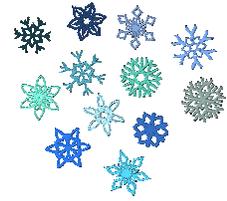




# CHMS Newsletter

## Winter 2017-2018



### NEW NEWSLETTER PLAN

We have decided to try a new plan for our newsletter! The information we share in the newsletter is very important, and we want to make sure you get all of it in a timely manner. We will be providing a seasonal newsletter, fall, winter, and spring, with information about all of our activities, and then Cynthia will be sending email reminders prior to an event to make sure everyone knows all the details. Please don't hesitate to call with any questions, and, of course, keep an eye on the bulletin board for sign-ups.

### CALENDAR



- |                |   |
|----------------|---|
| Dec 8          | Pizza lunch   |
| Dec 15         | Holiday Program (11:00-12:30) Staff Meeting (School Closes 1:00)                  |
| Dec 18 - Jan 1 | Winter Break (School Closed)  |
| Jan 9          | Parent Education – The Importance of the Montessori Kindergarten Year (5:30-6:30) |
| Jan 12         | Pizza Lunch   |
| Jan 15         | Martin Luther King Day (School Closed)  |
| Jan 26         | Staff Meeting (School Closes 1:00)  |
| Jan 29         | Teacher In-service Day (School Closed)  |
| Feb 7          | Parent Education—Berthold Academy presents Montessori Elementary (5:30-6:30)      |
| Feb 9          | Pizza Lunch   |
| Feb 14         | Valentines Day at school  |
| Feb 16         | Parent Day and Lunch (9:00-12:30) Staff Meeting (School Closes 1:00)              |
| Feb 19         | Presidents' Day (School Closed)   |

### CHILDREN ACTIVITIES



Time to learn about:

**December:** North America, desert biome, reptiles, cool colors, Mary Cassatt

**January:** Europe, temperate forest biome, trees and leaves, complementary colors, Vincent van Gogh

**February:** Europe, mountain biome, trees and leaves, complementary colors, Henri Matisse

## CHILDREN ACTIVITIES cont.



**Specials Info:** Music and Spanish continue through the winter months. Nature hikes are substituted for work in the classroom, special projects like gift making, and nature activities in the classroom.

**Local Outreach:** Our Christmas tree is up and decorated, but needs something under it! We will be collecting hats and mittens to take to the county supervisor's offer for distribution to those in need. If you would like to participate, you may buy new hats, mittens, and scarves, or recycle clean, gently used hats, mittens, scarves, and coats. Please have your child bring the items into the classroom for us to discuss and share with everyone, and then we will place them under the tree. Thank you for your generosity and helping to teach the children how to care for others. If you would like to take our mittens and hats to the drop-off place, please let Cinthia know. Our global outreach will be organized in the spring to help the people of Puerto Rico.

**Kindergarten Field Trips:** Each year the kindergarteners take three field trips—to the recycling center, to see “Charlotte’s Web” performed live, and to the National Gallery of Art. The dates are still to be determined, and we will let you know when they are finalized. We rent a school bus so there is plenty of room for parents to attend. I think the bus ride is probably close to the top of the list of “best part of the day!”

**Recycling Field Trip:** The kindergarteners will be going to the Montgomery County Recycling Center for this educational look at the inner workings of a recycling sorting facility. It’s a rather noisy affair, but definitely worth it. You’ll never think about your recyclables the same way again! The tour will take about an hour, at which time we’ll head back to school for lunch. After every field trip there is always some debate between parents and children over going back to school or going home. For this field trip, we encourage you to allow your child to complete the school day as planned as we will have a writing activity in the afternoon. Please make sure your child knows what to expect upon our return to school. Tears are never a good way to end a field trip! We will provide a lot more details when the date draws near.

**Charlotte’s Web Field Trip:** The “Charlotte’s Web” performance will be at the Hylton Performing Arts Center in Manassas on May 8th at 10:30am. This will be our eighth time viewing this fun show and we are looking forward to sharing the experience with the children. We will read the book in the weeks prior to the field trip so that everyone can follow along with the show. There will be a story writing activity in the afternoon after this trip. We will pre-purchased tickets and have enough for one parent per child. If you are interested in both parents attending, please let us know. We sometimes have a couple extra tickets that we can give out on a first-come, first-served basis. Likewise, if you are unable to attend, please let us know so that we can give your ticket to someone else. More details to follow as we get closer to the date, but for now, Kindergarten parents, put it on your calendar!



