



Offering Exceptional
Educational Childcare for
Infants and Young
Children

APRIL 2017

Upcoming Dates

- **March 31-April 1:** Montclair Literary Festival
- **April 11-12:** School photos (rain dates April 25th & 26th)
- **April 13:** Dragonfly and Bumblebee class trip to Turtleback Zoo
- **April 14th (CLOSED):** Good Friday
- **April 17th (CLOSED):** Easter Monday
- **April 29:** Night Out at Fitzgerald's, 7 p.m.-9 p.m.
- **April TBD:** Pre-K trip to Doin' Dishes

Spring is here and we are all looking forward to warmer temperatures and more time outdoors! April is National Poetry Month and each MMO teacher will bring the enjoyment of poetry to the students. April 22nd is Earth Day and school-wide MMO Programs will focus on our planet and environment and learning ways to keep the earth healthy. We will also be celebrating the Week of the Young Child April 24th to the 28th. This annual celebration hosted by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) celebrates early learning, young children, their teachers and families. Look for special activities and projects from our students and teachers!

Our Spring Fling Fundraiser event on April 29th is shaping up to be an exciting evening! We hope you will attend and enjoy a fun adult -only night of food, raffles, drinks and fun. Tickets are \$45 and may be purchased at the MMO offices. This is our biggest fundraiser of the year and your support benefits all of our students by enhancing our already incredible programs.

I would like to thank everyone for their generosity and support for our Scholastic Book Fair. Despite the snow days, we earned past our goal of \$2000 and our programs will benefit with many new books and classroom supplies, like the Pre-K Listening Center earned through last year's sale. A special thank you to Nicole Dougherty for organizing and to the parents who volunteered their time to work the sale!

This year school pictures will be photographed by Joy Glen on April 11th and 12th. She does an amazing job in capturing the magic of each child's personality in beautiful group and individual shots. You will be able to see your child's picture before deciding if you want to purchase. You will receive the picture day schedule by class in an email the first week of April.

If you are interested in our Summer Camp Program (beginning June 19th) or a space in our 2017-18 school-year program (space is limited), please come to the office or email us at info@mmoprograms.org.

Corrine Harney, M.Ed.
Executive Director of MMO Programs

PRE-KINDERGARTEN

Fireflies – Miss Tara



March was a busy month in the Pre-k classroom. The children learned about wind, walked on a labyrinth, experimented with magnets and became familiar with the concept of measuring. Despite some fun in the snow, we are looking forward to some springtime weather!

Throughout the month of April the firefly class will continue their study of the alphabet. The letters O, P, Q, R, and S will be the focus. We will look at some of our favorite Ocean animals, make Pizza, have a Pajama Party, make a Rainbow in a Jar and Sketch some beautiful flowers!

The class will spend some time learning about the season of SPRING. As we take walks outside we will collect some seasonal samples of nature. Hopefully, the weather will cooperate and we will go to the United Way flower garden and sketch all of the flowers we see.

We will discuss Earth Day and the importance of keeping our Earth clean and healthy. Our caterpillars will arrive this month and we will get to see them make their chrysalis and transform into monarch butterflies.

Our Math focus this month will continue with number recognition 1 -20. We will work on writing numbers, as well as matching quantities to the written number.

Our adventures with “Gingerbread Fred” are continuing throughout the rest of the year. The children have been doing amazing things with our “friend.” We love sharing the pictures and reading about the special times he spends at all of our houses! We can’t wait to see what he does now that the weather is clearing up!

Butterflies – Miss Lisa

We celebrated Dr. Seuss’s Birthday throughout the month of March. We had a Crazy Sock day on March 22 the day we read *Fox in Socks*. We charted the socks each child wore on a graph. There were six different categories and striped socks had the most entries. After reading *The Foot Book* we painted each child’s foot and had them make a foot print. Some of the children giggled hysterically while their foot was being painted. The children used unifix cubes to measure the length of their foot. We put all of the children’s shoes in a line and measured the line with Legos.

The children practiced writing the letters: Jj, Kk, Ll, Mm and Nn. They learned poems, sang songs and brainstormed words that begin with the letters they learned each week. The children worked on lots of art projects related to the letters including: jellyfish, kings, ladybugs, monsters and bird nests. They even made kazoos.

For science, the children did some experiments to see which objects in our classroom are magnetic. It was fun to observe the objects being attracted to the magnets.

We are so ready for spring in the Butterfly classroom! Our month ahead is full of exciting discoveries. In Art, we will begin our study of famous painters. Our budding artists will explore the amazing worlds of Van Gogh, Picasso, and Kandinsky to name but a few.

In Science, we will be busy studying the life cycles of plants and butterflies. We will also celebrate Earth Day this month with some very creative and fun projects. In Math, we will continue our concentration on the numbers 1-20 and in Language Arts our focus will be on the letters O, P, Q and R. We will be having a pajama day during the week we are learning about the letter P.

