

ARCADIA MONTESSORI SCHOOL

PARENT AND STUDENT HANDBOOK

2023-2024

SCHOOL POLICY AND GENERAL INFORMATION

ABSENCES

Please notify the school if your child is to be absent for any reason and the length of the absence, if known. As classroom enrollment is limited and school expenses run continuously throughout the year, tuition refunds cannot be granted for absences, whether due to illness or vacation. Regular attendance is important for the child's development.

ADMISSION

Children are admitted regardless of race, sex, religious preference, etc. The ARCADIA MONTESSORI SCHOOL is not affiliated with any church or religious belief. Children may be enrolled at the age of two years old, once they are toilet trained. No child may begin attending school until all necessary forms have been received.

AIR FILTERING SYSTEM

Our building is equipped with electronic air filtering units, which help to reduce the airborne infections which may exist when children are together. In order to keep this system operating efficiently, we need to limit the length of time that the outside doors are left open. Therefore, we ask for your cooperation in closing the front door behind you when you enter or leave the building.

ARRIVAL / DISMISSAL SCHEDULES

The school building is open from 7:00 am until 6:00 pm.

School starts at 8:30 am. Children may arrive as early as 7:00 am. We do not charge for morning daycare.

Extended Day Care (EDC) is available from 1:30 pm until 6:00 pm.

ARRIVAL

In accordance with California State law, we require any person bringing a child to school or picking a child up to sign our "Sign in/Sign out" sheet. The person who picks up a child must be at least 18 years of age. When you arrive in the morning, please pull your car as far forward in the driveway as possible, come into the building and sign the 'sign in' sheet. If you have other business to transact please park in the street. It is very important to keep traffic moving smoothly through the driveway. Please do not get out of your car until you are able to move forward past the

walkway/hedges.

Please do not accompany your child to the classroom in the morning. If you have a need to speak to the teacher, let the front office know and we will make the necessary arrangements.

DISMISSAL

The dismissal line is at 1:30 pm. If you are picking your child up at the time of the dismissal line, please follow this procedure:

1. If you are one of the first four (4) cars in the driveway, or are parked on the street, get out of your car and stand near the front door. Sign the 'sign out' sheet.
2. If you are in the driveway, parked behind the 4th car, STAY IN YOUR CAR AND DRIVE FORWARD AS THE CARS IN FRONT OF YOU LEAVE. When you are one of the first four cars, get out of your car, approach the front door and sign the 'sign out' sheet.
3. If you wish to visit with others, or have business to transact in the school building, please park your car on the street. Do not park in the staff parking area.
4. Your cooperation in getting your child into the car quickly and leaving promptly will be appreciated.
5. We are located on a busy street and we work at not becoming a traffic hazard. Your cooperation keeping things running smoothly is vital.

Children who have not been picked up 15 minutes after the scheduled dismissal time will be included in the Extended Day Care group and parents will be charged accordingly.

EARLY DISMISSAL

A note, phone call or email stating the time the child is to be excused is appreciated for any child who leaves campus before dismissal time.

BACK -TO- SCHOOL NIGHT and OPEN HOUSE

Back-to-School Night is held in the fall and gives the teachers and parents a chance to become acquainted. Goals for the year will be outlined and discussed and parents have an opportunity to have their concerns addressed and questions answered.

Open House is held in the spring and is an opportunity for your child to show you what he/she has accomplished. Family and friends are invited. It is not a time to discuss your child's behavior or academic progress.

BIRTHDAYS

On a child's birthday, he/she may bring a small gift bag to share at snack time. We don't allow food to be served. We will make your child's birthday a special day!

CLOTHING

There are no uniform requirements. Your child should be sent to school in comfortable, sturdy, washable clothing that permits the necessary freedom of movement to participate in all activities without undue concern spills, spots, etc. Clothing that is easy to manage, such as front openings, simple fastenings, large loose buttons or easy zippers encourages independence and self-help. Children take great pride in being able to dress and undress with a minimum of help, and many toilet accidents are prevented if children can unbutton, unbuckle or unzip without a struggle.

ALL REMOVABLE CLOTHING SUCH AS COATS, SWEATERS, HATS, RAIN BOOTS ETC. SHOULD BE CLEARLY MARKED WITH THE CHILD'S NAME.

For the younger children (those under four years of age) an extra set of labeled clothing should remain at the school. Please include one complete outfit (such as shirt and pants, dress, etc.) underwear, socks and shoes). All clothing must be marked with the child's name. Soiled clothing will be sent home each day and must be replaced (item for item) on the following school day.

COMMUNICATION / OBSERVATION

We make every effort to ensure frequent communication between the parents and teachers. A consistent structure between the school environment and the home environment contributes significantly to the child's sense of security. Parents should always feel free to call the school with any questions regarding activities during the school day. Although the teachers usually are not available to talk on the phone while classes are in session, they are always willing to return your call promptly, as soon as possible.

