



HELP ME DO IT BY MYSELF

Information Booklet for the Lower Elementary of the
1e Montessori School Hoofddorp



INTRODUCTION

Dear parents and guardians,

Your child will soon start at our school. We are delighted to welcome you and your child to our school. It is a new period for both you and your child. Often children have already attended a day care or playgroup. You have become familiar with those. With this information booklet, we hope to make the transition to our school as smooth as possible. What are the similarities and what is going to be new.

There are all kinds of rules and agreements that broadly apply to our entire Lower Elementary. Often (new) parents and/or guardians are just as “insecure” as their children, and approach the teacher with questions, such as: “When do the children go to the gym, what are the children wearing at that time, where should my child put their morning snack, and what are the children eating during lunch?”

This booklet has been written to make some things clear for you and your child. The booklet is called ‘**Help me do it by myself**’ after a quote by **Maria Montessori**. Our education is based on children’s independence, self-reliance, and self-responsibility. In the mixed-age groups, the younger children learn from the children who have been around longer.

Enjoy reading, and once again, we welcome you and your child to our school!

The Lower Elementary teachers.

Hoofddorp, 2022

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A photograph of a woman with blonde hair and a young child looking up at a colorful mobile hanging from the ceiling. The woman is wearing a dark blue top and the child is wearing a white top. The mobile has various colorful shapes, including a blue circle with a pink and purple pattern. The background is blurred, showing green foliage.

**I REMAIN
CURIOUS**

1 THE PRACTICE MORNINGS (DE WENDAGEN)

1.1 GETTING USED TO SCHOOL

When your child turns four, he or she may attend primary school. To ease the transition between home, playgroup or kindergarden, your child is welcome to settle in before the age of four. To make an appointment, we will contact you about three months before your child turns four. During these visits, we want your child to get used to the children, the teachers, and the class.

1.2 GOODBYES

When you take your child to school, of course the moment comes when your child stays at school, and you leave. It often helps children very much to discover their new surroundings without their father or mother. Once you are gone, they are more likely to make contact with other children and be more focused on their surroundings. In our experience, a short and clear goodbye helps. Preferably from the first day. Sometimes children are briefly sad when you leave. This may seem pitiful. But as soon as you are out of sight, crying often stops fairly quickly. Of course, not all children are the same and some get used to a new situation more easily than others. Naturally, in case of difficulties, it is a good idea to discuss it with the teacher. And we will always contact you if things are not going well.

1.3 EXHAUSTING

The first weeks can be very exhausting for your child. There are so many impressions: new children, new teachers, unfamiliar rules, tasks, and lessons. All this has to be absorbed. You know your child best. That is why we advise you to keep a close eye on your child and check whether it is not getting too much. It is best to build up the days and let your child come to school in the mornings for the first two weeks after turning four. This way, your child can relax or sleep at home in the afternoon. In consultation with the teacher, you can discuss when your child can stay for lunch and join us whole days after that. We like to gradually build this up, in consultation with you.

2 A SCHOOL DAY

Of course, every school day is different. There is also a lot of regularity. In the Lower Elementary there are many regular habits. This provides a certain routine and regularity. This daily structure provides children something to hold on to and clearness. Moreover, this is straightforward and clear for a new pupil and makes it easier to participate in the group's daily activities very quickly. Throughout the day, the children can do as much as possible on their own. Below we describe the daily structure.

2.1 THE MORNING

At 8.30am, the school door opens, and children are welcome to enter. Your child will put their own coat and bag on their own hook at the coat rack. This makes it easier for your child to find it again later on. On entering, the children shake hands with the teacher, and they wish each other a "Good morning".

The fruit snack and drink, for the small break, can be put down by themselves at the designated place.

Small plant

All children may bring their own small plant to school. The child may put it on his/her table at the end of the school day. During the day, the plant is put in the windowsill. The child is responsible for the plant, and waters it himself. The children clear their own table and cleans it if necessary. As soon as all this has been done, the children pick up some learning material and start working on it or put their own chair in the circle.

At 8.45 am, the classroom door closes. This is the sign that we have started. It is in your child's interest that you ensure, that your child is present in the classroom before that time.

The day can begin

The day can begin in different ways. The day can start with doing a task, reading names, discussing with the children what day it is, what the weather is like, who is sick and if they want, they can talk about their experiences. We also start with a circle activity or sometimes with gymnastics.

