

Arcadia Montessori School Parent Handbook

Welcome and thank you for choosing
Arcadia Montessori School

SCHOOL POLICY AND GENERAL INFORMATION

ABSENCES

Please notify the school if your child is absent for any reason. Tuition refunds cannot be granted for absences, whether due to illness or vacation. Regular attendance is important for your child's development.

ADMISSION

Children are admitted regardless of race, sex or religious preference. Arcadia Montessori School is not affiliated with any church or religious belief. Children may enroll at the age of two and toilet trained. No child may begin attending until all of the necessary completed forms have been received.

AIR FILTERING SYSTEM

Our building is equipped with electronic air filtering units which help to reduce 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 the outside doors are left open.

ARRIVAL

In accordance with California State law, we require any person bringing or picking up a child from school to sign our Sign in/Sign out sheet. Our director will greet you and your child at the front door where you will leave your child after a quick cheerful good morning. She will walk your child to class. You are always welcome to observe the classrooms from our observation windows after 9am. You do not need to make an appointment to come in and observe. Please review our driveway policy. If you have any business to conduct, please park on the street. We must keep traffic moving smoothly through the driveway. Please do not get out of your car until you are able to move all the way forward past the front walkway. You can always call to speak with a teacher after school or we will be happy to make an appointment for you to come in.

ARRIVAL / DISMISSAL SCHEDULES

We are open from 7:00 am until 6:00 pm. Monday to Friday.
Children may arrive at 7:00 am without a daycare charge.
Children who have not arrived by 8:30 am are considered tardy.
Dismissal time is 1:30 pm however, Extended Day Care (EDC) is available until 6:00 pm.

BACK -TO- SCHOOL NIGHT / OPEN HOUSE

Back-to-School Night is held in the fall which 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. It is an opportunity for your child to show you what he/she has accomplished. Family and friends are invited as well.

BIRTHDAYS

On your child's birthday, he/she will wear a birthday crown and the class will sing Happy Birthday. If you would like, he/she may bring gift bags for his/her classmates. Please do not include any food or candy. We have a simple celebration which will make your child feel special.

CLOTHING

There are no uniform requirements. Your child should be sent to school in comfortable, washable clothing which permits freedom of movement without concern of spills or spots. Front openings, simple fastenings, large buttons and easy zippers encourage 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. Shoes should be closed toed and comfortable.

All removable clothing such as coats, sweaters, hats and or rain boots should be clearly marked with your child's name.

Please leave one complete labeled outfit including extra underwear and socks at school. Soiled clothing will be sent home and must be replaced on the following school day.

COMMUNICATION / OBSERVATION

We encourage frequent communication between the parents and teachers which contributes significantly to your child's sense of security. Parents can always call us with any questions regarding activities during the school day. Although the teachers are not available to talk on the phone while classes are in session, they will return your call promptly after school.

Observation facilities are provided for all of our classrooms. We encourage you to observe your child at work as often as possible. You do not need an appointment. You are always welcome after 9am. 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.

CONFERENCES / WRITTEN PROGRESS REPORTS

Two Parent/Teacher conferences are scheduled during the academic year with written progress report provided. Prior to conference week you will receive a notice indicating the days and times available to meet with your child's teacher. This notice should be returned promptly as conference times are confirmed on the basis of the order of return. Parents who request a special conference at any other time during the school year need only to call for an appointment.

DIAPERS

Do not send your child to school in either diapers or pull-ups. Children who are still mastering potty training should be sent to school in cloth training pants without a plastic cover. Without the experience of feeling wet children take much longer to understand the concept of toilet training. All children have an occasional accident and this is dealt with in a non-judgmental manner.

DISMISSAL

The persons on your emergency contact list who are allowed to pick up your child from school must be over 18 years of age. The dismissal line is at 1:30 pm. If you are picking up your child, please follow this procedure:

- 1. If you are one of the first four cars in the driveway, or are parked on the street, you may get out of your car and stand near the front door and sign the sign out sheet.
- 2. If you are in the driveway behind the fourth car, please stay in your car and drive forward as the cars in front of you leave. When you are one of the first four cars you may then get out of your car and come to the front door to sign the sign out sheet.
- 3. If you would like to visit with others or have business in the school building, please park your car on the street. There is no parent parking on the property.
- 4. Children are dismissed in groups of four according to the order which the cars are parked in the driveway. Your cooperation in getting your child into the car quickly and leaving promptly will be appreciated.
- 5. We strive for everyone's safety and 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.
- 6. Always use our walkway on the North side of school when approaching the school.

EARLY DISMISSAL

A note or phone call will help us have your child ready to leave before dismissal time.

EXTENDED DAY CARE (EDC)

Extended Day Care is available until 6:00 pm for all enrolled children. It is recreational in nature. The children have some outside playtime, weather permitting. Inside there are a number of daily choices including stories, games, puzzles and craft activities. A second snack time is offered at 4pm. Please refer to our snack list. 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 are unable to pick up your child at dismissal time, a call-in advance will give us an opportunity to set his/her mind at ease.

