



# Alden Montessori School



2022/23

PARENT HANDBOOK  
AND RESOURCE GUIDE

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*“Children are human beings to whom respect is due,  
superior to us by reason of their innocence  
and of the greater possibilities of their future”*

*-Maria Montessori*



# Mission Statement

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**Our Mission:** At Alden Montessori, we are dedicated to the principles of Dr. Maria Montessori.

Our goal is to form a warm, welcoming alliance among educators, parents and students, to cultivate a strong sense of self-reliance and self-motivation within the child and to nurturing their natural love of learning.



Children are active learners who thrive in the Montessori environment. Their ability to learn independently through the Montessori materials enables the children to enjoy the learning process which they take with them throughout their lives. The Montessori method inspires children to discover, question, and think through hands-on exploration, challenging the children to work to their full potential regardless of age or grade. Montessori children grow to become respectful, social, moral human beings.



# Our Dedicated Leadership

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**Leadership** Jere Albanesi and Karyn Dole are the founders of the Alden Montessori School and personally invested in the ownership and management. Both are dedicated Montessorians with decades of experience between them, both in the classroom and in administration. Coupled with the wealth of knowledge in education and the dedication received from the staff and parents, Alden Montessori School has nurtured a beautiful Montessori community.



**Karyn Dole** obtained her American Montessori Society credential at the Early Childhood level in 2004. She became a director of a Colleyville Montessori School in 2006. In 2007 Karyn began working with Jere at the Windsong Montessori School in preparation for beginning our new adventure at Alden. Having a Bachelor of Science degree in Chemistry and Biology has proven to be a wonderful asset as she continually researches topics essential to the education of children. She is the mother of two lovely Montessori graduates!

**Jere Albanesi** came to Montessori in 1993 obtaining her MACTE accredited credentials at the elementary level through Contemporary Montessori Education. She has more than twenty years teaching and administrative experience. Having a Bachelor's degree in Graphic Design and Advertising, she provides communication to the parents through the website, educational materials and newsletters, as well as designing materials and curriculum for the students. She has raised three beautiful Montessori graduates!



**Ruth Austin** obtained her Montessori credential in Early Childhood Education in 1998 through the Montessori Educational Programs International. She has extensive experience in the primary classroom as well as having been a director of another Montessori school before joining the Alden family in 2010. She also has two incredible daughters that had a Montessori education.

**We are passionate about what we do!** Alden Montessori School is so fortunate to have a core of Montessorians throughout all levels of the school. The owners, directors and teachers are Montessori credentialed. When administration is able to support the teachers in all areas from curriculum to guidance of the children the school is in harmony from top to bottom. Our wonderful Montessori teachers are supported in every way by the owners who are on site every day and passionately involved with every aspect of the school.



# Our Wonderful Staff

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**Dedicated Staff** We employ dedicated Montessorians as advocates for your child's education. Each class is staffed by a Montessori credentialed teacher and an intern/assistant. Alden Montessori continues to enjoy well-seasoned staff loyal to our school and passionate about what they do, creating an environment that benefits from low teacher turnover. Each year it is a pleasure to watch these dedicated Montessorians enjoy what they do.

**Our Montessori Teachers** Each Montessori-credentialed lead teacher has a wealth of experience and a nurturing spirit. They have dedicated themselves to the Montessori philosophy and faithfully employs its principles for the student's education and enjoyment of learning. In that endeavor, they continue to study and immerse themselves in the pursuit of knowledge related to the Montessori child.

**Our Support Staff** is selected for their abilities to assist in the teaching and nurturing of your child. Each one is carefully trained and works closely with the lead teacher and administration to follow the principles of Montessori. Our support staff is dedicated to the school as well and continues to be a long-time advocate of the school and its mission.



# Licensing and Accreditation

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**Association Montessori International Teachers of Texas** AMITOT is a local Association Montessori International organization which licenses Montessori schools in Texas, overseeing Montessori administration, classroom curriculum and teacher training to ensure the quality of Montessori programs. Alden Montessori School has been licensed through AMITOT since 2009.

**American Montessori Society** AMS is a nonprofit, professional organization whose aim to provide for the leadership, support and advancement of Montessori education through training, collaboration, and accreditation. Alden Montessori School is a level 6 on the Pathways to Accreditation program.

**Texas Department of Family and Protective Services** DFPS works with communities, families, child care and schools for the health, safety and protection of children, the elderly, and people with disabilities. Alden Montessori School has been licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services since 2009.

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## Alden Montessori School, LLC

Director: Jere Albanesi (Head of School), Karyn Dole (Head of School), Ruth Austin (Director of Operations)

School: (940) 584-0400

After hours: Jere at (214) 415-8092 or Karyn at (972) 672-1481

## Local Licensing Office

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# The Genius of Maria Montessori

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**Maria Montessori** was an extraordinarily gifted person with the scholarly bent of a Madame Curie and the compassionate soul of a Mother Teresa, and was always ahead of her time. She became Italy's first female doctor when she graduated in 1896. Initially she focused on the care of children's bodies and their physical ailments and diseases. Her natural intellectual curiosity then led to an exploration of children's minds and how they learn. She believed that environment was a major factor in child development.

Appointed Professor of Anthropology at the University of Rome in 1904, Montessori represented Italy at two international women's conferences: Berlin in 1896 and London in 1900. She amazed the world of education with her glass house classroom at the Panama-Pacific International Exhibition in San Francisco in 1915. In 1922 she was appointed Inspector of Schools in Italy. She lost that position when she refused to have her young charges take the fascist oath as the dictator Mussolini required.

Dr. Montessori visited the U.S. in 1913 and impressed Alexander Graham Bell who founded the Montessori Education Association in his Washington, D.C. home. Her American friends included Helen Keller and Thomas Edison. In 1915 she mounted an exhibit at the Panama-Pacific International Exhibition in San Francisco. It featured a glass class room which allowed people to observe her teaching methods. She also conducted training sessions and addressed the NEA and the International Kindergarten Union.

She was a teacher of teachers. She wrote and lectured unceasingly. She opened a research institute in Spain in 1917 and conducted training courses in London in 1919. She founded training centers in the Netherlands in 1938 and taught her methodology in India in 1939. She established centers in the Netherlands (1938) and England (1947). An ardent pacifist, Dr. Montessori escaped harm during the turbulent 1920's and 1930's by advancing her educational mission in the face of hostilities.

Dr. Montessori's work garnered her Nobel Peace Prize nominations in 1949, 1950 and 1951.

Maria Montessori was profoundly influenced by Fredrich Froebel, the inventor of kindergarten, and by Johan Heinrich Pestalozzi, who believed that children learned through activity. She also drew inspiration from Itard, Seguin and Rousseau. She enhanced their approaches by adding her own deeply felt belief that we must follow the child. One does not teach children, but rather creates a nurturing climate in which children can teach themselves through creative activity and exploration.



Maria Montessori wrote over a dozen books. The most well known are the *Montessori Method* (1916) and *The Absorbent Mind* (1949). Dr. Montessori taught that placing children in a stimulating environment, e.g., the Children's House, will encourage learning. She saw the teacher as a 'keeper of the environment' who was there mainly to facilitate the children's self-conducted learning process.

The Montessori Method got its start with the opening of the original Casa De Bambini in the slum district of Rome known as San Lorenzo. Montessori took fifty hopelessly deprived ghetto children and awakened them to life's excitement and possibilities. Within months people came from near and far to see her in action and to learn her strategies. She founded the Association Montessori Internationale in 1929 so that her teachings and educational philosophy would flourish in perpetuity.

'Help me to do it my myself!' Dr. Montessori's pioneering work with children's education began at the beginning of the twentieth century. One hundred years later her philosophy and approach remains remarkably fresh and in tune with modern minds. In particular, it resonates with parents who seek to stimulate their children through creative activity and exploration in all its forms. Children educated in the Montessori manner know who they are as people. They are confident, at ease with themselves, and interact on a high social plane with their peers and adults. Montessori students are naturally curious about their surroundings and are eager to explore anything and everything. They go on to adulthood ready to make a contribution to society rather than becoming a rain on it.

The Montessori movement has spread throughout the world. It is a shining beacon of light in a dreary educational world. What Maria Montessori started as a scientific investigation has flourished as a monumental humanitarian and pedagogical endeavor. What she felt in her heart has become an international cause. Children are unique and a most precious resource.

After her death in 1952, two members of the Montessori family continued her great work. Her son Mario directed the Association Montessori International until his death in 1982. Recently her granddaughter, Renilde, has been active as Secretary-General of AMI. Truly, Montessori education is a family affair.





# The Montessori Method

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**The Montessori Method** of education, developed by Dr. Maria Montessori, is a child-centered educational approach based on scientific observations of children from birth to adulthood. Dr. Montessori's Method has been time tested, with over 100 years of success in diverse cultures throughout the world. It is a view of the child as one who is naturally eager for knowledge and capable of initiating learning in a supportive and thoughtfully prepared learning environment. It is an approach that values the human spirit and the development of the whole child-physical, social, emotional and cognitive.

**Hallmarks of Montessori** that are necessary for a program to be considered authentically Montessori include multi-age groupings that foster peer learning, uninterrupted blocks of work time, and guided choice of work activity. In addition, a full complement of specially designed Montessori learning materials are meticulously arranged and available for use in an aesthetically pleasing environment. The teacher, child, and environment create a learning triangle. The classroom is prepared by the teacher to encourage independence, freedom within limits, and a sense of order. The child, through individual choice, makes use of what the environment offers to develop himself, interacting with the teacher when support and/or guidance is needed.

**The Prepared Environment** is an important part of Montessori. It is the link for a child to learn from adults. Classrooms are thoughtfully designed with child-sized furnishings and the activities are set up for the child's success and allows freedom of movement and choice. The environment has to be safe for the child to explore freely. The environment has to be ready and beautiful for the children so it invites them to work. Montessori refers to work as an activity the child does. She calls it work since it is through this that they create themselves. The adult's role then is to construct the environment in which they will learn. The development of the child is therefore dependent on the environment.