A large part of the morning is spent on working individually. From almost all the materials there is at least one piece in the classroom. This is to limit the choice and to teach children that they sometimes have to wait for each other. However, often two children can work with it together. Besides all the corner areas (construction corner, home corner, sand table, etc.), there is a lot of Montessori and other developmental material. The teacher walks around, observes, and teaches lessons. The children should talk softly and walk quietly.

When the teacher wants to say something to the whole group, a bell rings to call their attention. All children then watch and listen to what is being said.

Short break

When it is time for the short break, all children take their break snack; this is some fruit cleaned and cut into pieces by yourself. Please do not bring sweets, biscuits, chocolate, or other sweets. Also, the children will have a drink bottle with water from home. Please mark everything with your name. Sometimes children forget what they have brought from home, so the

teacher can help them to find it. The children sit at their own table with their break snack. Anyone who has finished, cleans the table themselves.

Depending on the schedule, the children continue working or doing something together such as a game, singing, or reading aloud.

When the weather is dry, the children always go outside with the teacher, even in winter when it is cold. In that case, please provide appropriate clothing.

12.15pm - 1pm, stay over

In the morning, lunch is left in the bag on the coat rack; the children collect their bags themselves before lunch. Bread that is not finished by the end of lunch should be taken home in the lunch box, so that you can keep an eye on what your child has eaten.

At 12.30pm, all children go outside, where they play, accompanied by parental volunteers. In bad weather, the children stay in the classroom, accompanied by the same parental volunteers, and play games or do some drawing. At 1 pm, the teacher takes over the group again.

2.2 THE AFTERNOON

1 pm - 3 pm

In the afternoon, the same kind of activities as in the morning are done. They select their tasks and group activities may be organised. At the end of the afternoon, there is usually a wrap-up together. By 3pm, the children put their plants back on the table, with a cloth underneath. Tasks are handed out, which can be taken home. Coats and bags are collected, and the coats are put on.

3 pm

The teacher will walk to the front door and shake hands with each child as they go home.

3 RULES AND AGREEMENTS

3.1 GENERAL

The classroom belongs to and is for the children. The first week after each holiday, you can take a look in the classroom until the door closes at 8.45 a.m. There are a variety of rules and arrangements. To make it extra clear, we also ask all parents and other visitors to follow these rules. Below a summary of some general class rules.

In the classroom

- Often, there are rugs on the floor with the children's work. The rug is like a workplace, everyone should walk around it.
- These workplaces are handled with care.
- Children walk quietly in the classroom.
- We talk softly in class.
- Before we start, children are supposed to pick up their task. After school, they can show the parents what they have done that day.
- All the materials have a specific place in the cabinets. In this way, the children can easily pick it up and put it away again. We are very careful with the materials.
- Before we start, children, including younger siblings, do not play in the corners or the corridor.
- Please do not let your child bring toys and personal items from home. Please keep in mind that those items, can get lost or broken. There are enough materials at school to work and play with.

Gym class

- The Lower Elementary classes have gym lessons in the playroom.
- The gym classes vary in character. Such as climbing, circuit exercises, games, and dance.
- The children have to bring a gym bag to school containing
- gym clothes (preferably a T-shirt and shorts) and some comfortable gym shoes.
- The children change their clothes themselves. They also take off and put on their own socks and shoes. When getting dressed, please ensure that they can help themselves?
- Our gym is also used for other activities, so it is more hygienic to wear sneakers when going there. It is nice if the child has good-fitting sneakers, without laces and with non-slip soles.
- Please label everything with your child's name? Then we can find it easily if something gets lost.
- Gym bags will remain at school. Every class has bins where they are kept.
- Prior to the holidays, all bags are taken home to wash the gym clothes.

Birthdays

- There is a set rituals for birthdays. Please discuss with the teacher when your child could celebrate his/her birthday in the classroom.
- We do not celebrate the birthdays of 4-year-olds. Usually
- children still celebrate their birthday at the nursery, play-group, or day-care centre.
- The child treats his/her classmates. He/she may also go around the classrooms to treat the teachers.
- Parents and siblings already at school are welcome to join the birthday celebration in the classroom, we usually start right at 8.45 a.m., but some other time is also possible.
- To avoid disappointments, it is best to give party invitations to parents, preferably after school and outside the classroom.
- If your child is allergic to certain food or substances, please inform the teacher in advance, we will take this into account.
- Treat tip: cake, fruit, cheese, sausage. Let the treat be modest so that they can eat it straight away.
- Preferably no sweets, such as candies or chocolate and no presents please!



