

ARCADIA MONTESSORI PARENT HANDBOOK

***Please note changes in our program implemented for safer practices during the novel coronavirus outbreak.**

Arcadia is a learning center for children from preschool through Kindergarten. Montessori materials are provided to accommodate the mental and physical needs and abilities of young children. We have created a relaxed and friendly space where children are encouraged, loved and respected as individuals. Our goals are to kindle interests, develop basic skills, and have the children enjoy their learning experience.

The Montessori materials are intended to stimulate children's natural desire to act and learn through action. Providing proper materials and environment will give the children opportunity to develop inner discipline, concentration, and independence. The children use all their senses in learning. The materials allow them to see, hear, smell, taste & feel their environment. The children work at their own pace, either alone or joining others in small group activities.

The classrooms are divided into interest areas with special materials and equipment provided for a creative learning environment. These materials are added to and changed throughout the year.

SENSORIAL:

Montessori materials for coordination and sensory discrimination.

LANGUAGE:

Sandpaper letters, phonetic sound and word building materials, reading & writing activities.

MATHEMATICS:

Concrete, sensorial materials for learning numbers & number placement. Materials for addition, subtraction, fractions and more.

GEOGRAPHY:

Globes and maps combined with information about countries, peoples and animals found on each continent.

ZOOLOGY:

Kinds and parts of mammals, fish, reptiles, birds and insects.

BIOLOGY:

The external and internal parts of the body and the body systems.

PRACTICAL LIFE:

Food preparation, hand washing, pouring & spooning exercises

Art & Music:

Our art activities are open to the child's creative use of medium and are appropriate for each age level. Music activities include instruments, songs, & movement.

SCHOOL RULES AND PROCEDURES:

HOURS

Children may be dropped off and picked up any time between (Changed due to Covid19) 7:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. **PLEASE BE PROMPT.** A late charge of \$5.00 a minute will be assessed and is payable immediately by the parent to the teacher required to remain overtime. Our staff is hired until 5:00 pm and repeated tardiness in picking up a child could necessitate our requesting that the child be withdrawn from the center.

Class times are 9:00 am– 12:00 pm for preschool & Kindergarten

Extended day afternoon class runs until 3:00 pm Childcare available for full time students from 7:30 am to 5:00 pm. (Parents will asked to choose a preferred drop off and pick up time that fits their family schedule, and then we will expect for you to adhere to that time frame. Again, these new stricter policies relate to safety measures dictated by Covid19.)

CHILDREN MUST BE SIGNED IN AND OUT EACH DAY WITH PARENTS' FIRST AND LAST NAMES ON THE SIGN OUT SHEET PROVIDED. (For safety reasons, staff will sign children in and out so that we lessen our exposure to handling the same objects.)

Clothing:

Children need to be independent in the bathroom. To assist them with this challenge, please remember not to dress them in belts, suspenders, or anything else that might encumber them. Ideally new clothes should get a “test run” at home before being worn to school.

Although we use “washable” paints, stains are inevitable. Please don't let your child wear his or her best outfits to school. Plastic aprons are provided by Arcadia for art and water activities. **An extra set of clothing should be always kept at Arcadia including clean face masks.** The children are taken outdoors daily; to ensure their comfort please provide boots and jackets for damp days.

All clothing should be marked with your child's name.

As our cubbies offer limited storage space please make sure all items your child brings will fit. Backpacks are a problem for storage.

TOYS & CANDY

Please do not send any toys, gum or candy to school with your child.

FOOD & REST PERIODS

Children will be provided with nutritious morning and afternoon snacks. Please provide sack lunches throughout the week. We ask that you do not send food that needs to be heated or refrigerated for lunch. If your child naps, one small blanket should be sent to school to use at nap time. This blanket will be sent home each Friday for washing.