Observation facilities have been provided for all classrooms. Parents (and

interested relatives and friends) are encouraged to observe their children at work as often as possible. Please call for an appointment, you are always welcome. The most interesting time to come is about 9:00 am. Please do not tell your child you are coming to observe, we want you to see a typical day. You are welcome to discuss your observation afterwards, if you wish.

CONFERENCES / WRITTEN PROGRESS REPORTS

Two formal Parent/Teacher conferences are scheduled during each academic year. A written progress report will be provided at the Fall and Spring conference. Prior to conference week you will receive a notice indicating the days and times available to meet with your child's teachers. This notice should be returned promptly as conference times are confirmed on the basis of the order of return.

Parents who feel the need for a special conference at any other time during the school year need only to call for an appointment. Please do not try to discuss your child's progress during arrival or dismissal times. Communication between parents and teachers is very important. Please call us anytime.

DIAPERS

Please do not send your child to school in either diapers or 'pull-ups'. We do not have changing tables available to change diapers. Children who are still mastering 'potty training' should be sent to school in 'training pants.' Training pants are thick cotton underpants which do not have a plastic outer layer. Without the experience of feeling wet, children take much longer to understand the concept of toilet training. All two-year olds have an occasional accident, and this should be dealt with in a matter of fact, non-judgmental manner.

EXTENDED DAY CARE (EDC)

Extended Day Care is available until 6:00 pm for all enrolled children. You may make arrangements in advance whether your child stays late on a regular or occasional basis. Please see the EDC Agreement form for specific charges. If you find that you are unable to pick up your child at the regular dismissal time, a call in advance will permit him/her to join the EDC group immediately and give us an opportunity to set his/her mind at ease as to your whereabouts.

NAPS

Be sure to tell us whether or not your child needs a nap. The school provides the necessary bedding for nap takers, , but if your child feels more secure with a special blanket, stuffed animal, etc., feel free to send it along, clearly marked with the child's name.

ACTIVITIES

Extended Day Care is recreational in nature. The children have some outdoor playtime (weather permitting). Inside there are a number of choices daily, including stories, games, craft activities, etc.

EDC PICK-UP AND PARKING

Children in the EDC group are to be picked up inside the school building. You may park your car in the driveway for this purpose, but please pull forward as far as possible. However, if you have other business to transact, please park on the street.

When you enter the school please use the intercom and we will bring your child to you. Do not enter the classroom. Our insurance regulations require that anyone not employed by the Arcadia Montessori School must be accompanied by a staff member upon entering the classroom.

EXTRA CURRICULAR CLASSES

The school provides the space for gymnastic, dance and Mandarin classes. These classes are run by outside organizations. Although we have no direct responsibility for these classes, we are very careful about which organizations we permit to use our premises for these services. Specific information regarding class times, fees, etc., is sent out at the beginning of the school year and at the start of each new session. Payment is always made directly to the provider.

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

Starting school is another natural step in a child's development. Like learning to walk, it should be regarded as natural and good, and doesn't need be talked about excessively or anticipated too much. When you arrive, say a cheerful goodbye and leave your child in the care of the person at the front door. A matter-of-fact approach helps the child to feel more secure. Please call us at any time to check on your child and /or schedule an observation.

HEALTH

Please notify the school and keep your child at home when he/she is ill. If children become ill at school, they will, of course, be sent home. Any child who is sent home because of illness may not return until they are symptom free for 24 hours. Non-contagious, chronic symptoms, such as allergies or asthma, should be noted on medical forms.

LOST AND FOUND

Please check by the front door periodically for any items which your child may have lost. The best way to avoid lost jackets, lunch boxes, etc. is to clearly label each object with your child's name.

LOST MONTESSORI APPARATUS

Occasionally small pieces of Montessori apparatus (map pieces, beads, cubes, cylinders, etc.) find their way into the child's pockets, lunch boxes, fists, etc. This is the child's way of making a closer connection between home and school. It is not 'stealing' and should be dealt with delicately. We ask only that you check for them and send them back to us when they are found. Some of them are irreplaceable.

SNACKS AND LUNCHESES

Children bring their own lunches to school each day. Many children seem to dislike eating sandwiches; please feel free to send the child's usual lunch menu. We suggest the use of a wide-mouth thermos if you wish to send a hot lunch. Please do not send items which require the use of a microwave to prepare. A well-balanced, healthy lunch is an important part of the child's day; therefore, do not send candy or soda in your child's lunch.

Send any necessary utensil (as well a paper napkins) with your child's lunch each day; place mats are provided by the school. Each child will bring home the uneaten portions everyday so that you may better judge how much food to send.

EACH CHILD'S NAME SHOULD BE CLEARLY WRITTEN ON BOTH ENDS (NOT INSIDE) OF THE LUNCH BOX.

Please do not send lunch in oversize backpacks or coolers, we do not have room in the classroom to store them.

MEDICATION

PLEASE DO NOT SEND ANY MEDICATION, VITAMINS, BABY ASPIRIN, COUGH DROPS, OR PILLS OF ANY KIND IN YOUR CHILD'S LUNCH BOX.