**Sensitive Periods** were observed by Dr. Montessori. The children experience windows of opportunity as they grow. As their students develop, Montessori teachers match appropriate lessons and materials to these sensitive periods when learning is most naturally absorbed and internalized.

**The Absorbent Mind** is what Maria Montessori called how children learned the language without anyone teaching them. This sparked her idea for the "absorbent mind". Children under the age of three, do not need to have lessons in order to learn, they simply absorb everything in the environment by experiencing it, being part of it.

**Independence** is the ultimate goal for a Montessori student. "Never help a child with a task at which he feels he can succeed." –Maria Montessori. It is always a goal of Montessori education in the classrooms to make the child independent and be able to do things for himself. This is achieved by giving children opportunities. Opportunities to move, to dress themselves, to choose what they want to do, and to help the adults with tasks. When the children are able to do things for themselves there is an increase in their self-confidence and esteem that they will carry on throughout their life.



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**Follow the Child** is the term Maria Montessori used as she observed children without preconceived ideas that helped her develop her method and materials that the children needed and were interested in. Follow the child, they will show you what they need to do, what they need to develop in themselves and what area they need to be challenged in. The aim of the children who persevere in their work with an object is certainly not to "learn"; they are drawn to it by the needs of their inner life, which must be recognized and developed by its means." – Maria Montessori.

**Correction of a Child** should be done in a careful manner. In the learning process, children make mistakes.

They may spill something, break something or make a mistake. In a Montessori environment the adult calmly recognizes the error and helps them come to a solution. Correcting children incorrectly may result in them being scared to attempt anything in fear of making another mistake.

**Multi-aged Grouping** are key to the success of a Montessori environment. Maria Montessori observed that children learn similarly to each other in planes of development. This is observed in roughly 3 year cycles: Birth-3 years, 3-6 years, 6-9 years and 9-12 years. This ensures that as children move through the classroom they will be exposed to older and younger peers, facilitating both imitative learning and peer tutoring.

Along with direct lessons given by classmates, younger students in a multi-age setting also learn by observing the activities of older peers and even by "observing" advanced lessons given by the teacher to another child. Montessori teachers are careful to present lessons to older children in a manner that allows interested younger children to watch, listen, and learn.

It's easy to see how access to advanced activities and lessons benefits younger children academically. What about older children? Any adult who has tried to teach something the least bit complicated to someone else has enjoyed a taste of the older child's Montessori learning experience! There is no better way to reinforce one's own knowledge than by teaching someone else. Teaching a real lesson, as children do in Montessori classrooms, helps older children identify gaps in their own knowledge and often inspires them to achieve even greater mastery.

When peer-to-peer learning is self-directed, when it happens because children are ready, willing, and able to participate, it bolsters the older child's self-confidence, opens doors for younger children, and sharpens the academic skills of both.



# Will My Child Thrive in Montessori?

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**Each Individual Child** has their own unique personality as well as physical and emotional needs. In a Montessori classroom, the needs of each child are embraced and nurtured, allowing the child to flourish socially, emotionally and academically. The benefits of a Montessori education have been scientifically studied and time-tested.

Montessori programs are especially good for children who are self-directed, can work independently for extended lengths of time, and work well alone or in small groups. Also, these programs tend to be ideal for children easily overwhelmed by noise, chaos, and disorder. The focus on individual learning allows students to work at their own pace and can also provide a healthy environment for some special needs children.

The Montessori approach emphasizes process rather than the end result, and encourages decision-making and independence. This would suit children that need individualized learning especially for a child who does not like to compete with others, who may be feeling anxious about performance, have delays in certain areas and strengths in the others, or a child that needs a slower pace to learn.”

**When Montessori Is Not the Right Environment** Although we are firm believers that Montessori is right for every child, not each Montessori classroom is set up to meet the needs of every child. Montessori could be challenging and frustrating for children who are not flexible, who do not follow instructions, who like to switch activities frequently.

Some children really need to be outside and run and play with mud. While some Montessori environments have a more “farm” like arrangement, others in urban or suburban areas do not have the land to enable a child to spend hours running, climbing, digging and spending other purposeful activities out of doors. Children with excessive energy or behavioral challenges would benefit from such a Montessori school.

As with any environment, children that have physically hurtful or destructive behaviors may require a smaller environment where the teacher can be more readily at hand to manage such behaviors or outbursts.

Likewise, some children with behavioral or learning disabilities that require more one-on-one attention, require a smaller class size, or require a teacher trained in those areas may need an environment different than the one offered here at Alden. We are here to help find the best environment to enable that child to thrive.



# Montessori Education vs Traditional Education

## Characteristics of Montessori

## Characteristics of Traditional

<p><b>Active Individualized Learning</b> through stimulating, multi-sensory teacher materials.</p>	<p><b>Passive Class Learning</b> through teacher-centered class lessons and paper work.</p>
<p><b>Multi-Aged Classroom</b> is a natural social environment that includes a wide range of ages and fosters self-motivation. Students enjoy working for their own sense of accomplishment</p>	<p><b>Chronological Grouping</b> focuses on external rewards and punishments such as grades, competition and social conformity.</p>
<p><b>Freedom of Choice</b> involves decision making. Student selects work according to individual interest guided by the adult.</p>	<p><b>Class Curriculum</b> demands that students cover the same work at the same time with no regard to individual interests or needs.</p>
<p><b>Working at One's Own Pace</b> enables students to work for long periods without interruption. Each individual works at his potential independent of the class.</p>	<p><b>Group Learning</b> involves each academic subject being scheduled for a limited period. Each student is directly affected by the progress of the whole class.</p>
<p><b>Integral Education</b> balances academic work with freedom of movement and harmony is created between physical, social and mental activities. There is an interrelationship between subjects.</p>	<p><b>Fragmented Education</b> provides academic subjects that are not interrelated. There are periods of sitting with little ability to move. Concentration is interrupted allowing no ability to lengthen concentration span.</p>
<p><b>Independence</b> is fostered by a classroom that is specifically designed to encourage maximum independence.</p>	<p><b>Dependency</b> is promoted since activities are initiated by the teacher.</p>
<p><b>Self-Evaluation</b> occurs as students learn to evaluate their work objectively through the use of self-correcting teaching materials and individual work with the teacher.</p>	<p><b>Class Comparison</b> occurs as work is evaluated and graded by the teacher or peers. Students evaluate themselves against the group as best or worst in the class.</p>
<p><b>Reality Oriented Hands-on Education</b> maintains concrete, first-hand experience and is the basis for abstraction.</p>	<p><b>Abstract Education</b> has students learning through abstract mechanical memorization.</p>
<p><b>Close Student-Teacher Interaction</b> enables complete and precise evaluation of student's progress, both academically and psychologically.</p>	<p><b>Class Oriented Teaching</b> prevents close interaction between individual students and teacher. Standardized tests are used to determine student's progress and ability.</p>



# Successful Montessori Educated Individuals



Larry Page and Sergey Brin: Co-Founders of Google

Mark Zuckerberg: Co-founder of Facebook



Bill Gates: Founder of Microsoft

Anne Frank: Author of The Diary of Anne Frank



Will Wright: Video Game Pioneer

Julia Child: Chef



Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis: Editor, Former First Lady

Jeffrey Bezos: Founder of Amazon.com



David Blaine: Magician

Jimmy Wales: Co-founder of Wikipedia



Peter Drucker: Management Guru

Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Nobel Prize winner for Literature



*and many more ....*







# The Montessori Environment



# The Prepared Environment

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**Thoughtfully Prepared** The idea of the prepared environment is Maria Montessori's concept that the environment of the classroom should be designed to meet the developmental needs of the children. Beauty and simplicity make the children's environment warm and inviting, devoid of clutter and mess. Simply decorated, quality furniture, natural lighting, well-cared for materials, and natural plants lend a calmness to the child, allowing him to feel tranquil and comfortable within his environment.

**Structure and Order** are key to the success of the Montessori student. The materials are classified, ordered and sequenced according to the child's stages of development. This provides the child with a sense of security allowing her to interact with the environment successfully and comfortably.

**Reality** is an integral part of the Montessori environment. The environment is real and functional: Tables, chairs, sinks and shelves are child-sized. Real food is prepared with real utensils. The child cares for live plants and animals. Stories about real-life adventures are preferred over fairy tales until the child is of kindergarten age.

**Freedom and Discipline** is paramount. Children do not need strict discipline imposed on them. Maria Montessori discovered that freedom and discipline go hand in hand. We learn from making mistakes. When the child is free to explore the environment and correct his mistakes, inner peace and discipline emerge. The Montessori environment is designed to nurture the child's own inherent need for discipline.

**The Montessori Materials** are specifically designed for a particular academic concept, each wonderfully inviting, aid the child in his own self-construction. The materials are masterfully designed to allow the child to work independently and self-correct so that mastery of the concept is fulfilling. This gives the child the "I did it all by myself!" moment.

**The Normalized Child** having benefited from being in the Montessori environment help create a tranquil environment. Because the Montessori classroom is composed of children from age groups who stay in the class for three years, there are always older students in the classroom who have a positive influence upon the new children. The normalized children serve as mentors and are wonderful role models for the younger children. New arrivals to the classroom transition easily with good leaders to show the way.

**The Uninterrupted Work Cycle** is a two and one half to three hour work cycle in which the children have uninterrupted time to choose, work, complete their lessons. This all begins with the child choosing, doing, returning to order, feeling satisfaction, then choosing again. All while the teacher is presenting new lessons to individuals or small groups of children.

The uninterrupted work cycle allows the children to continue lengthening their attention span and building good work habits.





# Daily Lessons

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**Grace and Courtesy** The child has a need to know and to absorb the social structures in order to be more at ease in his environment. Grace and Courtesy lessons give the child the vocabulary, actions, and steps required for him to build his awareness and responsiveness of those around him. This in turn gives the child a better sense of orientation in his social structure.

**Practical Life** Practical Life provides the foundation for all other activities. Through exercises in daily living, such as pouring and scrubbing, sewing and gardening, the child gains confidence and mastery of the environment. After individual skills are refined, children apply them in purposeful work, such as serving juice or polishing. Specifically, these activities contribute to the control and coordination of movement, development of concentration, and the self-esteem that comes with making a real contribution to the group.

