELF

Primary students can...

- help make their lunch
- brush their hair and teeth in the morning
- demonstrate cough etiquette
- dress themselves & put on their own jacket/coat
- remember their backpack, jacket, lunch, etc.
- walk into class and carry their own belongings
- go to the bathroom independently if clothes are not a hindrance
- pour their beverages
- clean up after eating and carry their plates to the kitchen

CARE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

Primary students can...

- sort silverware after it has been washed
- sweep floors
- put away their toys
- straighten their room
- sort clean socks, fold towels, etc.
- help prepare fruits and vegetables at home
- help plant flowers, weed flower beds, water plants
- hang up their own jacket

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

Primary students can... (4-6 years old)

- show respect for others
- wait patiently without interrupting conversations
- recognize emotions in self and others
- use appropriate table manners
- ask for permission before taking/using things that belong to others
- begin to problem solve with little adult intervention

The road to independence is not always easy. We want you to know it's OK...

...if your child complains about what they have been asked to do; it's ok to be firm.

...if your child is crying when they come into class; just let them go, they will be fine.

...to allow them to dress themselves even if their clothes do not match. It shows that they have been given the opportunity to make their choice independently.

...if your child makes mistakes; it allows them to learn on their own.

...if your child has a toileting accident.

...if your child spills when pouring, drops when carrying, or does not clean up perfectly.

...if your child writes letters and/or numbers backward.

...if your child forgets their backpack, lunch, etc., on occasion.

...if you let your child try to solve their conflicts on their own before intervening.

...if your child brings leftovers for lunch.

"Never help a child with a task at which he feels he can succeed." -Maria Montessori