

THE MONTESSORI ACADEMY OF ARLINGTON

Preparing children for life, not just the next test.



Field Trip Packet Policy and Assessment

Please review the Field Trip Policy then complete the Field Trip Assessment. After completion, please sign the acknowledgement and the bottom of the last page of the assessment and turn it into the front office. If you have any questions, please contact the front office at (817) 274-1548 or via email: info@tmaonline.org.

Field Trip Policy

The definition of a field trip is any activity, conducted off of TMA property, where TMA staff are responsible for making arrangements and share responsibility for transporting/supervising children with approved volunteer chaperones and/or drivers.

Field Trip Protocol

To ensure the child's safety and to facilitate planning, the following guidelines have been developed. We ask for your help so that this very exciting means of expanding our children's knowledge and experience may be enjoyed by all involved. We appreciate your help in this matter and we are grateful for your continued support and assistance—without you the field trips would not be possible. Our goal is to have field trips be a group activity, where the class remains together under the supervision of the teacher. Please remember that the ultimate authority to decide whether or not a field trip takes place resides with the teacher.

Notification of Field Trips

There should be at least one month advance notice to the parents to allow for planning.

Field Trip Forms

Please observe deadlines. We must have all forms turned in by the deadline so that all plans may be finalized 48 hours before the trip occurs. If you have a special request, please write it on your form. No child will participate without a signed permission form. The permission slip will clearly state the mode of transportation to and from the field trip destination. The school requires that a master list of all drivers and passengers be in the office the day prior to departure.

Children Unable to Participate in Field Trips and Late Arrivals

Please be aware that if your child is unable to participate in a field trip or arrives late, the parents must assume responsibility for making arrangements for childcare. Care will not be provided at the school nor may a child be dropped off at a field trip location.

Respect Teacher Arrangements

Teachers spend an amazing amount of time figuring out seating arrangements. It is our best interest to have everyone happy. If you wish to make a request for a special arrangement, please include it on the field trip permission form. We will, whenever possible, do our best to accommodate you if we know ahead of time. This being said, please do not ask to change transportation arrangements or children assigned to you on the day of the field trip.

Field Trip Coordinator Responsibilities

Each class may choose to have an assigned field trip coordinator. The field trip coordinator assists the teacher by confirming that the field trip protocol is followed:

- ◆ Confirm that chaperones are on the approved volunteer list (see Section [4.7 Community Service Policy](#) of the *Parent Handbook*).
- ◆ Verify the accuracy of vehicle information (if transporting children).
- ◆ Ensure that chaperones receive all required materials.

Field trip coordinators may also help plan and organize a field trip depending on teacher preferences.

Transportation

A bus with a professional driver is required for destinations beyond a seven mile radius from the school. An appropriate fee, per child or participant, will be charged if a bus is required. Requests for exception are to be brought to the Board for approval.

For field trips within seven miles of the school, the following procedures apply:

- ◆ If transporting children under care, cars must caravan. The first and last cars in the caravan must carry a fire extinguisher and first-aid kit. The directions provided by the teacher and/or field trip coordinator must be followed. No unscheduled stops are made, except for emergencies.
- ◆ Each child being transported must ride in a child seat or a seat belt as appropriate to the child's age, size, and condition. It is the parent's responsibility to provide a safety seat if appropriate. Everyone in the vehicle must have on a safety belt. This requirement applies to any vehicle used by or for the facility to provide transportation, with the exception of a bus with a gross vehicular weight rating (GVWR) of 10,000 pounds or more.

Volunteer Chaperones and/or Drivers Requirements

- ◆ Completion of the self-study packet is required for all parents attending field trips.
- ◆ A background check is required for all volunteers attending a field trip.
- ◆ If automobiles are used for transportation of school children, it is required that every child has a seat belt. Children under the age of twelve may not ride in the front seat. The driving parent must ensure that the seat belts of all individuals in the vehicle are properly fastened and remain so throughout the duration of the trip.
- ◆ Parent drivers are not covered by TMA liability insurance, so they must provide proof of individual insurance coverage on the day of the field trip.
- ◆ In case of illness or other problems, please notify the office or teacher as soon as possible before the trip.
- ◆ If a parent has provided a safety seat for a child in your care, the child must use the safety seat.

