



The Montessori Academy of Arlington

TODDLER CLASSROOM ORIENTATION AND GUIDELINES



DROP OFF/ PICK UP PROCEDURE

Drop off and pick up take place between 8:20-8:30 am and 3:20-3:30 pm. Parents should park and walk with their child into and out of the main entrance of the building each day. Due to supervision concerns, Toddler students do not use carline; courtyard entrances will not be used. To encourage independence, children should walk into the classroom and put away their belongings. There will be a teacher to help assist children until they can accomplish this task independently. Drop off and pick up are very busy times. Please limit your time in the classroom. If you need to speak to the teacher at length, please schedule a time to speak with her or contact her through email.

Separation

Separation anxiety is a normal part of development and we have found that short and sweet is best. Saying goodbye at the doorway and exiting promptly ensures a smoother transition for children. If a child has trouble with the transition, a teacher will be there to offer comfort.

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. Provide an extra set of clothing each day.



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.



CELEBRATIONS

Celebrations are wonderful and we will celebrate milestones and accomplishments as they happen. Toddlers are not yet cognizant of the concept of time and age, so we choose to celebrate things that they recognize. Please do not send treats on your child's birthday, such as cupcakes. Should you wish to celebrate with a party outside of school, we will gladly pass out invitations to all students 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.

TOILETING INDEPENDENCE

Classroom teachers will work with parents to decide when a good time would be to start the toilet independence process. Please see Toileting Guidelines for additional information.

If your child is not ready to begin the toilet learning process, you can choose to bring disposable or cotton diapers, which should be supplied in the backpack daily.

We will place all soiled training pants in the laundry bag/dry bag that you will supply. This bag should have a zipper so that it can be stored without other children having access to the wet/soiled pants.



WHAT TO BRING



Backpack

Your child should bring an appropriately sized backpack to school each day which is labeled with your child's name. The backpack is a tool for independence and storage of extra clothes. If your child wears diapers, please send 5 diapers in your child's backpack each day. 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 folded waterproof laundry bag to store any soiled clothing.

Please send a reusable water bottle clearly labeled with your child's name to be used outdoors.



Nap Items

For afternoon naps, 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 lessons and practical life lessons.

To promote independence, please send lunch in a lunchbox that your child can easily carry and open independently. To avoid excessive trash in the classroom, please send reusable containers. 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 his/her 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.

Teachers are not able to reheat food for students.

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. We will provide a placemat, small plate, small bowl, fork, spoon, cup, and napkin.

Please refer to our Lunch Guidelines handout for great suggestions on food items to send to school.