**Sensorial** Children from birth to age six are in their “sensitive period” for exploring the world through their senses. Maria Montessori encouraged us to provide children with many opportunities to organize the sensory impressions they’ve been receiving since birth. Sensorial experiences also indirectly prepare children for future exploration of language, mathematics, geometry, art, and music.

**Language, Reading and Writing** Montessori perceived the miracle of language development as “a treasure prepared in the unconscious, which is then handed over to consciousness, and the child, in full possession of his new power, talks and talks without cessation.” A child who has varied experiences, and is given the words for those experiences, will develop a well-rounded means of expression. The transition to reading and writing is dependent on this. The child will be able to express thoughts, understand and interpret the thoughts of others.

**Mathematics** All of their work with the Practical Life and Sensorial materials brings order to children’s experiences, an important indirect preparation for the mathematical mind. The developing child yearns to organize, classify, and abstract. Fortunately, the whole world obliges with toes to count, temperatures to read, rain to gauge, and clocks to check. The Montessori math lessons lead the child through progressive hands-on activities, emphasizing concepts while preparing the child for abstractions. The extensions and variations we offer complement and support work with Montessori’s legendary math materials.

**Science** Give children as many real, hands-on experiences as possible before introducing abstract concepts like naming and classification. With a concrete experience “in hand,” Montessori children are inspired to learn everything about everything! Observing classroom plants and animals is a natural way to explore the world. Float-and-sink will wet their appetite for more hands-on physical science! With the right presentation, access to materials, and an opportunity for follow-up research, children will begin to comprehend the laws of physics and even the nature of the universe.

**Geography** The study of where and how humans adapted to all of Earth’s environments is so exciting to the child. Physical geography looks at the outward appearance of the environment. Cultural geography looks at what Maria Montessori called humankind’s ability to “continue the work of creation.” Through meeting the basic human needs for food, shelter and clothing, groups of people developed language, tools, transportation, rituals and celebrations, religion, music, art and crafts. Children can begin to see the uniqueness of other cultures, yet come to understand how much we all have in common.



# Our Young Scholars - Toddlers

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**The Montessori Toddler Community** offers children 2 to 3 years old, opportunities to explore their own capabilities and to develop independence within a supportive environment. Our Montessori Toddler community provides a nurturing place for young children to begin their 'education for life'.



A toddler environment is a space designed for the developmental needs of this age group from the size of the furniture, and activities provided, to the emotional support and guidance given. The Toddler classroom is set up very much like a 'home away from home' with distinct areas for food preparation, changing clothes, toileting, group activities, individual activities and quiet moments.

The lead teacher and an assistant provide the love, patience and respect necessary for the toddler to feel safe and thrive within this community. The teacher is a Montessori trained professional, accomplished in recognizing and nurturing the specific developmental needs of this unique phase.

Our youngest children can learn and grow individually, while also participating in cooperative group play and lessons with other children. For the children enrolled in our Toddler Community, each day presents an opportunity for strengthening language skills, refining gross motor skills, developing fine motor skills and encouraging independence.

Toddlers are most successful when enrolled in the five day program. Providing consistency in their schedule and building on the previous day's momentum helps the child feel safe and build confidence. Three day schedules are only considered for children who are secure with themselves and can be happy and successful each day.

**When they are ready to move to the next level:** When a child nears the age of three, he may show signs of readiness to transition to the primary level (3-6 years). The child shows signs of shifting from an unconscious to conscious state of being. He has the ability to follow verbal directions, speak in articulated phrases or sentences, engage in conversation, focus for a two-period lesson and use the toilet. The teacher will then prepare him for transition. Short visits to his new classroom will prepare him for the date that he formally transitions to his new classroom.



# Our Young Scholars - Primary

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**The Montessori Primary Community** offers children 3 to 6 years old the opportunity to explore their environment while striving towards independence, self-awareness, self-discipline, respect for each other and a deep love for learning.



The Montessori primary program is an opportunity to nurture the child's individual development within the context of a group setting. The child will emerge with a set of skills - social, emotional and academic - while more importantly knowing how to function within a group.

Children have extraordinary powers of the mind, as they possess a once-in-a-lifetime ability to truly absorb information and concepts from their surroundings. Children learn by doing with their own hands. Independence, coordination, order, self-discipline and concentration are developed. Children work individually and cooperatively with materials that engage their curiosity.

Children in our primary learn to be purposefully engaged with a wide range of activities. We support the child's natural drive for independence by encouraging him to choose activities of interest and concentrate without interruption. All the while, the teacher is giving academic presentations to independent students or small groups based on independent academic levels while also meeting the needs of the whole group.

The children learn conflict resolution, to act politely in all situations and to be kind and helpful to friends. The result is a cohesive community of young children.

**Important note about Montessori materials:** The scientifically proven materials develop skills and reveal concepts through the child's use and exploration. They provide the opportunity to perfect the practical skills of caring of self and the classroom environment. They enrich vocabulary and open the door to writing, reading, and the parts of speech. They also build on the child's natural interest in counting and introduce an understanding of the decimal system and the processes of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. These materials build a foundation of concrete experiences of abstract concepts assisting your child to deeper levels of understanding.



# The Kindergarten Year

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**The Five Year Old** child in a Montessori classroom has a tremendous advantage over those children in a traditional classroom. The Montessori approach has been acclaimed as the most developmentally appropriate model currently available by top experts on early childhood and elementary education. Montessori is based on a realistic understanding of children's cognitive, neurological and emotional development. In a primary classroom, three and four-year-olds receive the benefit of two years of sensorial preparation for academic skills by working with the concrete Montessori learning materials. This concrete sensorial experience gradually allows the child to form a mental picture of concepts like "how big is a thousand, how many hundreds make up a thousand," and what is really going on when we borrow or carry numbers in mathematical operations.

The value of the sensorial experiences that the younger children receive in Montessori cannot be overestimated. Research is very clear that this is how the young child learns, by observing and manipulating his environment. In traditional education, teachers are not trained in the developmental needs of their students and children are filling in workbook pages with little understanding and do a great deal of rote learning. Superficially, it may appear that they have learned a lot, but the reality a few months down the road, little of what they "learned" will be retained.

The five year olds in Montessori classes help the younger children with their work, actually teaching lessons or correcting errors. When one child tutors another, the tutor normally learns more from the experience than the person being tutored.

By the end of age five, Montessori students often develop academic skills that are beyond those of advanced traditional students. Academic progress is not our ultimate goal. Our real excitement comes from knowing that they develop a natural love of learning and carry that with them the rest of their lives.



## Kindergarten Graduation

**The Kindergarten Graduation Ceremony at Alden Montessori** is a recognition of the completion of the three-year cycle of the primary level in the Montessori classroom. It is a proud moment for everyone!



# Our Young Scholars - Elementary

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**The Montessori Elementary Community** grows out of respect for the mind of the developing the child. The 6-9 year old child now strives for intellectual independence. This is a time for insatiable curiosity and excitement for learning. The children in this age group are starting to realize that the world is an interesting place.



They are primed to study continents, cultures, scientific concepts and great literature. The world is their classroom.

The carefully developed elementary curriculum guides the child through identifying, classifying and researching all the fascinating concepts in each chosen field of study.

The areas of practical life, language, math, geometry, botany, zoology, geography and history are all represented in the classroom, with materials that lead the child to abstraction of the fundamental concepts in each area.

An elementary Montessori classroom is a warm community: a multi-aged, stimulating environment with highly-trained teachers and materials that invite exploration and research. Children learn to face challenges with confidence and begin to find their place in the world around them.

Maria Montessori summed up the 6-9: "The elementary child has reached a new level of development. Before he was interested in things: working with his hands, learning their names. Now he is interested mainly in the how and the why...the problem of cause and effect". It is the job of the elementary teacher to provide the child with the materials and information to discover the interconnectedness of the universe.

**Ready to transition to a traditional classroom:** At the end of the Montessori elementary program, the child is well-equipped to transition into new environments. He has experienced the challenges and rewards of working with a group of other children of different ages and has seen his skills and talents put to use in many group projects. He has developed proficiency in all academics and has learned invaluable social skills, successfully navigating many experiences. The Montessori child is flexible and adaptable allowing him to easily migrate into new academic and social situations.



# Enrichment of the Montessori Day

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**Art** is one of the many ways children express themselves. Art is a way for children to communicate their feelings. It is through art that children develop their fine motor skills. In the Montessori environment, we provide open-ended art activities that help children explore and use their creativity.

**Music and Movement** adds a sensory dimension to a child's life. Children have an innate ability to appreciate music of all types, and an uninhibited inclination to move, dance, and make music. Music is present in all cultures, often reflecting the character of a people by the style, melodies, tones, and instruments used. Both music and movement provides children with a way to express their own unique spirits.

**Food Preparation and Snack** is one of the foundations of Practical Life, they seek ways to use their skills and assume broader responsibilities. Preliminary activities that isolate single skills demonstrate children's amazing ability to handle kitchen tools. The children learn to wash their hands before they begin to learn how to cut and spread on all sorts of delicious, healthy foods. Often, they share their creations with their classmates or sit down with a friend and enjoy their snack together. Preparing and serving snacks (and even meals) is a natural way for children to learn cooperation and experience community.

**Our Beloved Pets** are absolutely adored by the children. Many of our sweet animals are rescues or donated to the school. The children nurture them, feed them, and care for them. The animals, in return, give the children a sense of peace and pride in caring for our fellow creatures.

**Naptime** is an important part of the young child's day. After a relaxed, healthy lunch, the children lay out their blanket and pillow on a comfortable mat. They curl up warm and cozy and drift off to sleep, awakening on their own, fully rested and ready for the rest of their day. Most children under five take a nap, though some may cycle through periods of wakefulness through the year, napping and not napping. However, it is still important to offer this time to them. We never force them to sleep. If they are in a stage where they stay awake on their own, they have a short rest time then may engage in afternoon activities with others who do not nap.