**I PROOF
THAT I CAN**

4 POINTS OF ATTENTION FOR PARENTS

4.1 IN THE CLASSROOM

- Let your child do things by themselves, such as taking off their coat, hanging up their coat, shaking hands with the teacher and putting down their break snack. The children also undress and dress themselves!
- As adults, please be a good example of all social rules.
- If you come across something unfamiliar in your child's pockets, ask if it belongs at school, and return it. Don't make an issue of it. This does happen from time to time. The materials are often very attractive, but it is good if your child learns that things from school do belong at school.
- Toddlers sometimes lose things. That is why it is convenient to put your child's name in and on all items. If anything gets lost, please check our lost properties bin in the hallway. A few times a year, lost and found items are displayed in the central hallway. Please check whether you recognise anything.
- We play outside every day if the weather permits. When it's cold, please remember to provide gloves, mittens, a hat, and a warm coat, because even when it's cold, we do go outside!
- Teach your child to go to the toilet themselves, to wipe themselves and to wash their hands afterwards. Should your child have regular hygiene accidents, please inform the teacher, and give your child his/her own spare clothes in a separate plastic bag in his/her bag.

4.2 ARRIVE ON TIME AND MAKE APPOINTMENTS

It is important that you make sure your child is in the classroom on time. We start at 8.45 am sharp. At this time, the class door is closed. There will be no time for a chat anymore.

- It is important that you pick up your child on time. It is not pleasant for your child to be the only one left in the classroom after school. Moreover, your child's teacher can have other appointments and may not be able to look after your child at that time.
- If your child is ill, would you please inform the teacher via Parro before 8.30 am? It can also be done by phone by calling 023-5611500 if necessary.
- To request leave of absence, you can request a form from the management or administration. This permission must be requested at least 4 weeks in advance.
- For questions or to make an appointment, you can contact your child's teacher via Parro.
- If you are unsure about anything, please leave a message for the teacher via Parro, or call the school to speak with the teacher.
- Please inform your child clearly who will pick him or her up and also inform the teacher. Furthermore, it is necessary that the teacher is informed when your child uses the after-school childcare service.
- If your child wishes to meet up with another child, please discuss this outside the classroom.
- When the teacher is sick, 4-year-olds may return home if possible. The remaining children are allocated if there is no replacement. This means that the children are allocated to the other Lower and Middle Elementary groups according to a fixed timetable.

4.3 HOW TO BE KEPT INFORMED

A variety of information, general school information, Lower Elementary information or anything specific for your child's group, is sent via the Parro app. Please check that your recent e-mail address is registered at the school!

- **Reporting:** You will receive a written report on your child's progress twice a year. Your child's first report, after turning 4, is a verbal report, all reports thereafter are written reports.
- **Meetings:** in addition to the introductory meeting and the report meetings, it is possible to discuss any matters with your child's teacher. Feel free to make an appointment if you see a reason to do so. The teachers can also take the initiative for a discussion.
- **The ALV:** at this general meeting, during the course of the school year, general association matters are discussed.
- Sometimes there is an event in the evening or afternoon. This may be linked to the conclusion of a project.

4.4 HELP FROM PARENTS

Parents can help the teacher organise activities. Throughout the year, activities are organised. For example, there is a sports day, a school trip, Christmas dinner, a visit to the library or a forest or spring excursion, where we really need your help! We also sometimes call on the help of a parent for a class activity such as crafts or carpentry.

Another special event is the **Montessoridag** at the end of the school year. On this day, we celebrate the end of the school year. A special and joyful day for everyone. A lot of help is always needed for this.

If you have a good idea of your own to do with the children, it is most welcome. Perhaps you would like to come and bake biscuits or tell something about your profession, pet, or baby. Children love that. In consultation with the teacher, you can agree on a suitable time.

Help from parents is always needed in the school library and at lunchtimes too. Please feel free to ask your child's teacher if you see opportunities for this.

4.5 A PEEK INTO THE CLASSROOM

To give you the opportunity to experience what it is like in a Lower Elementary school group, it is possible to have 'a peek into the classroom'. This is meant to experience a regular working period and to taste the daily atmosphere. The teacher will invite you via a registration form. The intention is that parents will have this opportunity once during the lower school period and it is only intended for children in group 1.

**I LOOK FOR
SOLUTIONS**

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