Nido Environment Welcome Letter

We are thrilled to welcome your children to our Nido environment! We know that trusting others with the care of your babies can be incredibly hard and anxiety-inducing, but we are ready to be a part of your community and give the most loving care to your child. This letter will entail some need to know items and supply lists for school. We hope it answers any questions that may be on your mind as you approach this new environment for your little one. Please never hesitate to reach out to the teachers or the Infant/Toddler Level Coordinator with any questions or concerns at any time.

Our Goal

Our goal in the Nido environment is to surround your baby with love and peace. The word Nido translates to "Nest". We treat it very much as a nest in the life cycle of a bird. Much of Montessori focuses around learning independence and self-driven interests. However, our Nido is where we foster the feeling of security that all infants and babies need to create a strong base for future independence and confidence. We keep the environment calm and as soothing as possible. We still give our babies much freedom to move about the space as they are able to, never placing a baby into positions they cannot get to themselves. We also utilize floor beds, giving them the freedom to go to their bed or get off whenever they feel (though we help them go to sleep when they are signaling they are tired). Our goal is to minimize stress on our youngest children's nervous system. Diaper changes are slow, words are calm and soft, and children are given comfort whenever needed. We are incredibly aware of what a special and important time this is in a child's life and take care to treat it with the preciousness it deserves.

Transitioning into the school year

We hold it as an incredible privilege that you choose us to care for your children. When we begin the school year we offer several opportunities to see the classroom and meet with teachers to provide more reassurance to your child (and you!).

Home Visits: We begin by offering home visits to new families. This is an opportunity to have one on one time with a guide for roughly 20-30 minutes at your convenience. This gives time for a child to start seeing a new adult in their safe place with their safe people! It offers a moment of interaction and also time for any questions that may be on your mind. We bring an item to play with that the children will see again when they visit their new classroom. Please do not let this bring any anxiety to you, we have no cares if your house is messy or if you have that perfect montessori set up, this is fully for your child to feel their most comfortable in this new transition!
Parent Orientation: The Thursday evening before school starts for the year, we host a parent orientation evening. This covers everything from how things at OCC work and give you a chance

to check out the Nido room. You will have the opportunity to meet the teachers in the school and see what types of materials we will have set in the room. This is an event for just the grown-ups of the household to join in on.

Classroom Visits: The next day, there will be scheduled classroom visits (You will receive a link to a sign-up for time slots). This is a day to bring your child along with you to explore their new classroom. This offers another opportunity for children to have their safe people alongside them as they enter a brand new space and meet even more new people! We ask that you bring along all of your child's supplies at this time as well to prepare their cubby for their first day.

Small group visits: On the Monday school begins, we will host shorter time slots (roughly 1.5 hours) for students to visit with only half the class. This will be the first day of drop off and a great practice for those quick, confident goodbyes. The more confident you appear, the less nervous your child will feel! With our Nido, we welcome parents right into the room to drop off and have a connection point with the teacher.

Supply List

We've included this supply list including links to some of our favorite products we find work best. Feel free to use the links or find your own items that fit the description! I have attempted to cover various price points to be as accessible as possible, but used items are also a great option! Locally we have both Kid to Kid and The Mommy Shoppe that often have great supplies second hand. The Mommy Shoppe also provides one free bag of items you are able to shop for once a month if you sign up. For clothes that often get messy at school, I find this a great resource to find extra clothing to send in. Please label ALL ITEMS. While you may not be too worried about things getting lost, we have many students and it can be difficult to ensure who has what, especially in those beginning months.

- **LABELS**- Our favorite is the label stamp because it works on socks too! Any label you choose is good. Last name stamps are fine as well to make it easier on future hand-me-downs in your family.
  Namestamp
  Mabel's Labels stamp
  Mabel's Labels Stickers
  Inchbug labels
- **Wet Bags**- used to transport soiled clothing home. We recommend having at least 2.
  Target wet bags
  Bumkins Bags
- **Backpack-** While it may make sense to have a smaller backpack for a smaller child, babies come back and forth with a lot of stuff! We request a backpack that is a little on the bigger side to accommodate all those items. Diaper bags are also a great choice at this age.
  -Hawlander 15in bag -as teachers, these are our absolute favorites! They are just the right size while able to hold everything they need.
  -Land's End small bag -often on sale!
- **Spare Clothing-** We ask that you please send in **5** spare changes of clothes to have on hand for any messes that may take place. We ask that you include socks in these outfits as we don't utilize shoes in the Nido space and sometimes the floors get chilly!

- **Nap Items-** We provide an organic cotton sheet that fits our beds, they will come home on weekends for washing. Under 1, we do not use blankets to comply with safe sleep. We are happy to utilize sleep sacks for napping as well as pacifiers if your child prefers them. If utilizing pacifiers, we ask to keep an extra or two at school for those days they may get forgotten.
  -Halo Sleep sack
- **Diapers-** We ask that you send in a decent amount of diapers to keep on hand. We will be sure to send a note through the app or transparent classroom when the supply grows low. We are always happy to accommodate cloth diapers as well!
- **Outdoor shoes-** Outdoor shoes are great to have on hand as we get out as often as possible! Preferably ones they are able to slide feet in as they grow the skillset to. We highly recommend See Kai Run shoes as many have a nice firm heel, wide easy straps, and support natural foot development.
  -https://seekairun.com/first-walker/
- **Creams-** As we know, this young age often includes a need for some type of cream! Whether diaper cream, lotion, or sunscreen, we ask that you send in a clearly labeled bottle with your child's name. Along with this, a Topical Ointment Form will need to be completed on Transparent Classroom for us to be able to apply when needed.
- **Bottles and Food-** If your child is still bottle fed, we ask that you either transport breastmilk in a cooler bag or bring a canister of formula to leave at school. Bottles will be returned home daily for washing. We do have a small freezer available as well should you like to keep frozen breast milk on hand for those hungrier growth spurts. We welcome baby food as well for those who prefer it. As you and your child are ready for it, our full lunch menu is available to begin practicing with real solid foods at the appropriate time frame. As well, we will have a nursing area for any parent who may want to stop in to feed on lunch breaks or any convenient times for you.
- **Seasonal Gear-** Throughout the seasons, children will need to have seasonal items that stay at school. A raincoat and rainboots, as well as snowpants, winter coat, and snow boots (One piece snowsuit/jackets are a great option). Teachers will reach out during the time frame the items are needed to send them in.

All around, we know this can be a huge transition time for families! We are here for any questions, comments, or discussions you would like to have. We are thrilled you have chosen us to be a part of your parenting journey. There is never a question too small to reach out about. We know the anxieties that come along with parenting (most of us from experience) and we are happy to help ease those in any way we can.

Thank you and we look forward to seeing you soon,

Abigail Pierre-Louis
Infant/Toddler Level Coordinator