**Sharing a Meal** is a cherished time for the children. Even as adults, it is beneficial to take the time to sit down and enjoy a leisurely meal with friends and family. With our hectic lives, we should all make this an integral part of our day. The children enjoy their lunch time routine. They wash their hands, layout a place mat, a plate and silverware, prepare their lunch and sit down with their friends and teachers. They enjoy each other's company to the fullest. The children love bringing a lunch box prepared at home or our delicious and healthy lunch.

**In House Visitors** bring the world to the children. Artists, musicians, scientists, professionals, animals and more enrich the children's school experience.

**Field** trips are a learning and cooperative experience. Kindergarten and elementary children love "going out" into the community. We are dedicated to sharing the culture of our beautiful city. The children enjoy many experiences from amazing museums and beautiful symphonies to endearing wildlife sanctuaries and more. The children take part in the choosing and planning of their outings.





# Montessori Academics and STEAM



# Montessori Academics

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**Montessori is STEAM!** Since the launch of Sputnik in 1957, the US has called for an increase in scientific and mathematical education. There is currently a movement underway to train 100,000 STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art and math) teachers. Across the country there are new standards for STEAM subjects, with educators being charged to be creative and engaging rather than just teaching from a textbook.

What does this mean for Montessorians?

STEAM - Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math: Being Creative and Engaging in the Montessori Classroom Montessori teachers have a jump start on their conventional counterparts. Since student engagement is at the forefront of the Montessori classroom, we are already actively engaging students in hands-on learning. Beginning in the Montessori preschool environment, students learn the fundamental rules of math and science through the discovery of natural laws through manipulation of didactic materials and problem-solving with peers. The work engages the senses and insures the internalization of concepts, not just memorization of disjointed facts and figures. Through the Montessori concept of Cosmic Education, the curriculum reinforces that everything is interrelated; students see how math and science work harmoniously in nature.

On March 29, 2012, the National Governor's Association issued a brief on "The Role of Informal Science in the State of Education Agenda". It calls for an increase in hands-on discovery and practice of STEAM concepts, something that is already happening across all levels in the Montessori community. It also calls for the use of outside resources such as museums, science centers, and other 'real-life' activities that engage and focus student's attention in the areas of science, technology, engineering and math. Again, Montessori teachers have been using "going-out" opportunities to pique student interest and foster real-life connections for over 100 years.

Larry Page and Sergey Brin, Co-founders of Google, have said that Montessori education allowed them to think for themselves. They credit Montessori with allowing them to question what was going on around them and to discover the answers for themselves. Former Montessori students, Jeff Bezos, founder of Amazon.com, and Will Wright, inventor of "The Sims" video game series, also credit Montessori for allowing them to ask questions, discover, and learn on their own terms.

The current STEAM movement is calling for innovation, collaboration, and hands-on learning and problem solving.

**To the Montessori community, this is nothing new. This is what we've been doing all along!**







# Supporting Our Students



# Road to Independence

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**A Child's Developmental Needs** are important to understand in creating environments of growth for children. Young children are innately driven by their developmental needs, which often clash with the needs of parents. By understanding the child's drive towards independence, we learn to offer her the time and materials she needs to complete the task herself. The intense effort she puts into small, repetitive tasks is deeply satisfying, and the end result gives her confidence and comfort in her skills. If she is not allowed to work through the task to completion, the child may react strongly. This kind of opposition, originated in the conflicting needs of the adult and child, highlights one of the main obstacles to a harmonious relationship between adults and children.

One of the key tenets of Montessori practice is that a more harmonious relationship can be achieved through understanding why children act as they do, through patiently offering them experiences that fulfill their deep, inner developmental drives. The entire Montessori environment is designed to meet these drives and satisfy them through the child's own activity. In Montessori schools, children enjoy that while they learn, and develop respect and care for others around them. This is true preparation for real life.

**"Help Me to Help Myself"** The Montessori teacher considers her role to be a guide, acknowledging that it is the child's work to develop. We prepare the environment so the child can master movements and work toward independence—meeting her own needs. The adult examines the environment to remove any obstacles to the child's independence: is the sink too high? Can we find a smaller dustpan and brush to fit the child's hand? Is there a place to put cloths after wiping up a spill? We observe and wait to see if the child can solve a problem or if other children might offer to help. The large class size and mixed ages help insure that this spontaneous help will arise, allowing children to experience leadership and to ensure good role models.



# The True Meaning of Discipline

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**True Discipline** comes from within and is developed through the experience of greater and greater levels of freedom. A child who has learned to live within certain consistent limits will develop the ability to handle increased levels of freedom, and thus develop more and more control of his actions and choices. In this way, the child will eventually develop self-discipline.

This is why, in our Montessori approach, we establish clear and consistent limits within our environments, which allow the child to discover her own limits on the path to self discipline. In the beginning, it is the adult's role to enforce the limits and allow the natural consequences to occur. Through practice, trial and error, children learn to control impulses and navigate social challenges that allow them to discover the choices that feel right.

Limits can be described as logical, simple, clear rules that determine what behaviors are and are not acceptable in a given situation, community or family. These rules must be clearly and concisely explained to the child, must be consistently upheld, and must reflect the underlying values of the family or community... so that they make sense to all who are asked to uphold them.

The consequences we provide children should be logical, in that they directly relate to the situation... and they make sense. For example, if a child misuses a toy, it is logical that she lose the opportunity to play with that toy for some period of time. Likewise, if a child is yelling or otherwise misbehaving in a restaurant or other public place, it is logical that you leave that place (ie, "if you don't stop screaming we will need to leave the restaurant right now, even though we are not finished eating.") In these examples, once the toy is taken away or you've left the restaurant, it's important NOT to offer a replacement toy or other food. Children need to experience the consequence as uncomfortable, in order to learn the way the world works.

It's vitally important that we, as adults, never state a rule or limit we are unwilling to enforce. We must be totally committed to enforcing the rules we set; otherwise, the message to the child is that rules are made to be broken... and the adults (who set the rules) cannot be trusted.

Children are naturally impulsive and the consistent limits we provide over time allow them to gain control of their own impulses in a way that empowers them and establishes the value of their individual contribution to their family and community.

Therefore, modeling the path to self-discipline is perhaps the greatest gift we give to the children in our lives.



# Supporting Academics

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**Homework** The children spend all day in the classroom working and learning. If the student is productive during the school hours then they should have their afternoons and evenings to pursue their personal interests, interact with their families and relax.

We encourage activities which constructively direct a child's pursuits during home hours, while nurturing their interests and building family bonds. A fundamental truth permeates Montessori's work: children are desperate to learn. In a Montessori class, children are motivated to discover why and how things work. Therefore, homework, in a Montessori sense, is work that the child does at home, as an extension of his or her educational exploration.

**Enhancing What We Do** Many activities may constitute homework, including household activities along side the parent. Responsibilities at home help the child develop language skills and cultural awareness. Making math a real part of the home environment (pairing socks and counting by twos; dividing a pizza into equal pieces; shopping and making change) and giving the child a voice in family decisions are important to the child's perception of math concepts and economic geography. Reading with and to your children every day will result in quality family time and confidence building.

**Outside Tutoring** Since the Montessori curriculum consists of sequentially presented lessons, tutoring can be in conflict. Children learn best with the concrete Montessori materials, moving toward abstraction. Tutors tend to teach by rote memorization and give away the "Ah ha!" moments of discovery that children should come to on their own. Consult with your child's teacher if you feel your child is in need of extracurricular assistance.

**Grades** Grades, like other external rewards, have little lasting effect on a child's efforts or achievements. The Montessori approach nurtures the motivation that comes from within, kindling the child's natural desire to learn. A self-motivated learner also learns to be self-sufficient, without needing reinforcement from outside. In the classroom, of course, the teacher is always available to provide students with guidance and support and closely observe each student's progress and readiness to advance to new lessons.

Elementary children have exposure to test taking skills based on their curriculum. A student is given a test when he completed a section of the curriculum and can masterfully complete the test. Older elementary students have exposure to standardized testing. Test taking lessons are done in such a careful way, providing them with a successful experience free, of anxiety.

**Technology** Computers are the wave of the future. It is very important to know how to use them for many purposes from work to pleasure. The question is when and how much should we expose our young children to them. We are very careful with how much we utilize computers in the education of our young students. Learning on computers does not compare to the hands-on manipulation of three dimensional objects in the real world. The texture, weight, and smell of objects along with the motor skills the child acquires when using those objects cannot be matched in the digital world. Scientific studies show that the massive amounts of computer time small children are receiving is detrimental to their development. Small children need to interact with their environment, other children, and adults to develop social skills, empathy and group dynamics.



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**Touch Base with Teachers Often** The teachers enjoy engaged parents. Feel free to communicate as often as you like about your child's progress. Schedule a time via the teacher's school email. Nap time is a perfect time for the teacher to speak with you. Come in to meet in person or by phone. We respectfully ask that you refrain from talking at drop off or pick up time, as that is an important time for the teacher to be with the children.

**Parent/Teacher Conferences** Once in the fall and once in the spring a formal conference is scheduled. Parents and teachers sit down together and discuss the child's academic progress and emotional growth. A formal report will be provided.

**Open House** Each spring the children are proud to host an open house. This evening is for the children to share their beautiful Montessori environment with family.

**Reading with Your Child** The sensitive period for language development is between birth and age six. What better time to start reading aloud to your child than when he is in the sensitive period for language acquisition? Reading aloud to children facilitates their readiness for formal reading instruction in four areas: oral language, cognitive skills, concepts of printed words, and phonemic awareness. Development of these skills provides a strong foundation to support literacy development during the early school years.

A nightly routine of bedtime stories forms close bonds between parent and child.



# Supporting Children Who Are Struggling

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**Academically** Wherever there is a child struggling in school, the odds are there are parents struggling to figure out how to find the most effective help for that child. Some children find themselves falling behind their peers, despite a lot of effort, because they are frustrated by learning disorders. Some fall behind because they have a hard time focusing on learning, or making an organized effort to get school work done.

The Montessori materials are specially designed to help children learn concepts more easily than abstractly. Using these materials, all their senses, individualized instruction, and a nurturing environment all help when a child is struggling.