**National Gallery of Art Field Trip:** All year long the children look forward to the National Gallery of Art field trip as we study a variety of artists and enjoy learning about their styles of painting. We are very excited to stroll through the gallery and see many of the paintings, sculptures, and cut-outs we have studied. We eat lunch at the gallery and then return to school before 2:30. We do not write our story until the next day so you may plan to take your child after this trip.

**Valentine’s Day:** Valentine’s Day always sneaks up on us, so here is a little info just in case you see cards in the store that your child wants to buy. If you are struck by creative genius and have a

## CHILDREN ACTIVITIES cont.



wonderful, crafty idea for cards that he or she can make, it's not too early to start planning. Each class does a separate celebration, so each child should bring enough Valentine cards to share with their class. If you want to attach a little something, but don't want to distribute candy, a sticker, tattoo, or pencil would be a good substitute. Please don't feel like you have to add anything at all!

Our Valentine's celebration is a simple, yet sweet sharing of cards and "ooing" and "aahing" over everyone's creativity, sticker choices, use of paper (new and re-used), and effort. It really warms the heart to see the children share their Valentines. They tell us how they made them or where they bought them. If they are store bought they tell us about why they chose the character they did. If they are home-made they tell us about the drawings or glitter or lace. If they are old enough to write their name, we marvel over the fact that they wrote their name so many times! It's a fun exchange.

A few guidelines to keep in mind: Please be sure to have enough Valentines for all of the children in your child's class. We will let you know how many that is by email when the date gets closer. There are eight staff members, plus Ms. Arlene if you want to include all of the teachers, which is completely unnecessary, but always nice! Valentines can be brought in anytime in February before the 14th and deposited in the large basket that is next to the bookshelf outside the Sunshine Room door. Please write your child's name somewhere on the outside of the bag or box. **Please do not write individual names on the valentines as this slows the process tremendously.** A little card with your child's name on it would be perfectly perfect!

## FAMILY ACTIVITIES



**Holiday Program:** We are looking forward to a fun, holiday music program this year! The children have been having a lot of fun in music class this year and we are excited to showcase their hard work. The program begins at 11:00am on Friday December 18th. You can arrive as early as 10:30 to find a place to sit. It will last approximately 40 minutes, and will be followed by light refreshments downstairs. School will close at 1:00pm for our staff meeting and remain closed for Winter Break through January 1st. If you are available to help set up or take down chairs or if you have a hot water heater / dispenser for hot chocolate or hot cider that you are willing to share in the name of festive fun, please talk to Cinthia.

**Parent Day and Lunch:** It's almost time for one of our favorite activities here at Children's House. Parent Day is scheduled for Friday, February 16th. Parents are invited to join their child for a morning of work time, circle time, and play time. You've probably wondered what your child does all day; this is your chance to find out! The morning will start around 9:00, but feel free to arrive whenever is most convenient. Your child will show you his or her favorite work and maybe even give you a lesson. After circle time we'll head outside for playtime and then it'll be time for a pot-luck lunch. Come prepared to sit on the floor and bring your inner child. It's time for you to go back to school! School will close at 1:00 that day for a staff meeting.

**Camping Update:** One of the most exciting things that happens during the school year is our annual family cabin camping trip. We are still waiting to hear from Prince William Forest Park about our cabin camp assignment for our trip, planned for May 25-27. We will keep you posted and let you know about upcoming opportunities to volunteer as we get closer to spring. There is lots to do to make this a fun weekend family event. Be sure to save the date; you won't want to miss it!



**Parent Day and Lunch:** We can't wait for one of our favorite activities here at Children's House: Parent Day is scheduled for Friday, February 3rd. Parents are invited to join their child for a morning of work time, circle time, and play time. You've probably wondered what your child does all day; this is your chance to find out! The morning will start around 9:00, but feel free to arrive whenever is most convenient. Your child will show you his or her favorite work and maybe even give you a lesson. After circle time we'll head outside for playtime and then it'll be time for a pot-luck lunch. Come prepared to sit on the floor and bring your inner child. It's time for you to go back to school! Watch for the sign-up in the middle of January. School will close at 1:00 that day for a staff meeting.

## PARENT ACTIVITIES

### Parent Education:

**CHMS Kindergarten:** Join us on Monday, January 9th from 5:30 to 6:30 to learn about our Montessori Kindergarten Program. The kindergarten year is the culmination of two years of hard work, growth, and development. This is a critical year, as children are leaving the first plane of development (birth to age six) and moving on to the second (six to twelve). Allowing a child to complete the cycle they have begun here with us is an essential part of cementing the educational foundation we have been building together. All parents are welcome and encouraged to attend, regardless of your child's age. Babysitting will be provided for \$10 per child. Pizza will be available for everyone. The signup sheet will be up in early January. Please let us know if you will be coming. We hope to see you there!