Finally, we have a super exciting class trip to Doin' Dishes in the works! More information to come!



Spotlight on Aftercare



Creative Movement with Miss Teresa (Tess)

Miss Teresa is a former Radio City Rockette and a musical theater veteran. She has done numerous regional theater productions, cruise ships, as well as the "My Fair Lady" National Tour. Tess also is the creator of Kid's Corner dance program and she teaches creative movement at St. James Preschool and MMO. She is an instructor for Gas Lamp Players as well a member of their executive board. In addition to instructing our tiny dancers, Miss Tess has choreographed for Melochords, The Theater League of Clifton, as well as for the Orchesis Dance Company.



Aftercare Enrichment:

In the month of April we will be focusing on spring by continuing to learn about different plants and flowers and what makes them grow. We will plant our own vegetables and go on a nature hunt to see what we can collect. We will be using different materials to group, sort and make patterns. We will be talking about Earth Day, reading books and incorporating art projects.

We will also be learning all about Ocean Life in April by discussing what lives in the ocean and we will conduct science experiments including making our own waves!

Aftercare Enrichment will continue with our great instructors- Music and Movement with Tess, Yogarate with Ms. Nicole, Art with Ms. Mimi, rocking out with the Lil' Rockers band, Art through Nature with Ms. Susan, and STEM with Ms. Shronda and Ms. Malessa. So many exciting things to do in Aftercare! Please secure a spot by contacting the office.

**Danielle Hoover,
Aftercare Enrichment
Coordinator**

Montclair Literary Festival

The Montclair Literary Festival promotes reading for all, bringing writers and readers together to celebrate our town's literary scene and support the work of local non-profit Succeed2gether, to close the education achievement gap. Many events will be taking place from March 31-April 1st throughout Montclair including several events located in our building at the First Congregational Church of Montclair.



3 YEAR-OLD PROGRAMS



Dragonflies - Miss Megan



During the month of March we explored some fun themes including Dr. Seuss, St. Patrick's Day, and Rainbows! We celebrated Dr. Seuss' birthday with a week of themed days. The children especially loved Wacky Wednesday and Pajama Day! We explored the fun rhymes of Dr. Seuss and created amazing projects like our hot air balloons for *Oh, The Places You'll Go* and blow painting Thing 1 and Thing 2!

Since you can find a leprechaun's pot of gold at the end of a rainbow, the children wanted to explore rainbows! We did a fun STEM experiment called "walking water". We took six cups and filled three of them with water, one with red water, one with yellow water, and one with blue water. The other three cups remained empty. Next, we arranged the cups in a circle, alternating one with water and one without. Then, we took six strips of paper towels and put them in the cups so that one end was in a cup with water and the other end was in an empty cup. As we watched, we saw the colored water "walking" up the paper towels. The children predicted what would happen when the different colored waters mixed together in the empty cups. They predicted that red and yellow would make orange, yellow and blue would make green, and red and blue would make purple!



In the month of April, we will explore some exciting themes like the zoo! We will talk about the different kinds of animals that we might see when we visit the Turtle Back Zoo for our field trip! We will also talk about Earth Day and the different ways that we can care for our planet!

Bumblebees - Miss Christina



March was a very busy month for the Bumblebee class! We spent the month in the deep ocean, exploring some of the sea creatures that live there. Each week we focused on one or two animals, with our art, science activities, and literacy all focused on those animals. We learned about seahorses, clownfish, jellyfish, starfish, sharks, whales, octopus, and sea turtles. We created our own pet jellyfish in a bottle and loved looking at how they floated freely in the water. Then we explored sinking and floating and tested different items found in our classroom. We also created oceans in a bottle using sand, shells, and foam stickers. Be sure to stop by our classroom and check out our ocean displays that we have been working hard on.

This month, we will be just as busy. We will be starting the month off with a field trip with Miss Megan's class to the Turtle Back Zoo on **Thursday, April 13th**. To prepare for this trip we will be discussing different zoo animals. We will look at and create animal tracks, and discuss how they are alike or different, and even look at our own tracks. We will be playing a memory matching game and a counting game with different zoo animals. Then we will move onto discussing spring and all the changes that occur in this season. We will be creating beautiful spring-like artwork and voting on our favorite thing about spring. Finally, we will be receiving real life caterpillars that we will take care of and observe as we wait patiently for them to morph into butterflies.



Respecting Play (the Work of Children)



On a recent March afternoon, children in our Ladybugs and Grasshopper classes engaged in a STEM (science/technology/engineering/math) activity, which incorporated bubbles and “wind” (breath). Ladybugs teacher Malessa Ramsarran planned and introduced the activity, in which the young children had the opportunity to dip modified plastic water bottles (cut open on the fat end) into bubble solution. Blowing into the drinking spout created fat, drippy bubbles!