OPEN HOUSE/SCHOOL NIGHT

Open houses are special parties for parents and their children. During these occasions, the equipment and materials in the classroom are to be respected by the children who do not attend Arcadia, as well as those who do. **(This year our open house/back-to-school night events will be happening virtually.)**

CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher conferences can be arranged any time of the year by parents or teachers request. By no means should you feel that these are the only times when you should visit or communicate with your child's teacher. We want to exchange thoughts and information on your child regularly throughout the year. **(These meetings will happen virtually or over the phone until we enter a phase of the pandemic that allows for in-person meetings.)**

VISITING

Parents are invited to observe at any time, but are requested not to disturb the children. We encourage parent participation. If you have any special talents or interests, please let us know so that we may include them in our curriculum. **(There will be no parent observation or in-school fieldtrips until we are in a phase that allows for more in-person contact.)**

FIELD TRIPS

(To Be Determined – we will be following state guidelines.)

Field trips and nature walks are considered an important part of the educational program and will be taken periodically. Parents will be asked to help drive and supervise the children on these trips. If the whole school is going on a trip we may rent a school bus. If this is the case, we will ask parents to share the cost of the bus.

Also if you are able to volunteer with various projects at the school please let us know.

MEDICINES

Parents must give all prescription medicines to a teacher with instructions to place it in the refrigerator or in the medicine cabinet. The parent must then fill out the necessary information on the Medicine Consent Form. The medicines must be in their original prescription bottle.

Over the counter drugs may be given if a Medicine Consent Form is filled out and signed and the medicines are given to a teacher.

No medication may be in a child's possession, including backpacks or cubbies.

PET POLICY

If a pet is on the school site, we will inform parents and post a pet policy.

ILLNESS

State regulations require that we maintain a medical and immunization record on each child.

For the protection of all children your child must be kept at home if ill.

We cannot accept him/her at school if they show any of the following symptoms or have had them in the last 24 hours:

- A temperature
- ☐ ☐ Diarrhea
- ☐ ☐ Vomiting
- ☐ ☐ A rash
- ☐ Discharging eyes
- ☐ Discharging ears

If a child becomes ill during the day they will be isolated and the parents will be contacted to take the child home.

**We will be following state and local guidelines on how to respond to suspected and/or confirmed cases of Covid-19. For full information regarding those policies please refer to Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department tpdhd.org or Childcare Resources at childcare.org*

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

In the event of a medical emergency or an accident we shall contact the parents and/or emergency contacts. If it is impossible to reach any of them or should emergency treatment be required we will call 911 for emergency transport to Mary Bridge Children's Hospital. Your authorization for the center to contact your family physician and to take whatever emergency medical procedures are deemed necessary as part of this agreement.

NEWSLETTERS

We use our monthly newsletter & email to communicate all important information to parents. What will be covered during the month, holidays we will take off, any special requests and all need to know. **PLEASE READ THEM!** They will come to you via e-mail and hard copies.

TUITION

Monthly tuition is to be paid on or before the first school day of the month.

A \$10 late fee will be charged for each late payment.

A \$100 non-refundable registration fee is charged at time of registration.

Because our program and license requires us to engage staff based on the number of children enrolled we cannot give tuition refunds or allowances for days your child is absent because of illness or vacation.

CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT

Child abuse or neglect is a violation of a child's human rights and an obstacle to their education and development. We are required by Washington State Law to report immediately to the police or Child Protective Services any instance when there is reason to suspect the occurrence of physical, sexual or emotional child abuse or neglect.

SEPARATION ANXIETY

Sometimes children and/or parents suffer from separation anxiety at the time children enter school. In this case, a calm, pleasant and prompt exit on the part of the parent, leaving the child in the care of a reassuring staff member, will be the most helpful. Lengthy good-byes usually only exacerbate the situation. At other times, this anxiety may manifest at home, and the teacher does not see signs of it at school. If problems of this type occur, the teacher will be glad to discuss them with you. We welcome your cooperation in assuring a happy and successful school experience for your child.

