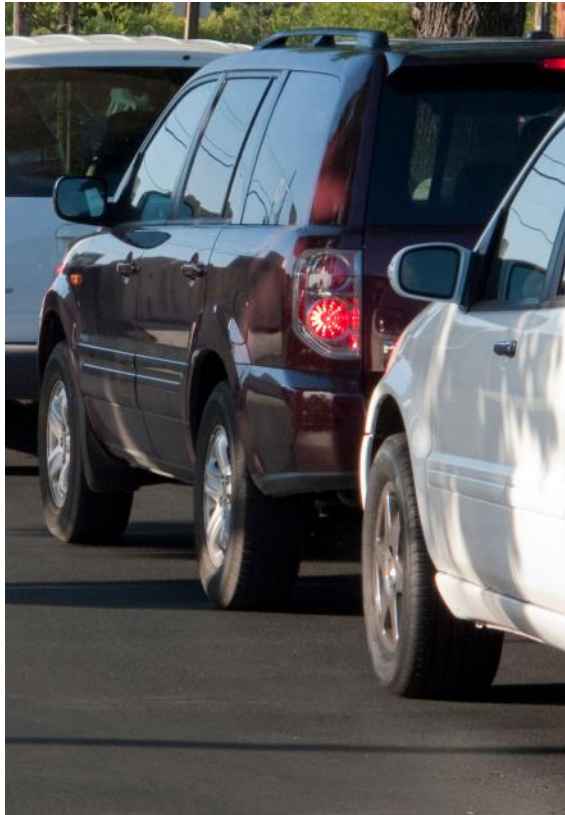




The Montessori Academy of Arlington
**EARLY CHILDHOOD
CLASSROOM ORIENTATION
AND GUIDELINES**



DROP OFF/ PICK UP PROCEDURE

Drop Off

Morning carline begins at 8:20 am and ends at 8:30 am. While you are in carline, it is imperative that you stay in your car for safety reasons and the efficiency of carline. Parking spaces are needed for Infant and Toddler parents, so please use carline rather than walking your child into the building.

It is in the best interest of your child to arrive on time. Late arrivals do not allow us to properly greet your child as we are already busy giving lessons, and it can disturb children who are already working. If a late arrival is unavoidable, please allow your child to cross the classroom threshold and put away his/her belongings independently. It is preferred for routine medical and dental visits to be scheduled later in the day.

Pick Up

If your child is a half-day student, please pick him/her up at the classroom entrance between 11:20 am and 11:30 am. Afternoon car line begins at 3:20 pm and ends at 3:30 pm.

WHAT TO WEAR

Clothing

Children should wear clothes that allow them unrestricted movement in the classroom and outdoor environment. Your child should wear clothing that can be put on and taken off easily to allow for independence in the restroom; items such as belts and overalls should be avoided. Clothing depicting cartoon and fantasy characters should also be avoided as they distract children from the learning environment. With the exception of discreet earrings, jewelry and watches should be left at home. We go outdoors daily, participate in art activities, garden, and experience other activities that will be messy. Clothing should, therefore, be weather-appropriate and easily washable.

Indoor Shoes

Please bring a pair of indoor shoes to keep in the classroom year-round. These should be easy to slip on and have soft/thin soles. This type of shoe will allow your child to feel the floor under her feet, promoting balance and awareness of movements, as well as promote independence with a consistent routine of changing into and out of shoes. Other reasons for wearing indoor shoes include helping to keep the classroom floor clean and the noise level to a minimum. In some classrooms, these shoes will be used as a second pair of shoes in the event of an accident. Over the years, we have found that the best indoor shoes are ballet shoes or thin-soled loafers, similar to Tom's. Choose brand of loafers are an excellent choice and have the added benefit of helping the child discern between the left and right foot. House shoes and slippers are not acceptable.



Outdoor Shoes

Shoes should enable your child to move with coordination and confidence. They should be sturdy and allow for safe outdoor play. Closed-toe tennis shoes with Velcro are best (laces should not be worn until a child can manage them independently). Please avoid jellies, flip-flops, cowboy boots, clogs/Crocs, and tight dress shoes, because they are more difficult for children to walk in and can be dangerous in the classroom or on the playground. Please avoid flashing shoes, shoes that make noises, and those that have cartoon or fantasy characters; they are highly distracting for the wearer and other children.