Teachers, parents and administration work together to develop strategies to help the child.

**Behaviorally** Montessorians believe in natural and logical consequences as opposed to punishment. Conflict resolution and respect for the environment, (both physical and environmental), are also important aspects of our approach. For it is one of our ultimate goals that our students do the right thing, not because they will be punished if they don't, but because they don't want to adversely affect the people and world around them.

Children who struggle with behaviors that are detrimental to themselves, others, or the environment are nurtured and helped within the classroom. Communication between the teacher, parent and administration is essential to put in to place strategies to help the child gain control of themselves through purposeful activity.

**Partnering with Teachers** When a child is struggling, we will set up daily or weekly communication with parents to discuss progress. A timeline will be created to help parents know when/if it is time to get some outside professional assistance and evaluation.

**Evaluation and Therapy** When a child continues to struggle, an evaluation from a professional might be in order. The Dallas/Fort Worth area provides a wide array of doctors and therapists with specific specialties. Together we will help parents find the right professional to help.

We also have a speech therapist and reading specialist that comes directly to our school to work with children in need. These professionals are hired directly by the parent, but they work closely with the school as well as the parent to best meet the needs of the child.



# Developmental Behaviors

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In our Montessori communities, rules are provided to uphold our overarching commitment: respect for self, others and environment. In young children, some behaviors are developmental and are very normal. However, they are to be monitored to keep all the children happy and safe.

**Biting** is a typical behavior often seen in children under three. They may bite to relieve pain from teething, exploring cause and effect (What happens when I bite?), satisfying a need for oral-motor stimulation or showing frustration. As children mature, gain self-control, and develop problem-solving skills, they outgrow this behavior. While not uncommon, biting can be an upsetting and potentially harmful behavior. It's best to discourage it from the very first.

The first step is to identify the cause of the biting. Partnering with the parents, we implement appropriate strategies to help a child that may be experiencing some of these behaviors.

**Hitting** is also a developmental behavior very common among young children. As with biting, parents and teachers will work together to identify triggers and help the child gain self-control.

**Mean or Inappropriate Words** All children experiment with colorful, foul, or mean words they learn from others to express frustration or a sense of power. We ensure that the children have plenty of positive ways to get attention and help alleviate any frustration they may be experiencing.

"Potty words" are a great source of fun for some children. They enjoy the reaction they gain from others. For younger children, they should learn appropriate names for body parts and use them conversationally to remove the excitement of using those words.

At home, monitoring TV, video, music lyrics, Internet usage and language older family members use is helpful. Children mimic what they see and hear.

**Bullying** There is no one cause for bullying. However, there are many things that can be done to help. We encourage students to show their respect for their peers and teachers by using both kind words and actions. Children need lots of practice at peacemaking. There are many opportunities during their day where children need positive role modeling from adults and older children to navigate difficult situations. These teachable moments help them recognize their challenges and gives them useful solutions.

There is also Children's literature to share with your child that empowers both children and adults to address the problem proactively.

Of course, we must keep all of our children feeling safe and happy. If we have a student that continually hurts others, that student may be asked to take a break from the school until the behaviors have been addressed and corrected.









# Becoming a Montessori Parent



# Becoming a Montessori Parent

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**The Montessori Parent** is a wonderful partner in the journey of supporting the children on their path to becoming happy, healthy individuals. We hold a common bond in our commitment to the values and goals of an excellent Montessori education. Close bonds are formed between families, students, and the staff. Respect for one another is at the heart of all we do. Adults model the same values we teach in the classrooms—respect, honesty, and a commitment to being an active participant in the community.

We believe parents are their child's most important teachers. Open communication allows us to work together to provide the best for the children. Parents are encouraged to attend the parent education events and borrow from our lending library. These are a part of our commitment to support parents in understanding the needs of children at varying stages of their development and understanding how the Montessori approach meets these needs. The success that Alden Montessori has experienced is in large part because of the strong partnership we have with our parents.

**The Alden Montessori Parents** are a joy to behold. We have such a wonderful group of parents. They plan and organize many of the incredible events the children enjoy, inside and outside of the school. These moms, dads and grandparents also do many amazing things to support our teachers.

**Be a Part:** The success that Alden Montessori has experienced is in large part because of the strong partnership we have with our parents. We heartily encourage parents to become a part of the school community by offering their time and talents.

Parents have so many wonderful talents to share. Over the years, we have enjoyed many parents share with the children their artistic talents, handiwork, knowledge and time. It is a joy to see the smiles on the children's faces when a parent comes to share something special.

If you have a special talent or time and would like to become a special part of the school, please see us in the office. We would love to hear all about you!



# The Art of Communication

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## Communication in the School

We encourage parents to communicate any questions or concerns regarding their children. The lead teachers are responsible for discussion regarding children's progress and behavior, while administrators are responsible for child & parent support, policies, billing and enrollment questions.

**Communicate with teachers:** Use Brightwheel app to send a message directly to your child's teacher by using the messaging feature. Click your child's name, click [All staff & parents](#), type your message, then click send. Your message will only go to your child's teachers and the office staff. This keeps us all informed. Please use this feature for all information relating to your child such as: asking questions, alerting us of child illness, absent because of travel, etc.

**Note:** Teachers do not monitor their phones while actively supervising children. If your message is time sensitive, office staff will let the teacher know to check their messages right away.

Feel free to message your teachers between 7am and 6:00pm. Please refrain from messaging them late as you might disrupt their family's evening routine. If you have something urgent, you may contact the Head of School.

Use the school cell instead of Brightwheel for after care pickups. [214-972-7436](tel:214-972-7436).

**Communicate with office staff:** If you wish to communicate with office staff without the teachers being notified, click on your child's name, click [Admins & Parents](#), type your message, then click send. Your message will only go to the office staff.

**Communicate with Head of School:** If you wish to speak privately to the Head of School, please text Jere Albanesi directly at [214-415-8092](tel:214-415-8092). She will text back or call you asap. You may also email to [director@aldenmontessori.com](mailto:director@aldenmontessori.com)

## Parent/Teacher Conferences

Routine Parent-Teacher conferences are held twice a year. They are half-hour meetings held during school hours in the classrooms. Parents will sign up for the conferences in advance. The school administrator sends out the conference schedule so parents can plan their conference time and make child care arrangements if necessary. During the conferences, teachers discuss in-depth the social, academic, emotional and behavioral aspects of each child's developmental progress. Parents may ask questions, share their insights and any concerns. Parents are welcome to arrange follow up meetings with the teacher after the conference as needed.

## Ways to Communicate with the School

**Brightwheel:** This is the best way to communicate with the school. Online and app. Message teachers and office staff.

**Head of School Cell Phone:** You are always welcome to call Jere if you need to talk privately. 214-415-8092.

**School E-mail:** [director@aldenmontessori.com](mailto:director@aldenmontessori.com)

**School Landline:** 940-584-0400. This phone line is for outside inquiries. Please use brightwheel, email, or Head of School cell.

**School Cell:** For after school pick-ups only 214-972-7436



# Parent Volunteer/Chaperone Guidelines

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Thank you for your interest in sharing your child's experience at our next event. We are excited to have you and appreciate your help!

The following guidelines will help to ensure that you and your child have the best experience possible.

Each child's relationship with his/her parent is uniquely different. Some children are very independent of their parent, while others are not.

If you feel that your child may cry, cling or misbehave to the point where he/she may not enjoy the event, please delay your participation until your child is a little older.

If you choose to chaperone, we respectfully request that you not bring other children, as state licensing standards are very definitive about who joins us on trips and staff/student ratios.

If you wish to participate, here are a few helpful suggestions to make your experience an enjoyable one:

- ☞ Let the teacher guide your role at the event. Some events require a lot of help from parents, while others, much less.
- ☞ No parent will be left to supervise students without a teacher present.
- ☞ Conduct yourself as if you are one of the teachers and a representative of our school. Please be a good role model for the children, using appropriate behavior, language, and tone of voice.
- ☞ Stay with the group. Do not stray or lag behind as children may follow you. If you leave the group to go to the restroom, let the teacher know. Be a part of the group adventure.
- ☞ Please do not purchase mementos, food, candy or drinks for your child (or only a few children) as it makes others sad. We also have children with restricted diets.
- ☞ Please let the teachers maintain the discipline, especially for your child. You may not take your child outside or to the bathroom to punish them.
- ☞ If you see something that the teacher should know, please make him/her aware immediately so that it may be addressed.
- ☞ If we are seated at an event, such as the symphony, where you are close to a child who needs to be reminded to have their best manners, please feel free to remind them. If they do not do as you ask, get the teachers attention so they may help.
- ☞ Children must travel to and from the field trip on the school bus. No child may ride to the field trip on the bus and then ride home with a parent. This policy is very important to ensure that all children are safe and accounted for and adult/child ratios are met.

No volunteer or chaperone will ever be left unsupervised with a child or group of children. However, we want to do our due diligence to make sure that our children are safe.

If you wish to be a chaperone on a field trip/event or volunteer in the classroom, we will require a background check and attend a volunteer orientation.

Please see one of the directors for a Volunteer/Chaperone Background Check Form and we will take care of the rest!





# Policies and Procedures



# Arrival and Dismissal

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**Starting the Morning off Right** is important. Beginning your morning at home in a calm and peaceful manner will help your child have a great day! Wake your child early to allow ample time to dress and eat without having to rush. If you get up early and have yourself ready to go, utilize that extra time to enjoy your child stress free.

**Arrival to School** Timely arrival is essential for the peaceful start to the children's day. Though life gets in the way sometimes, we feel it is very important to not only foster good life habits but, also avoiding disruption to the classroom. Please dedicate yourself to being on time each and every day as this policy will be enforced.

Help to foster independence and confidence in your child by allowing them to walk on his/her own into the school. Parents are encouraged to say their goodbyes quickly and allow their child to enter the school carrying his/her own things. If the child requires assistance, allow staff to help, as this aids in building a trustful relationship between child and staff.

**Saying Goodbye** Make your goodbyes sweet and swift. Lingering creates uncertainty and anxiety in the child who may already be feeling anxious. Let the teacher nurture your child at drop off and your child will adjust more quickly.