Our school policy is that we do not administer either prescriptive or over-the-counter drugs such as decongestants, cough medicine, aspirin, etc. if your child has any sign of illness – runny nose, cold, cough, fever, vomiting, impetigo, etc., PLEASE KEEP HIM/HER AT HOME until he/she is symptom free for 24 hours and able to participate in all classroom activities. Under special circumstances, we MAY be able to administer prescriptive drugs which are required to maintain or control a non-communicable condition. In these instance prior arrangement must be made with the director and the medication must be left in the school office each morning.

NAPS

An opportunity and facilities are provided for children who want or need a nap after 1:30 pm. If your child needs a nap on a regular or occasional basis, please make this

known in the office. If your child has a favorite blanket or stuffed animal, leave it in the office each morning. Be sure it is clearly labeled with your child's name. All blankets and sheets are washed at least once each week.

ORIENTATION

There is an orientation program for new students on the Friday before school starts in September. For those children who start in Summer School, or at other times during the school year, we ask parents to bring the child to school Friday afternoon before the first day. This gives the child the opportunity to meet the staff and look around the classrooms and the playground.

PROBLEMS AT HOME

We would appreciate being informed, perhaps in a brief note or phone call to the director of any event at home that might affect your child emotionally (ex. a house guest, a new baby, a missing pet, etc.).

READING FOR PARENTS

We recommend that all parents read the following three books on Montessori education:

1. MARIA MONTESSORI: HER LIFE AND WORK BY E. M. Standing. This is an interesting biography and an excellent introduction to Montessori education.
2. THE ABSORBENT MIND by Maria Montessori
3. THE SECRET OF CHILDHOOD by Maria Montessori

By reading these books, parents may become more aware of their child's needs and thus be better able to meet them.

RE-ENROLLMENT

In April of each year, we provide the parents of all enrolled children with an application form for the Summer Session and the following Fall term. We guarantee a place in September for each child whose application is received prior to the beginning of the Summer Session. After that date we accept new students to fill any vacancies.

Priority for fall enrollment is as follows;

- 1st priority— returning students
- 2nd priority— children who attended Summer School
- 3rd priority— siblings
- 4th priority— children transferring from other Montessori schools

5th priority– children on the waiting list

RELEASE

No child will be released to any person whose name does not appear on the Identification and Emergency Information form unless the school receives written notification signed by one of the parents stating the name of the person to whom the child is to be released. The person must be at least eighteen years old. Photo ID is required. Please notify the school promptly of any changes in release information.

SCHOOL PICTURES

School pictures are taken each year, generally in the fall. The photographer will take pictures of each class as well as individual photos. Information will be sent home approximately one week before the pictures are to be taken.

SECURITY

We are very aware of parents' security concerns and make every effort to provide a learning environment that is absolutely safe and secure. Fire and earthquake drills are conducted on a monthly basis and our goal is to evacuate the building in less than two minutes.

Our building is equipped with an electronic lock on the front door which requires a six-digit code for entry. The gates to the playground are always locked and access during school hours is not permitted. Any person entering the classroom is always accompanied by a member of our staff.

Twice each year we prepare 'KID ID' cards for each parent, by request. This card provides an easily accessible set of measurements, current photo and description of your child.

SUMMER SCHOOL

A six-week summer session is held each year from mid-June through the end of July. This session covers the full Montessori program and is of benefit to both continuing students and new children. It affords the opportunity for children who are already enrolled to continue their progress and maintain the growth patterns which the long summer vacation denies them. For new children, the smaller class size helps to prepare them for the fall session. Enrollment is for the entire six-week session.

During August we provide a second session of summer school. Enrollment is on a weekly basis. The program is typically five weeks in duration and children may be

enrolled for one week or all five weeks.

TOYS AND PETS

Please do not allow your child to bring toys to school. The Montessori apparatus and environment completely provide for the necessary mental and physical stimulation of the child. Children may always bring in books, a tape or CD, flowers, a potted plant, an interesting rock or other nature finds for sharing day. You will be notified by your child's teacher which day is sharing day. Be sure that anything that is to return home is clearly marked with your child's name. Toys which are brought to school are not permitted in the classroom.

TRANSPORTATION / CAR POOLS

Transportation to and from school is provided by the parents. However, upon request, the school will assist in the formation of car pools. In the event of an emergency where your child cannot be brought to school, please notify the school office and we will make every effort to find transportation for that day.

TUITION FEES AND PAYMENTS

Details concerning tuition fees and payments are outlined in the Tuition Payment Agreement Form.

In order to keep tuition costs to a minimum, we specify all non-tuition charges. An annual material fee of \$500 is required of all students. This charge covers classroom materials, arts and crafts, earthquake kits, and insurance and is billed with the first tuition payment.

WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

A one month written notice (20 school days) is required to withdraw a child from school. When written notice is received, children may attend school and tuition will be charged through the following twenty (20) school days. Tuition which has been paid in advance for days past the withdrawal date will be refunded EXCEPT that THERE IS NO REDUCTION OR REFUND OF TUITION WHEN A CHILD IS WITHDRAWN AFTER APRIL 15TH.