***Some changes to the daily schedules will be made to allow for staggered use of the outside play area and newly arranged drop off and pick up protocols. Updates in this part of our daily structure will be communicated to parents as we learn how to juggle the “new normal.”**

DAILY SCHEDULE

7:30 - 9:00	Free choice time
9:00 - 12:00	Class Time
11:50- 12:20	Outdoor Time
12:20 - 1:00	Lunch
1:00 - 3:00	Nap time for younger children (until they wake up) Extended day class time for remainder of children
3:00 - 5:00	Free Play (outdoors if weather permits, or indoors if not)

TRANSITIONS

Should a child need to transition to a different classroom we will do so gradually, making sure that they are totally comfortable with the children and teacher. This is fairly easy to do at our school as the majority of our teachers are involved with all the children in our school at one time or another.

When our children transition to a new school we talk about feelings they may have, addressing any fears and anxieties. We encourage the parents to visit different schools and classrooms and to bring their children with them. We read books about change and have many conversations with any children that have had the experience of changing schools.

(During strict guidance on group size and mixing of groups we will most likely do very little changing of classrooms and more individualized support of the child to create strong connections and positive relationships within classroom groups. We will switch classrooms in extreme cases only.)

SIGNING IN AND OUT REQUIREMENTS:

Parents are required to sign their **COMPLETE SIGNATURE** when they drop off and pick up their children. We will only release children to adults authorized on the registration form unless given written permission to do otherwise by the parent. We will

not release children to parents or any other person who is under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. (Signing in and out will be done by staff members only, until we enter a period of safe interactions.)

FEE SCHEDULE:

Effective 9/1/2021

PRESCHOOL/KINDERGARTEN CLASS HOURS:

9:00 – 12:00

5 Days a week - \$615.00 per month

3 Days a week - \$565.00 per month

PRESCHOOL/KINDERGARTEN PLUS EXTENDED DAY/CHILD CARE

5 Days a week - \$1,015.00 per month

3 Days a week - \$915.00 per month

Multiple children enrolled? Receive a 10% discount on the second child.

Non-Refundable Registration Fee: \$100

Annual Supply Fee \$75

Discipline policy

We try to have the children handle their problems with conflict resolution. At times a child may need to be removed from the group for a quiet time to reflect. We do not use any form of corporal punishment.

We do not view discipline as a means of punishing a child but rather as a means to teach a child how to problem solve for themselves in the event of conflict. Our goal is to teach communication skills and to encourage the development of social relationships in our community. We also ask that families take an active collaborative role in this relationship.

In cases where a child has documented incidents of challenging behaviors where they are harming themselves, teachers or other children, and are not responding to the program and families' initial, coordinated attempts to modify the behavior, a special meeting will be called to discuss next steps and the implementation of a behavior plan. This plan will include types of redirection, consequences, and skills the child needs to work on. If after a 3-week period of time the behaviors have not improved an evaluation with an expert will be needed. Once this has taken place, another meeting will be scheduled where families, teachers (& preferably with some contact & input from the expert) will reevaluate the situation.

Should we feel that the situation is beyond our expertise and the child's needs are beyond our scope we will meet again to come up with a solution for your child's care which may involve other programs that may better meet the needs of your child.

Expulsion policy

As a community we are committed to meet the needs of all children in our care. When faced with behaviors that are harmful to the children & staff we realize that these behaviors are also harmful for the child himself. Our goal is the success of the child.

We use all resources available to us & we attempt new strategies for long periods of time, all the while being in communication with the family & attempting to work together for success of the child.

When it becomes obvious that our environment & strategies are not sufficient we find it necessary for the good of the child to have a new solution.

We have large classes of children with more than enough capable & caring teachers in the classroom but sometimes this is too much stimulus for a child. We are not staffed for a child's behavior to take a teacher out of the classroom on a regular basis. This is also a signal from the child that this environment is not serving them & in the end will make them feel negatively about themselves. This is not our goal & do not want this to happen.

The importance is solely for the success of the child and we will advocate for and ask that the family take steps to facilitate this.

Here is a quote from a family that we worked with this year & now have found success in a new environment.

"We just finished his first week at Harbor Heights Developmental Preschool! He is doing great!!! I am so thankful for his placement in the program! When a child is in the right environment it makes all the difference. Thank you for your help with that!!"

A FINAL WORD

Arcadia Montessori admits all children regardless of race, creed, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, or physical, mental or sensory disability.