**Half Day Dismissal** for half-day toddler students is promptly at 11:30 am and half-day primary students is promptly at 12:00 pm. We request that families pick up promptly, so that the departing children won't feel excluded from lunch preparations taking place for the school-day scheduled children.

**School Day Dismissal** is promptly at 2:45 and 3:00 pm (depending on class) to help a smooth transition from the school day to after care and studio classes. The aftercare program is full. To maintain required student/teacher ratios, students not enrolled in aftercare program or enrolled in a studio class may not stay for aftercare without approval from the office. Children not enrolled in after care program and are still in care after 3:15 pm will begin accruing overtime charges at \$10/hour.

**Saying Hello** Please take the time to offer a loving 'hello' to your child at pickup time. Complete phone calls and leave your day's stress in the car. Take a breath and slow your pace as you greet your child. Your little one will be very excited to see you and looks forward to a great big hug!

**Making Friends** Many parents enjoy visiting and become great friends with other parents or staff. We would ask that parents carefully choose the moments they visit with one another, either prior to dismissal time or at a nearby place that is safe for children to play as the parking lot is an unsafe place for children to engage each other in play while parents visit. Please do not have conversations in the parking lot while other parents are circling the school looking for a parking space.



# Supporting a Peaceful Environment

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## The Parent's Role

Parents should avoid entering the student's environment during classroom hours. Visitors disrupt the focus of the children and flow of the classroom. If one must enter the room, be mindful to not step on children's work, use a whisper voice, avoid interrupting children's concentration or interrupting a teacher's lesson.

Please support the school safety rules and encourage your child to walk calmly through the school as well as walking on the sidewalk and in the parking lot. If you have difficulty with your child or multiple children going in different directions, feel free to ask a staff member to help you.

Put your cell phone away upon entering the parking lot and greet your child with all your attention. They want to share with you about their day!

If a nanny or relative is the primary person to drop off and pick up, please share this handbook with them.

**Dress Code** Students should wear comfortable clothing that allows them to play unrestricted. Children who are potty training or newly trained should wear clothing that allows for easy on and off. Please do not dress your child in clothing items that have scary, fantasy characters, or disrespectful messages. Superhero shirts and other characters that solve their problems with fighting are strongly discouraged as they entice children to punch and hit and are not appropriate for a learning environment. Likewise, shirts with capes, wings, etc. are also distracting to the learning environment. If a child comes dressed in such items, we will gently encourage them to change into their spare clothing.

**Proper Shoes** Alternative footwear such as cowboy boots and flip flops are not allowed as they are dangerous to run and climb in. Tennis shoes with velcro closures are helpful until they are able to successfully tie with the Montessori materials and then begin to tie on their actual shoes. Light up shoes, wheeled shoes and shoes with noise makers interrupt the peacefulness of the class.

**Distraction Items** Jewelry, tiaras, tutus, hats, shirts and shoes with bells, sequins, and items with sound effects are very distracting to the children in the learning environment.

**Toys from Home** Toys should be left at home or in the car. If you have difficulty getting your child to part with a toy at drop off, allow a staff member to help you. We have many verbalizations that allow the child to part with their object easily.

**Cell Phones, Smart Watches or GPS Tracking Watches** Children at this age do not have the maturity to keep up with these items, nor the ability to use them appropriately. They are not only a distraction to your child, they are also a distraction to other students.



## Other Important Information

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**Parent's Right to Immediate Access** Parents are welcome to visit the school and check on their child at any time during the day. Please be sensitive to your child's emotions if they see you, and then you leave without them, it is confusing to them and may cause them distress. You may also view them from the window of their classroom or on the video system.

**Children's Records** The Alden Montessori school highly values confidentiality. Children's files are maintained in the office for easy access during emergencies or visits from a licensing organization. Sensitive or confidential items are kept in a private file out of easy access.

**Court Orders** A court order must be on file for a parent to be denied access to their child. All parents have a right to access. If non-expired court orders are not supplied, the school must release the child.

**Confidentiality** The Alden Montessori school values each family and family member's confidentiality. Sensitive information is provided to teachers only on a need to know basis.

**Liability Insurance** Alden Montessori School carries liability insurance in at least the amount required by Texas Department of Family and Protective Services covering injury to a child as required by Texas DFPS.

**Gang Free Zone** All child care centers must inform parents or guardians of the gang-free zone designation. Certain gang-related criminal activity or engaging in organized criminal activity within 1000 feet of a child care center is a violation of the law and is therefore subject to increased penalty under state law.

**Fire Arms and Weapons** The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services Child Care regulations state that no one may carry a firearm or weapon, openly or concealed, on campus unless a law enforcement officer.

**Class Rosters** A class roster is available in the office for classroom listing student and parent/guardian names, e-mail addresses and phone number. This roster is provided to you for birthday party announcements, play dates, etc. Please inform the office in person if you do not wish to be on the list.

**Immunization Requirements** The Alden Montessori school is responsible for obtaining, for each child enrolled, a current immunization record. Parents must supply this upon enrollment or request from the office. If parents choose not to immunize, a current affidavit for immunization exemption is required. Failure to do so may cause withdrawal from the school until provided.

**Hearing and Vision Screening** Each year, certain age groups must have vision and hearing testing, among others required by law. If parents do not supply documentation upon request, it will be provided from an outside vendor at a cost to the parent.





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**Dispensing Medication** is taken very seriously. If your child needs medication, please bring it to the office and complete an Authorization for Dispensing Medication form. No medication should be left in a child's bag or in the classroom. All medication must be in its original packaging, and cannot be given if expired or parent instructions are contrary to the instructions on the packaging.

Parent authorization is not required to administer a medication to a child in a medical emergency to prevent the death or serious bodily injury, provided that it is administered as prescribed, directed, or intended.

**Childhood Vaccinations** must be kept current and updates provided to the school. Children who are on a delayed vaccination plan due to illness or adoption, etc. must provide the school with an immunization schedule from their pediatrician. Parents who choose not to vaccinate their child must provide the school with an original copy of an Affidavit Request for Exemption from Immunizations for Reasons of Conscience available through the State of Texas.

**Head Lice** is a common condition among children. Though it is contagious, annoying, and may even be very embarrassing, it is not dangerous, nor is it a sign of lack of proper hygiene.

It's best to treat head lice quickly once they're found because they can spread easily from person to person. It is essential that parents inform the school if their child contracts lice so that we may keep it from spreading to others. Please know that we will keep this confidential as to not cause embarrassment to your child.

Lice now have a resistance to over-the-counter and prescription pesticide products. We recommend using lice removal services that effectively kill the lice and the nits. See the director for more information.

**Family Pets** should be left at home. Though families may enjoy bringing family pets into the school to share with friends, unfamiliar surroundings can sometimes upset even the calmest of animals. We ask that families not bring pets unannounced, as licensing regulations have many requirements to be met before an outside animal can be brought in to visit the children. Of course, your pet is welcome to travel with you in your car onto school property, however, your pet must stay in the car and have no contact with students.



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**Transportation** The Alden Montessori School bus is used solely for transporting our students to and from field trips. Students in their kindergarten year and over are invited to join outside trips on the bus. Child restraint systems required by law is in compliance on our bus and is based on weight limit and age of the child.

**Breast Feeding and Milk Storage** Mothers are always welcome to breast feed their child in the school. Please let the director know and we will find you a comfortable place. You may also provide breast milk for your child and we will store it the refrigerator with your child's name and date on it.

**Pets** We have a wide variety of classroom pets. When required by licensing regulations, certain animals are seen by a licensed veterinarian once a year to ensure the pet's health and the safety of our students. We encourage the students to help maintain a safe, clean environment for them in a sanitary manner. The students are also invited to help feed, water and love our pets. Any animal that is known for biting is kept in an environment that children's fingers do not have access to.

Please advise us if your child has allergies that may prevent your child from helping with this most valued activity.

**Postings** We post all required licensing flyers, a most recent licensing inspection report and health inspection report, as well as a copy of the Texas Department of Family Protective Services Minimum Standards.

**Inclement Weather Closings** In case the school needs to close due to inclement weather, we will post on our website, email and text the families as soon as possible. Please stay informed as sometimes the roads may be clear but the parking lot may still be unsafe.

**Emergency Preparedness** The Alden Montessori school has an Emergency Preparedness Plan. A copy is available in the office if any parent wishes to review it.

**Preventing and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect** We educate our staff annually on the issues regarding child abuse and neglect as well as the methods for prevention, where to get assistance, and their legal responsibilities regarding reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect.

## Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline

(800) 252-5400

If you suspect that any child has been abused or sexually molested, report the situation immediately.



# Please Leave at Home

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**Toys** Please leave all toys at home. Children who nap are welcome to bring a small, soft “lovey”. These items are soothing and help them fall asleep. If the lovey is a distraction to your child we may respectfully ask that you leave it at home. Please remember to take it home each day as needed if your child needs it at bedtime. All students four and under are required to have a rest time.

**Sippy Cups** Montessori students are very capable of drinking from real cups. Part of the child’s steps toward independence is enhanced by learning to use real items.

**Pacifiers** Children who use pacifiers at home will be gently weened off of them at school. The teachers are very skilled at helping the children learn to soothe themselves at naptime without the use of a pacifier.

**Backpacks** Children do not need to bring backpacks to school. Extra clothes and a package of diapers (if needed) are kept in their cubby. All other items are supplied by the school.

**Candy, Sodas, Cupcakes** and similar sugary items are not to be brought to school. If these items are accidentally brought to school, such as in pre-packaged lunches, we will send them home to be enjoyed after school.

**Distracting Items** Watches that make noise, cell phones, smart watches, light-up shoes and clothing, jewelry and other such items distract your child from their purposeful work and often cause conflict between classmates.



# Healthy Nutritious Lunches

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**Healthy and Nutritious!** Watch your child when he/she is accomplishing "real work" in the kitchen at home. Whether carefully slicing apples or arranging crackers topped with eggs on a tray, his/her face shines with purposeful concentration. You can provide support for such rewarding experiences daily, when packing a Montessori style lunch. Prepare lunches the evening before, with your child. They'll relish the opportunity to undertake an important role in caring for themselves in this way. Giving children a chance to choose from healthy options respects their food preferences and allows for their eagerness to participate in family life.

