

Montessori Discovery Center

Parent Handbook

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Montessori Discovery Center



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Operating Hours 7am-5:30pm

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Welcome to Montessori Discovery Center

Montessori Discovery Center has been in business since 1990. The owners are Judy Austin and Ann Rogers, who each have over 20 years of experience teaching in a Montessori school. We strive to offer the best quality care and education in a loving environment, and are glad to have you join us as we prepare your child for a bright and rewarding future.

This handbook is intended to help you understand how our school operates, what our policies are, and what your responsibilities as a parent will be. Please read through this handbook and feel free to ask questions regarding anything that may be unclear. By working together with our staff and us, we will be able to provide the quality program your child deserves.

Philosophy

Montessori Discovery Center is committed to providing quality Montessori education and childcare for all children, ages 2 ½ to 6 years, based on the following principles:

*The overall goal of Montessori education is to teach children to be independent, confident, responsible, and caring citizens.

*Learning occurs in an inquiring, cooperative atmosphere. The teacher prepares the environment, guides the activity, and offers the stimulation, but it is the child who learns from his or her experience.

*Each child's physical, emotional, social, and intellectual needs and interests are inseparable. To develop these needs to their fullest potential, each child must have the freedom to explore and absorb the knowledge with order and self-discipline at his or her own rate and interest.

Registration and Tuition

A non-refundable registration fee is required when your child is enrolled at Montessori Discovery Center. Re-registration is required yearly in September. Tuition payment is due on the first of the month. If no payment has been made by the 10th of the month, a \$25 fee may be charged to you. This occurs unless prior arrangements have been made with the school director. In the event an account becomes delinquent 30 days, the school reserves the right to request that your child be withdrawn from school until satisfactory payment arrangements have been made.

For those families with more than one child enrolled in the school at the same time, a 10% discount will be given on the second child's tuition.

THERE IS A \$1.00 PER MINUTE LATE CHARGE FOR CHILDREN PICKED UP AFTER 5:30 PM.

School Day Schedule

7:00-9:00	Childcare available in activity room
9:00-11:30	Morning Class time
11:30-12:00	Lunch
12:00-1:00	Playtime
1:00-3:00	Afternoon Class time
3:00-5:30	Childcare available in activity room

*Childcare includes free play, group games, story time, and crafts.

Arrival and Departure

It is very important to have your child brought to school by 9:00am. State law requires that all children must be escorted to school and signed in and out by the adult responsible for their transportation to and from

school. You are also responsible for your child anytime you are at the school with them. Please have your child stay with you during these times. We ask that you be prompt in picking up your child from school. If you anticipate being late, or if an emergency arises, please call the school to let us know. **There is a charge of \$1.00 per minute for care after 5:30 pm.**

Combination Lock and Arrival/ Departure Door

Since school begins at **9:00am**, the door will be locked after this time, and you may not enter the school again until **9:30am**. This is done so that classes are not disturbed during morning circle time. After **9:30am**, you may enter the school using the combination lock. This combination will be given only to parents.

Withdrawal

Montessori Discovery Center requires 2 weeks written notice to discontinue your child from the program, or full tuition will be charged for the month.

Classroom Visitation

We have an open door policy at our school. Parents are welcome and encouraged to visit their child's class at any time.

Emergency School Closure

During the year, school may need to be closed due to weather conditions or other emergencies. In such cases, the safety and well being of all children is our primary concern. When an emergency closure is necessary, we will contact parents or emergency contact

persons to come pick-up their children. When inclement weather conditions occur, the opening of school (in most cases) will follow the Salem-Keizer school district's decision on whether we have a school closure or delay. Check our website, www.montessoridiscoverycenter.com or call the school for a message.

Discipline

The Montessori method allows children to choose their own work, which requires a high concentration level and allows them to frequently work independently. This method actually minimizes discipline problems, but when they do arise, our ground rules are simple:

1. No child shall hurt another in any way.
2. No child may disturb the work of another.

These rules aid in the development of respect for self and others. When a problem does occur, certain actions will be taken:

1. The child will be redirected in a positive manner.
2. If redirection does not correct the situation, a time-out will be given. A time-out means that the child is to sit in a chair where he/she can observe the class for approximately 5 minutes.
3. If behavior continues to be an issue, the teacher or the director will contact parents.