Each of the one- and two-year-olds introduced to this activity experienced it in a unique and individual way. Some children enjoyed combining “wind” and solution to produce round, floating bubbles. Some children left this portion of the activity behind to delight in chasing and popping bubbles created by teachers and friends. Some children moved quickly on to other interests elsewhere in the classroom, while some children were still exploring the slippery stuff 30 or more minutes later (a relatively LONG time for a young attention span!). Some children who were intrigued by the liquid found other ways to interact with it—several dipped paper towels into the sudsy solution, diligently scrubbing and wiping already-clean tables. Others seized the opportunity to expand the classic toddler fascination with “filling and dumping” to liquids, pouring the solution back and forth from one vessel to another. These children poured and filled and poured some more, sloshing and spilling and overflowing as they explored properties of volume and viscosity. Elsewhere in the classroom, some children cared for “babies,” some rolled dump trucks on the floor, and others practiced unloading and re-loading toy shelves.

Who was doing the “right” thing? ALL of these children! Each child, given the freedom and respect to pursue her own interests, was engaged in play—the *work of children*. Each child was learning, free to explore what was currently piquing his interest. Each child was given time and freedom to discover—not what was “prescribed” for them but what was truly of interest to them in that moment. Whether we are teachers or parents (or both) of young children, it is our role to *offer* opportunities for exploration and discovery, but never to force, or even push. For young children, optimal learning occurs when they are supported in their own exploration and discovery.

Reflection:

- *What were the children engaged in bubble play learning?*
- *What were the children playing with dolls learning?*
- *Why didn't the teachers bring the children who had left bubble play almost immediately back to the tables?*

Jan Burgess
Infant/Toddler Coordinator

INFANT & TODDLER PROGRAMS



Ladybugs Miss Joelle & Miss Malessa

We honored Dr. Seuss by reading books like *Ten Apples Up On Top!*, *Mr. Brown Can Moo! Can You?*, *One Fish Two Fish Red Fish Blue Fish* and our favorite of all *Put Me in the Zoo*. We painted a fish bowl and talked about how fish swim inside it. We were introduced to the different colored fish and counted them as we glued them in the bowl using a glue stick after we read *One Fish Two Fish Red Fish Blue Fish*.

In the long month of March we covered almost everything about the "Sky." We learned about animals that fly in the sky like birds, bees and butterflies. Our art projects are "flying" in the classroom and hallway, don't forget to check them out! We painted suns on felt paper, clouds with cotton balls and moons with shaving cream. It was a very sensory filled month! We were introduced to the changing weather like thunderstorms, rainbows, snow and rain. We even experimented with snow and talked about how it felt and how it melted once our warm hands touched it.



In the month of April, we will be focusing on Sounds. We will introduce animal sounds, building/knocking down wooden blocks, playing with bells, clapping and popping bubbles and playing with a guitar. For art we will see how dotters, chalk and "rolling crayons" will sound on paper. Some books we will be reading are *Moo*, *Baa Lalala*, *George Catches a Cold*, *Peppa* and *the Big Train* and *Beep! Beep!* On behalf of the Ladybugs Staff we would like to thank all the families once again for donating books to our classroom!



Caterpillars Miss Claire & Miss Margaret

Happy spring! During the month of April the caterpillar classroom will be exploring the theme of "Outdoors!" We will talk about and do activities relating to things we find outside. Some of the things we will talk about are the grass, sun, trees, moon, rain and much more. We will be engaged in lots of sensory activities; please be aware that we will be getting a little messy. Our class will also be participating in the new school garden "renovation" that will be located on the playground. Our walkers will take on the task of digging in the dirt and adding our contribution to the garden. We look forward to this upcoming month and cannot wait for warmer weather!



Parents corner:

Our MMO Spring Fling will be held on **Saturday, April 29, 7-9 PM** at the Sidecar at Fitzgerald's 1928 in Glen Ridge. Tickets are now on sale at the office, \$45 per person. Keep an eye out for the great prize baskets that will be raffled off, as well as a chance to win the 50/50 drawing.

Thanks to all who volunteered at the Scholastic Book Fair, and to those who participated in the Silver Graphics art fundraiser.

Don't forget, if you have any spring plant or flower needs, all purchases at Metropolitan Plant Exchange of \$50 or more result in \$10 donated back to MMO. Please reach out if you need a flyer or download a copy from the Parents' Association tab at mmoprograms.org.

As always, if you have any questions or suggestions, please reach out via email, mmoparentassociation@gmail.com.

Nicole Dougherty
Parent Association President

MMO Preschool Programs

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Tadpoles (to stay in touch
with your child's teacher)



YOU'RE INVITED!

MMO Spring Fling 2017

Saturday, April 29, 7-9 PM



17 Herman Street, Glen Ridge

Tickets on sale now in the MMO office, \$45 per person

Limited space available

Ticket price includes 3 raffle tickets

Hors d'oeuvres, wine and beer will be served

Prize baskets – raffle tickets \$1 or 3 for \$5

50/50 raffle – tickets \$5 for arm's length

raffle tickets will be sold in advance at the office

(winners need not be present to win)

Door prizes the night of the event

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