Healthy foods are a hallmark of the Montessori philosophy. Dr. Montessori was one of the first educators to recognize the connection between nutrition and the developing brain. We request that you to pack healthy foods and avoid the pre-packaged, high-salt, high-sugar foods. We especially ask that you don't send candy and sodas, cupcakes, etc. There is no need to pack juice boxes or other sugary drinks as the children use their waterbottles to drink cool, delicious water. Children never get enough!

## Helpful Hints

- ☞ Foster independence and limit frustration by packing food in containers your child can open by themselves.
- ☞ Limit microwavable things to one minute so that children do not have to wait long periods of time.
- ☞ Please, no pre-packaged items that require special preparation by the teacher. Ex: Ramen & Mac-n-Cheese.
- ☞ Due to possible severe allergic reactions we are PEANUT FREE.



**Food for Thought!** Pediatric feeding experts recommend avoiding squeeze pouches. Choose items that require lots of jaw action. Crunchy, sticky, slippery, whole foods are better for a child's development. Squeeze pouches oversimplify the eating process, leaving fewer opportunities for children to practice the oral and fine motor skills they need to eat more textured and varied foods, increasing picky eating. They also dilute the nutritional quality of food and may cause cavities due to added sugars. Pack a real apple instead of apple sauce in a squeeze pouch.

From a Montessori perspective, squeeze pouches delay social skills development with the use of utensils. Food requiring time and effort to eat offer more time for social interaction when they aren't slurping down their meal in five seconds!



# The Celebration of Life

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Children's birthdays are wonderful events recognized by the school with the Montessori Celebration of Life.

The Celebration of Life is a beautiful ceremony that celebrates the child's life. A candle is used to represent the sun and a globe is used to represent the Earth. The child carries the earth and walks around the sun once for each year of his life. After each trip around the sun, the children sing the Celebration of Life song. "The Earth takes a trip around the Sun...now the (child's name) is one (year)!"

During the celebration we reflect on the growth and development that has occurred since birth and serves as a young child's first experience with the concept of history and time on a larger scale, giving the child a sense of the passage of time.

Parents provide photos in consecutive order from their birth to their present age with a few accomplishments at each age. This presentation style gives the children a sensorial impression of the passage of time in a horizontal timeline.

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Families are welcome to attend and participate. Your child's Celebration of Life may be scheduled with the teacher. We schedule Celebrations of Life near the end of the morning program.

After the Celebration, parents of older children are usually fine to depart while their child continues with the school day. However, younger children such as toddlers or very young primary age children should accompany their parents home at the conclusion of their celebration as it is confusing to the child and emotionally difficult for them to separate from their parent at that hour.

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This is a beautiful celebration with the focus being completely on the accomplishments of the child. This celebration is not meant to replace a birthday party that you might have outside of school. As we celebrate many birthdays throughout the year, and many parents value our dedication to healthy diets, we do not share cakes, ice cream, goodie bags, pizza, etc.

**There's no ceremony within the Montessori classroom more beautiful than the Celebration of Life. Each one is unique in its own way.**

**We look forward to seeing you in class when your child's special day arrives.**



# Parking Lot Safety

## THE PARKING LOT IS ONE WAY AT ALL TIMES.

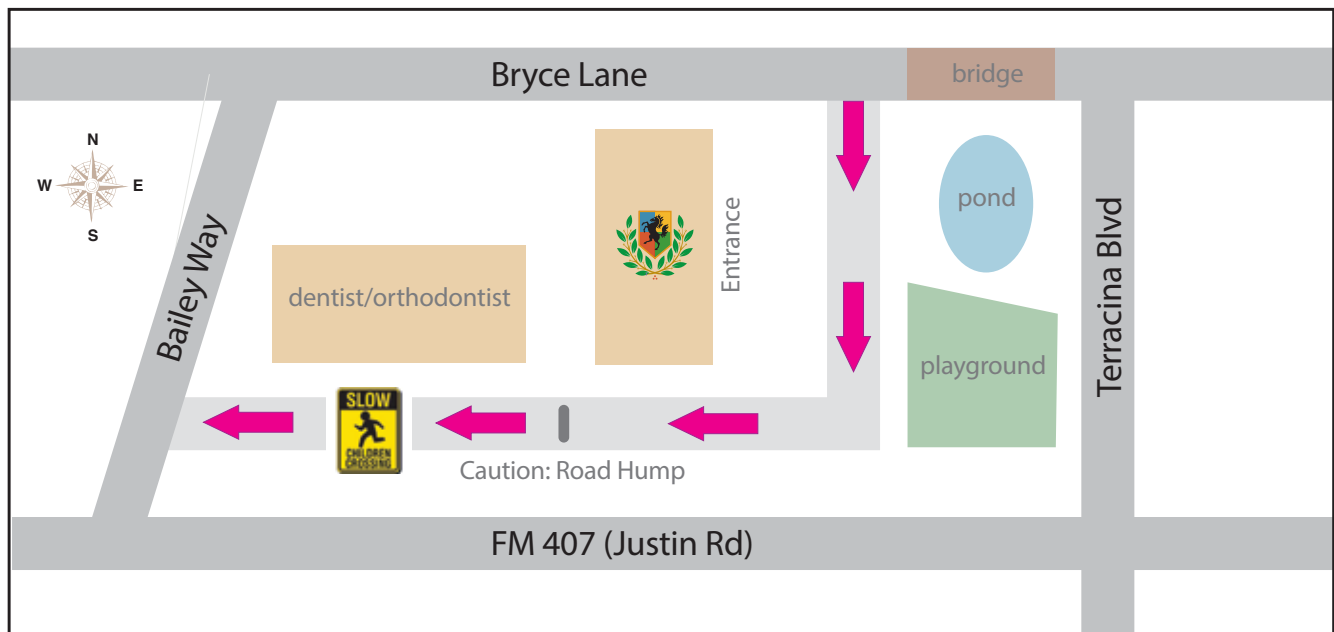
Enter the parking lot from the north side of the school and park.

Our parking lot is a school zone. Cell phone usage is prohibited.

Please do not back your vehicle into parking spaces if others are present, especially at drop-off and pick-up times, as it causes traffic flow restrictions and confusion.

Escort your child to the lobby door, encouraging them to walk and watch for cars. Hand your child to a staff member before leaving. Please do not leave them in the alcove alone. Clock in using the QR code on the window or pick-up card.

To allow for the safety and flow of arrival and dismissal, the parking lot is not a safe place for the parents to socialize, allowing the children to run and play around the parking area. Please make arrangements to meet friends at a coffee shop or other venue for parent socialization.



Lobby Office



## Child Illness Protocols



### When Your Child Isn't Feeling Well

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Children are often very hard to read and it may be for one of many reasons; illness, teething, moody, or just sleepy. If, however, you feel your child may be falling ill, please be sensitive to the child's need to stay home and rest. We understand that parents have responsibilities to their work. Keep in mind that keeping children home when sick stops the spread of illnesses and benefits everyone. Parents miss less work in the long run.

Please keep your child home if an illness or allergies prevents him/her from participating comfortably in school activities including outdoor play. Due to licensing regulations, a child must be ready to participate in all activities and may not be held inside during outdoor play.

Children should stay home if they have an illness resulting in greater need for care than teachers can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of the other children in care. Children should also stay home if they have one of the following, unless medical evaluation of a health-care professional indicates that the child may be included in school activities.

- 🌀 Behavior changes or symptoms of oncoming illness
- 🌀 Oral temperature above 100 degrees
- 🌀 Diarrhea
- 🌀 Vomiting
- 🌀 Rash or mouth sores
- 🌀 A health-care professional has diagnosed the child with a communicable disease.

**If your child becomes sick while at home** If you feel your child may be coming down with any illness, keep them home and watch for other symptoms. Please alert the school if you plan on keeping your child at home due to suspected illness, symptoms, and progression of symptoms.

#### **If your child becomes sick while at school**

Exclusion from the center is sometimes necessary to reduce the transmission of illness. For your child's comfort, and to reduce the risk of contagion, we ask that children be picked up within thirty minutes of notification. Until then, your child will be kept comfortable and will continue to be observed for symptoms. Please have a backup person in place who can be available to pick up your child if you are unable or work too far to pickup in a reasonable time frame.

## When your child may return to school

Children may return to school after an illness provided they are:

- ☒ Feeling well enough to comfortably participate in all activities including outdoor play
  - ☒ Fever free for 24 hours without fever reducer
  - ☒ At least 24 hours after the last episode of vomiting or diarrhea
  - ☒ Depending on the communicable disease, may need a release from a health-care professional.
- 

## COVID-19 POLICY

It is more challenging than ever before to distinguish between COVID-19 and other common illnesses such as flu, cold, allergies, etc as it has many varying symptoms, or none at all.

If a household member has been exposed to or is awaiting testing results due to COVID-19 symptoms, please keep your child home until results arrive to avoid exposing our students and staff. Please alert us and we will give you guidance.

If we have a confirmed case of COVID-19 within our staff or classrooms, we will notify parents. Every individual's privacy will be protected.

If our local community is experiencing a surge and you, a household member, or your child have symptoms, please get tested before returning to school or stay home observing symptoms. Please alert us and we will provide guidance for return to school

As always, we continue to keep abreast of local community spread. If warranted, Alden will adjust our policies and procedures and will keep parents updated.





# Classroom Schedules



# Class Schedules-Toddlers

Though we strive to keep consistent schedules throughout the day, some times may vary depending on the needs of the children.