Volunteer Chaperone Responsibilities

- ◆ Be sure you know the names of the children you are assigned and have their medical forms. Assume responsibility for the children you are assigned throughout the entire trip.
- ◆ If you need to leave for any reason, notify the teacher immediately.
- ◆ Return your assigned children and their medical forms to a teacher upon returning to TMA.
 - You must accompany your assigned children to the classroom.
 - If the teacher is not in the room yet, you must remain until the teacher returns.
- ◆ The field trip itinerary must be followed. No unscheduled stops are allowed. If you are driving, make sure you have enough fuel to complete the round trip.
- ◆ Drivers taking medication on the day of the field trip that restricts the operation of motor vehicles may not drive.

Required Ratios for all Field Trips

- ◆ Infants/Toddlers—no field trips.
- ◆ Early Childhood/Extension—1 adult to 2 children.
- ◆ Elementary—1 adult to 6 children; exceptions are to be brought to the Board for approval.
- ◆ Field trips to Pappy Elkins Park in the City of Dalworthington Gardens and Veterans Park in Arlington must meet the following ratios:

3 year olds—1 adult to 6 children	5 year olds—1 adult to 10 children
6 year olds and older—1 adult to 12 children	4 year olds—1 adult to 8 children

TMA Field Trip Policy Assessment

Name _____ Date _____

Student Name(s) _____

The following statements are partially true. Correct each statement to ensure that it complies with policy.

1. If personal automobiles are used, each car can make its way to the field trip site, following any route a driver chooses. Each car must carry a first aid kit and fire extinguisher.

Corrected statement:

2. Each child being transported must ride in a child safety seat or seat belt as appropriate. Each driver must provide enough seat belts or car seats for the children riding in his or her car. Children can be placed in the front seat. It is optional for adults to wear seat belts.

Corrected statement:

3. If a person is interested in chaperoning or driving on a field trip, we'd like for the individual to: (1) complete the field trip assessment packet sometime during the year; (2) have a background check; (3) have proof of liability insurance at home; (4) take medication that restricts the operation of motor vehicles; and (5) occasionally check to make sure all the assigned children are present.

Corrected statement:

4. The following are required adult to student ratios for field trips: Infant/Toddlers – 1 adult to three children; Early Childhood/Extension – 1 adult to four children; and Elementary – 1 adult to six children.

Corrected statement:

Scenarios: *Please read each scenario and answer the questions in the space provided.*

1. You have met all the requirements to drive on a field trip and you are eagerly anticipating your first field trip experience at TMA. The morning of the field trip, your child wakes up with a fever. You call the person you carpool with and ask her to tell the teacher that your child is sick and won't be going on the field trip. Is this a good decision? Why or why not?

2. You have your assigned children and you are sticking to them like glue. However, one of your children whines continuously that she wants to be with her best friend who is assigned to another adult. Trying to make everyone happy, you negotiate a switch so that the best friends can be together. Is this a good decision? Why or why not?

3. It is a beautiful day and you are on your way back from a field trip. The children in your car are saying that they are thirsty and hungry. You decide to stop at a McDonald's on your way back to the school and then let your kids stretch their legs at a park close to the school. Is this a good decision? Why or why not?

4. It is been a great field trip, but it has run a little bit longer that you expected, so you are late for an appointment. You appear to be the first car back. You drop the children off in their classroom and notice that there is not a teacher present. You notify a teacher next door that your kids are back and that you have left the medical forms for your assigned children on the teacher's desk. As you quickly leave the building, you tell the front office staff that you are back, had a great time, and that the kids are in the classroom. Is this a good decision? Why or why not?

Please sign below and return your completed assessment to the front office.

I have read, understand, and agree to follow the TMA Field Trip Protocol.

Signature

Date