Parent Conferences

Conferences are held twice a year, in the fall and spring. This is the time to find out where your child's skill development is at, and ask any questions you may have. Whenever possible, we recommend that both parents attend.

Illness

If your child becomes ill at school, we will provide immediate attention (all of our staff has been trained in CPR and First Aid per state requirements) and we will notify you at once. Please be sure the school has current information regarding how parents and emergency contacts can be reached.

In order to protect your child and other children in the center, we have set-up some guidelines regarding illness. Do not bring your child to school if he/she has any of the following symptoms:

1. Fever over 99 degrees
2. Diarrhea
3. Vomiting or nausea
4. Severe cough
5. Unusual color to skin or eyes
6. Skin or eye lesions, or rashes that are severe, weeping, or infected

7. Severe cold with fever, sneezing, and green nose dislodgement
8. Contagious illness such as measles, chicken pox, mumps, roseola, or whooping cough
9. Head lice

If the teacher feels that the child is too sick or contagious, he/she will not be allowed into school. Please have a friend or relative who would be willing to care for your child if you cannot. **If a child becomes ill at school, a parent is expected to pick-up the child within an hour from notification. If your child has a fever, he/she needs to stay home for a full 24 hours AFTER the fever has cleared before returning to school.**

Immunizations

Immunization records must be kept current and on file within the first week of school. Immunization forms are available in the office.

Student Medication

Prescription medications will be administered only with written permission from the parent. This includes cough drops. Prescription medications must be labeled with the student's name, instructions on how and when to administer it, the name of the medication, physician's name, and must be in the original container. Non-prescription medication instructions include the name of the medication, circumstances under which it may be administered, dosage, and frequency of administration.

Child Abuse

Teachers are required ethically, and under penalty of law, to report any suspected child abuse (physical, emotional, sexual, or neglect) to the Child Care Division.

Sharing Day

Mondays are our day for sharing. Each child is given an opportunity to share something with the whole class. Things such as books, educational toys, pictures, and things from nature make wonderful sharing items. We prefer that children not bring toys for sharing, especially toy weapons. We feel that toy weapons provoke violent behavior and are inappropriate for the Montessori environment.

Birthdays/ Book Parties/ Special Occasions

In the Montessori classroom, we celebrate birthdays with a special song at group time. It is both fun and educational to have the birthday child bring photos of him/herself from birth through the current age. You may

provide store bought items only for treats. Please DO NOT bring cake or cupcakes.

Lunches

Montessori Discovery Center is committed to promoting a nutritious and healthy lifestyle for all of our students. We encourage parents to be aware of the food that they pack for their children's lunches and how these foods can impact learning.

Be aware of the following ingredients when packing lunches:

- high levels of sugar (listed in the first three ingredients)
- hydrogenated oils (also includes shortening)
- juice containing artificial flavors/colors

Lunch is a social experience greatly enjoyed by the children, and is an opportunity for them to develop graceful and courteous manners. It is a time to enjoy pleasant conversation, and healthy foods. The school provides low-fat milk at lunchtime. Please send 2 napkins (preferably cloth) to school in the lunchbox. One is used as a placemat, and the other for a napkin. Children wrap uneaten food and return it to the lunchbox. If you find empty wrappings, old peelings, or unwrapped food in your child's lunchbox, it is helpful to reflect with them on the lunchtime procedure.

If you wish to put something special in your child's lunch, a note or picture from home always brings a smile. Please limit sweets and nutritionally empty foods, as children tend to reach for these items first. Please do not send candy in your child's lunch.

We discuss nutrition with the students throughout the year and are hopeful that we can contribute to a healthy lifestyle.