**Berthold:** On February 7, from 5:30 to 6:30pm, we will have special guests from Berthold Academy, a new elementary Montessori school very close to us. The owners have many years of Montessori experience, both in the classroom and teaching at Montessori training centers. Karen's oldest child London is attending Berthold again this year. Visit their website for a sneak preview, and join us on Wednesday evening for a closer look at this option for your child's further Montessori education.

**Progress Reports:** The next progress reports will be coming your way in late January. As always, however, we are here to answer any questions or concerns that come up between reports and scheduled conferences.

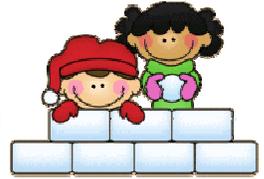
**Ways to Volunteer:** Please check the bulletin board at the beginning of each month to find out the ways you can be involved in school activities.

**December:** Listen to children read, deliver mittens to the county supervisor's office, set up chairs for the holiday program

**January and February:** Listen to children read, straighten the library

## FROM THE OFFICE

**Winter Backpack Check:** As we get closer to the really cold weather being here for good, it's time to check your child's backpack for appropriate clothing. Long sleeved shirts, pants or leggings, socks, and underwear are must-haves. It's also a (VERY) good idea to keep a sweater or sweatshirt in there for days when an extra layer will come in handy. Children need to have mittens or gloves, a hat, and a warm coat at school EVERY DAY. We may not make them wear everything every day, but it's nice to have the option. And, please, LABEL, LABEL, LABEL.



**Lip Balm:** Cold weather brings chapped lips. You are welcome to send in a tube of lip balm with your child for him or her to keep in their classroom. Tubes need to be labeled with their name and will be kept in a basket in the classroom where the children can access them, while a teacher monitors the activity. Plain, non-sparkly or crazy scented, lip balm is preferred. If you think it might cause a distraction, you're probably right. Lip balm MUST be kept in the classroom basket designated for that purpose. Please DO NOT leave it in your child's backpack or cubby.

**Reduce, Reuse, Recycle:** The children have learned a lot this year about the importance of the three Rs (we also add a fourth R—Respect) and about taking care of the earth. Please help us reinforce the Reuse/Reduce concepts by using as few plastic bags and disposable wrappers as possible when packing lunches. Reusable containers send a strong message: we care about the earth! Also, help us stay in compliance with state regulations that require each container and utensil be labeled with the child's name. Initials on the bottom are fine.

**Summer School:** We will again be offering a summer program, similar to last summer. Here are the details: • We will take a 2 week break after the regular school year ends and then have 6 weeks of programming, beginning the week of July 2, and ending on August 10. • For staffing reasons we will accept only 20 children per week, on a first-come-first served basis. • We will have a different theme each day, such as “water day” or “cooking.” The Montessori materials will also be available, of course. • You will be able to sign up for a week at a time to accommodate your vacation plans. More information will be forthcoming in the spring. We hope you will support us and bring your children to CHMS for “Summer fun!”



**Emergency Closings and Notifications:** As a general rule, we follow Fairfax County Public Schools with regards to closings and delays. There have been instances, however, when we have deviated from this policy because we felt a closing or delay was unwarranted, given our needs and circumstances. We will still continue to follow FCPS's lead with regards to closures, so expect the following, unless we specify otherwise:

If Fairfax County Public Schools are closed: we will be closed

If FCPS have a delayed opening (1 or 2 hours) we will open at 9:00 AM

If FCPS close early: we will close at 1:00 PM

If FCPS cancel after-school activities: we will close at 3:00

Listen to the news in the mornings when the weather is iffy. We will always post our plan on the front page of our website and change the phone message for the day.



## FROM THE OFFICE cont

**Staff Training:** Our annual in-service and training day is on Monday, January 29th. School will be closed that day. Each staff member is required to attain 16 hours of training each year. We do this over the course of the year at our work week in August, our in-service day in January, and at weekend workshops during different times of the year. We appreciate your understanding as we complete these state licensing requirements.

**Re-registration and records check:** Planning for the new school year will begin in February. We will send home a contract for what we think you need, but it can always be changed if you let Cinthia know your needs. The contract is returned with a \$50 reapplication fee and a \$250 re-enrollment fee. Our annual records check will be conducted at the same time. Please help us get your child's files in order by completing any missing forms as soon as possible.