Weather-Appropriate

We ask that you provide a pair of rain boots to stay in the classroom year-round so children can play outdoors in various weather conditions without fear of damaging daily-wear shoes. On rainy days, your child should wear a rain coat to school to be used when we go outdoors. Please do not have your child bring an umbrella. These can be very distracting for others and difficult to store in the classroom. If we are lucky enough to have a snow day, please send labeled warm clothes.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Maria Montessori developed a very special ritual to honor a child's birthday called the Celebration of Life. During this celebration, your child walks around the "sun" as his/her growth and maturity is shared through pictures that you send to school. This simple but meaningful ritual focuses on the child and is not conducted in a party atmosphere. The date will be arranged in cooperation with the teachers and the parents of the birthday child(ren). You may attend the birthday celebration with your child which is generally held at the beginning or end of class. You may bring a healthy snack, but it is not required. Please let us know ahead of time if you will be sending a birthday snack. Do not send goodie bags. We are happy to distribute birthday party invitations, but we can only do this if they are going to all children in the classroom.

COMMUNICATION

Parent-Teacher Conferences are held three times a year. You will receive a report that summarizes what your child has accomplished and have an opportunity to help set goals with the teachers on what your child will be focusing on next. At any time, you can request to meet with your child's teachers. Please contact them by email, or you may leave a message for them to return your call after the school day ends.

Additionally, you will be invited via email to join the classroom information sharing site, Bloomz. Please accept this invitation so you can see pictures and descriptions of your child's work in the classroom, as well as information from teachers that is specific to your child's class.



COMMUNITY SNACK

During the school year, snack is assigned on a weekly basis. A snack calendar will be sent out by email in August and updated throughout the year as necessary. Each child will be assigned to bring a week's worth of snack approximately once or twice a year. A shopping list with specific items will be sent home on the Thursday or Friday prior to your snack week. All items on the list should be brought to the classroom by 8:30 am on Monday morning.

A separate snack calendar will be sent out in June for the summer months.

WHAT TO BRING



Backpack

Your child should bring an appropriate sized backpack to school each day. Please make sure it is labeled with your child's name. The backpack is a tool for independence and storage of extra clothes, weekly folder or binder, and reusable water bottle. If utilized, weekly folders (9x12) will be sent home in your child's backpack on Fridays, and should be returned to school in his/her backpack on Mondays.

Please send at least one complete set of clothes - top, bottom, underwear, and socks. If your child is younger, you may want to send additional clothing. You will also need to pack a small laundry bag to store any soiled clothing (this can be a gallon-size zipper bag or a folded waterproof laundry bag.) Please send a reusable water bottle clearly labeled with your child's name to be used outdoors.



Nap Items

If your child naps or needs some quiet rest time in the afternoons, you may send a reasonably-sized, thin blanket at the beginning of the year. These will be sent home on Friday for laundering and should be returned to school on Monday. Please do not send very large blankets, pillows, or stuffed animals.



Lunch

Good nutrition is essential to the development of your child. Lunch not only provides essential fuel for our bodies, but universally, it serves as a social function. Lunch time provides us the opportunity to teach Grace and Courtesy and Practical Life lessons.

To promote independence, please send lunch in a lunchbox that your child can easily carry and open independently. Reusable containers should be used to avoid excessive trash in the classroom. We have found that the containers with snap lids on all four sides are the best for children to manage. We will provide water during lunch for your child to pour in a glass, so we ask that other drinks not be sent. If you would like to send milk, it needs to be stored in a thermos that your child can easily open and pour into a glass. All eating utensils, plates, bowls, glasses, napkins, and placemats are provided in the classroom.

Although the school does have microwave ovens, it is not practical for us to use them to reheat food; we encourage wide-mouth thermoses. Please refer to our Lunch Guidelines handout for great suggestions on food items to send to school.

Please do not send the following items: sippy cups, bottles, juice, carbonated drinks, Lunchables, chips, or items high in sugar such as cookies, fruit snacks, yogurt in tubes, and Jell-O.