Our school also promotes litterless lunches. We encourage all day students to pack their lunch/snacks in re-useable containers/packages. We would like the students to be aware of how garbage can be reduced and that they can help keep our environment clean and healthy. We also have started a composting program and promote recycling whenever possible.

Lunchbox Ideas

Please be sure to include a protein food in your child's lunch every day. We also ask that you use whole wheat breads, and cut all fruits and veggies into small pieces (carrots, grapes, cherries, etc.). There are many websites with wonderful lunchbox suggestions. Here are a few to look at if you are at a loss for lunch ideas:

<http://www.laptoplunches.com/healthy-lunches-bored.php>
http://www.ehow.com/how_134910_healthy-lunches-kids.html
http://www.eatingwell.com/recipes_menus/collections/healthy_kids_lunch_recipes

Clothing

Children should be dressed comfortably, and with enough outdoor clothing to stay warm when we go outside. Please make sure all of your child's outer clothing is marked clearly with their name. Your child will also need to have a pair of rain boots left at school. Please send a zip lock bag to school containing at least one complete change of clothes, including socks and underwear. Please be aware that pull-ups and diapers are not allowed at school.

Nap Time

For children taking naps, naptime is 12:45-2:45. Each napper will need to bring a small blanket and pillow in a pillowcase in a bag or large pillowcase to be left at school. All of these items need to be marked with your child's name, and are left at school all week. Nap linens

are sent home on Friday so they can be washed over the weekend.

Mailboxes/ Cubbies

Each child at our school will have a mailbox and a cubby. These mailboxes are located in the activity room, and will contain all of your child's work, and notes from the school. Extra clothing is kept in the cubbies. Please check your child's mailbox every day before taking your child home.

Field Trips

We go on a number of field trips during the school year. Each time we plan an activity, we will send home a detailed note with space for your signature. Please return these promptly.

Children are transported either in the school van (they must be at least 4 years old) or in a private parent volunteer vehicle. Your child will always be secured in a carseat with a seatbelt, and driven by a responsible adult who has a valid Oregon driver's license and insurance. We encourage parents to come with us when able. This is a great sharing opportunity for both you and your child.

School Calendar

We generally have the same school holidays and inservice days as the Salem-Keizer School District. We will provide childcare only over the Christmas and Spring Break holidays. A school calendar with dates will be available at the beginning of the school year.

Vacations/ Sick Days

There are no make-up days or credit for sick days or vacations taken by your child.

Volunteer Hours

Parent volunteer hours are mandatory at Montessori Discovery Center. Volunteer time is calculated by points, and each family is required to accumulate 10 points during the school year. Examples include 2 points given for services such as washing towels, story time reader, bringing snack, going on a field trip, mowing the lawn, grounds keeping, making materials for the classroom, etc. 10 points is available for taking on leadership roles in the Parent Club. If you are unable to volunteer at all, you may pay an annual fee of \$250 in lieu of service hours.

Communication

It is very important that the staff of Montessori Discovery Center has excellent communication with parents. We want to keep you informed of all current events, and schedules. To facilitate this, we use several methods:

1. White board located by entry way
2. Monthly newsletter
3. Notes in parent mailboxes
4. Messages on sign-in computer

Please call the school if you have any questions.

Good Things to Know

*Parents are always welcome at the school. To facilitate visits, parents will be given the code for the combination lock on our arrival/departure door.

*It is mandatory that your child arrive at school by 9:00am. If you are late, you may not enter the school until 9:30am when classroom circle time is over. This decreases interruptions during the lessons.

*When you park your car, always park in the right direction. Tickets may be given to cars facing the wrong way.

*Always lock your car and take valuables into the school with you. The school is claims no responsibility for any damage to your vehicle or loss of property.

*If you have younger children, it is illegal to leave them in your vehicle alone while picking up your school-age child.

*Please call the school if your child will not be there that day.

*Please make sure that the gate is always closed behind you.

*Girls must wear shorts under dresses and skirts.

*Due to health concerns, please do not send milk in your child's lunch. Milk is provided by the school.

*Always remember to thank your child's teachers. They work very hard to make sure your child has a positive and creative experience.