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 your car as far forward as possible. Again, if you are staying for any length of time, please park on the street. Sign your child out and come into the building. When you enter the school someone, either in the office or in the classroom, will bring your child to you.

EXTRA CURRICULAR CLASSES

The school offers gymnastic, dance and a Mandarin language immersion class. These classes are run by an outside organization. Although we have no direct responsibility for these classes, we are very vigilant about organizations we permit to use our premises. Specific information regarding class times and fees 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. 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 a child to feel more secure.

HEALTH

Please notify the school and keep your child at home when he/she is ill. If children become ill at school with a fever, diarrhea or vomiting they will be sent home. Please keep him/her at home until he/she is symptom free for 24 hours and able to participate in all classroom activities.

Non-contagious chronic symptoms such as allergies, asthma or seizures should be noted on medical forms

LOST AND FOUND

Please check the front office periodically for any items which your child may have lost. The best way to avoid lost items is to clearly label each one with your child's name.

LOST MONTESSORI PIECES

Occasionally small pieces of school Montessori materials such as; map pieces, beads, cubes, or cylinders find their way into the child's pockets or lunch boxes. 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.

LUNCHES

Our children bring their own lunches to school each day. We suggest the use of a wide-mouth thermos if you would like to send a hot lunch. Please do not send items which require the use of a microwave. A well-balanced, healthy lunch is an important part of your child's day. Please do not send candy or soda in your child's lunch.

Send any necessary utensil as well as paper napkins with your child's lunch each day. Place mats are provided by the school. Every child will bring home the uneaten portions everyday so that you may better judge how much food to send. Your child's name should be clearly written on the outside 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 to school with your child. We do not administer either prescriptive or over-the-counter drugs such as decongestants, cough medicine, aspirin or sun screen. You may come in to give a dose of medication to your child.

The staff at Arcadia Montessori School is trained and recertified every two years to administer an epi-pen and or nebulizer by Safety First, P.O. Box 40764 Pasadena, CA 91114.

Under special circumstances, with an Incidental Medical Services Consent form completed and signed by the parent along with written instructions by the child's doctor, we may be able to administer prescriptive drugs which are required to maintain or control a non-communicable condition. The name, address and phone number of the physician must be included. In these instances, arrangements must be made with the director and the medication along with the doctor's note must be left in the school office. A copy is also stored in the medicine container.

NAPS

An opportunity is available for children who need a nap. Nap time is from 1:30 pm to 2:45pm. If you want your child to nap, please inform the office. We provide all mats, blankets and sheets and we launder them here at least once each week.

ORIENTATION

There is an orientation for new students. This is on the Friday before the start of school. We ask parents to bring their child to meet the teacher and staff and become familiar with the classroom and 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 such as a house guest, a new baby or a missing pet.

RE-ENROLLMENT

In April of each year, we provide 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 on the waiting list

RELEASE

No child will be released to any person whose name does not appear on your 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 and a Photo ID is required. Please notify us promptly of any changes in your release information.

SCHOOL PICTURES

School pictures are taken each year in the fall. The photographer will take pictures of each class as well as individual student photos. Information will be sent home before the pictures are scheduled to be taken. Payment is made directly to the photographer.

SECURITY

We are very aware of parent's security concerns and make every effort to provide an absolutely safe and secure learning environment. Fire and earthquake drills are conducted monthly and our goal is to evacuate the building in less than two minutes. We also keep and update earthquake supplies for every child at school. Should an emergency occur you will be notified by email and phone calls.

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 other persons entering the classroom are always accompanied by a member of our staff.

We are always on lockdown except for the hours of 8 and 9am. and our school is also armed with a security system.

SHARING

The Montessori materials and environment completely provide for the necessary mental and physical stimulation of the child. Once a week children may bring in an item to share with the class. You will be notified which day is sharing day. Children may bring in a book any day. Please be sure anything to return home is clearly marked with your child's name.

SNACKS

The school provides both morning and afternoon snacks. Typically, each morning we serve orange juice or water with graham crackers. Afternoon snacks vary from day to day. You can find a list of these on our website.

SUMMER SCHOOL

We offer two academic summer sessions. A six-week session is held from mid-June through the end of July. This session covers the full Montessori program and is a benefit to both continuing and new students. It allows children who are already enrolled to continue their progress and maintain their growth patterns. For new children, the smaller class size helps to prepare them for the fall session. This first session is for the entire six-weeks.

During August, we provide a second session which also covers the full Montessori program. This session is typically five weeks in duration and enrolled students may attend for one week or all five weeks.

TOURS

We welcome school tours every morning after 9am. Monday thru Friday. No appointment is necessary. We ask you to please park on the street and sign our visitors log. You will receive a thorough explanation of our school policies and procedures along with a brochure explaining our philosophy and a brief explanation about Montessori and what your child will learn. Via our two-way observation windows, you are able to view children at work in every classroom without disruptions.

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, an annual materials fee is applied to the first tuition payment.

WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

A one month written notice, 20 school days is required when withdrawing a child from school. When 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 will be refunded except, there is no reduction or refund of tuition when a child is withdrawn after April 15th.

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 be better able to meet them.