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- 8:30 am - 8:45 am: **Montessori Greeting on the Circle**  
A time to welcome our friends into the classroom and start the day
- 8:45 am - 10:15 am: **Montessori Lessons**  
Practical Life and Academic Lessons
- 10:15 am - 10:30 am: **Snack with Grace and Courtesy Lessons**  
Practical Life lessons of snack preparation and service along with table manners
- 10:30 am - 11:00 am: **Outdoor Play**  
Physical education and fun outdoors
- 11:00 am - 11:30 am: **Community Time**  
Group time
- 11:30 am - 12:15 pm: **Lunch with Grace and Courtesy Lessons**  
Practical Life lessons lunch service along with table manners
- 12:15 pm - 2:30 pm: **Peaceful Nap**  
Well earned rest time
- 2:30 pm - 2:45 pm: **Waking Up and Group Time**  
As our sleepy ones begin to wake, the group enjoys time together
- 2:45 pm: **Dismissal**  
Parents arrive to escort their children home and remaining children join the after care

# Toddler After-School Care

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- 3:00 pm - 3:30 pm: **Story Time**  
Wonderful stories and songs are shared during dismissal time
- 3:30 pm - 4:00 pm: **Outdoor Play**  
Playground fun and games
- 4:00 pm - 4:20 pm: **Snack Time**  
Snack is served family-style while our students socialize with their classmates
- 4:20 pm - 6:00 pm: **Engaging Activities**  
Our children enjoy many activities such as art, music & movement, and more



# Class Schedules-Primary

Though we strive to keep consistent schedules throughout the day, some times may vary depending on the needs of the children.

---

8:30 am - 12:00 am: **Montessori Greeting on the Circle**

A time to welcome our friends into the classroom and start the day

**Montessori Lessons**

Practical Life and Academic Lessons

**Snack with a Friend**

Practical Life lessons of snack preparation and service along with table manners  
The primary children enjoy inviting a friend to share snack and social time

**Outdoor Play** Physical education and fun outdoors

(Timing of outdoor play is dependent on which classroom the child attends)

12:00 pm - 12:45 pm: **Lunch with Grace and Courtesy Lessons**

Practical Life lessons along with table manners

12:45 pm - 2:30 pm: **Peaceful Nap - Kindergarten continued Lessons**

All three and four year olds will enjoy a well-earned rest time.

Late four and early five year olds that don't nap will gather together for afternoon activities. (Limited space availability)

Children that meet the criteria to be a Kindergartner, gather as a group for specialized lessons and activities. (Must be 5 by September 1st)

2:30 pm - 3:00 pm: **Waking up and Group Time**

As our sleepy ones begin to wake, the group enjoys time together

3:00 pm: **Dismissal**

Parents arrive to escort their children home and remaining children join after care

## Primary After-School Care

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3:00 pm - 3:30 pm: **Story Time**

Wonderful stories and songs are shared during dismissal time

3:30 pm - 4:00 pm: **Snack Time**

Snack is served family style while our students socialize with their classmates

4:00 pm - 5:00 pm: **Outdoor Play**

(Timing of outdoor play is dependent on which classroom the child attends - 30 min)

5:00 pm - 6:00 pm: **Engaging Activities**

Our children enjoy many activities such as art, music & movement, and more



# Class Schedules-Elementary

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- 8:00 am - 8:15 am: **Montessori Greeting on the Circle**  
A time to welcome our friends into the classroom and start the day with an exciting topic that is continued throughout the day and week.
- 8:15 am - 11:45 am: **Montessori Lessons**  
Practical Life and Academic Lessons
- Snack with Grace and Courtesy Lessons**  
The elementary children enjoy sharing group snack and social time.
- 11:45 am - 12:30 pm: **Lunch with Grace and Courtesy Lessons**  
Practical Life lessons lunch service along with table manners
- 12:30 pm - 1:00 pm: **Outdoor Play**  
Physical education and fun outdoors
- 1:00 pm - 2:45 pm: **Montessori Cultural Subjects**  
Continuation of our beautiful Montessori day
- 2:45 pm: **Dismissal**  
Parents arrive to escort their students home and remaining children join after care.

# Elementary After-School Care

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- 3:00 pm - 4:15 pm: **Community Time and Engaging Activities**  
Wonderful stories and songs are shared during dismissal time
- 4:15 pm - 4:30 pm: **Snack Time**  
Snack is served family style while our students socialize with their classmates
- 4:30 pm - 5:00 pm: **Outdoor Play**  
Playground fun and games
- 5:00 pm - 6:00 pm: **Engaging Activities**  
Our children enjoy many activities such as art, music & movement, and more





# Financials · Calendar · Contacts



# Financial Items

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## Tuition Payment Schedule:

Tuition may be paid in annual, semester, or monthly installment plans. Families who choose to pay one annual installment will receive a 3% discount (on academic programs only). Pre-paid tuition and fees are non-refundable. Families may otherwise choose the ten monthly installments option. Due to agreements the School maintains with Montessori teachers, **full monthly installments are required regardless of absence, illness, vacation or travel out of the country, and regardless of the duration.** Families on an installment plan who need to withdraw from enrollment may do so with a thirty (30) day advance written notice. Any deposits, pre-payments, installments or fees paid to the school cannot be refunded for any reason. The School has no obligation to hold any enrollment space except during an agreed upon enrollment term.

## Before and After School Care

The School offers before-school and after-school care to all currently enrolled students. You may select a before and/or after care program which meets the needs of your family at a special rate, or you may use drop-in child care for before-school (7:00-8:30 am) and after-school (3:00 - 6:00 p.m.) at a rate of \$10 per hour per child. If you utilize child care before or after the plan you signed up for, Smartcare will automatically charge by the minute at a rate of \$10/hour rate to your account. The School business day ends promptly at 6:00 p.m. Child care beyond closing time may be charged at a rate of up to \$30 per hour per child.

## Annual School Fees

Annual school fees are due May 1st or upon enrollment for new families. Activity/field trips reservations, subscriptions, materials etc. are planned and paid for months in advance and therefore, school fees are non-refundable in case of withdrawal.

## Holiday Child Care

Child care is offered on many days that the academic program is closed, as shown in the calendar. Holiday Child Care is only offered for families who sign up at the beginning of the academic year or upon enrollment for the Holiday Plan.

## Hot Nutritious Lunches and Snacks

Healthy, mid-morning snacks are provided to all children, along with an additional snack for children enrolled in after care. See the Healthy Nutritious Lunches section of this handbook. Please remember we are a peanut-free school.

## School Calendar

Alden Montessori School's annual calendar consists of the Fall and Spring semester and Summer Camp, including school holidays and important dates such as parent/teacher conference days, teacher-in-service days, early dismissal days, and summer camp days. The calendar is always available on the school website, in your re-enrollment information and is posted at all times in the lobby.

## Summer Camp

Summer Camp is during the months of June and July.



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## Other Financial Terms and Conditions

Full and timely payments are required on any agreed upon deposit, tuition, and other fees incidental to enrollment, payable through Bright wheel. Late payment fees (\$40) are assessed on the 4th of each month for tuition due on the 1st. A charge (\$30) will be assessed for returned checks or insufficient funds.

Payments not received within fifteen (15) days of the due date may result in the exclusion of children from attendance until the past due amount is current. Exclusion will not excuse any payments owed to the School. If full payment is not received within thirty (30) days of the due date, the School reserves the right to terminate the enrollment and may send the amount due for legal collection. Any delay of the School to impose any of these fees or take any of these steps will not waive its right to take such actions thereafter.

## Brightwheel - School Management System

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Brightwheel is a web-based platform for paying school tuition and fees. It's easy to use, intuitive interface, and responsive design is critical for today's active families. Your financial data is of highest priority. Physical, electronic, and procedural safeguards provide security you can trust. Data is transmitted using 256-bit encryption—the financial institution standard. Their solutions are PCI-DSS compliant.

Brightwheel significantly reduces the administrative work involved in collecting tuition. This reduction in workload frees up busy staff to address other priorities and allows school leaders to focus on educating children. SmartCare is in response to parent requests for modern payment methods and a secure way to allow families to schedule one-time and recurring payments from both bank accounts and credit cards. Schools and parents appreciate the always-available Customer Service.

## Payment Options

Invoices are emailed to families on three days before tuition is due and is billed based on the tuition agreement signed by the parent. Tuition is due on the first of each month. Brightwheel will assess a late fee on midnight of the 4th. A one time courtesy late fee removal is possible upon request, but will not be given to families that consistently pay late.

### In-School Payments

Parents may bring a check to school and place in the tuition box. Please make sure it is in the box on the 1st of each month to allow time to collect the check and apply it to your account.

### Auto-Draft from Checking Account

Auto-draft is a great option and is only sixty cents per transaction. Parents may login and provide Brightwheel with their banking information to auto-draft from their checking account. Accounts will be drafted on the 1st of each month.

### Credit or Debit Cards

Parents may also pay tuition with credit or debit cards for a 2.9% convenience fee. This may also be set up to automatically charge by logging in to Brightwheel and selecting this option.



# School Hours and Contact Information

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## Hours of Operation

Before School Care: 7:00am - 8:30am

School Day: 8:30am - 3:00pm (Elementary begins at 8:00am)

After School Care: 3:00pm - 6:00pm

**School Calendar** The academic year consists of the fall and spring semester. Summer consists of the summer months. See attached calendar for details.

**Inclement Weather** If the school should close due to winter weather parents will be contacted via email as well as a posting on our home page of the website. We do not follow any school districts, rather make our own decision based on our parking lot conditions and road conditions for students and staff to travel safely.

**Emergency Preparedness** An emergency preparedness plan is available to parents in the office.

## Contact Information

Alden Montessori School, LLC  
4010 Justin Road  
Flower Mound, Texas 75077

Head of School: Jere Albanesi - 214-415-8092

Website: [www.aldenmontessori.com](http://www.aldenmontessori.com)  
Email: [director@aldenmontessori.com](mailto:director@aldenmontessori.com)

### HEADS OF SCHOOL:

Jere Albanesi - [jere.albanesi@aldenmontessori.com](mailto:jere.albanesi@aldenmontessori.com)  
Karyn Dole - [karyn.dole@aldenmontessori.com](mailto:karyn.dole@aldenmontessori.com)

### DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS:

Ruth Austin - [ruth.austin@aldenmontessori.com](mailto:ruth.austin@aldenmontessori.com)







# 2022/23 Academic Year Calendar

AUGUST 2022						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Aug 1 - 5: Teacher Professional Dev - No School or Child Care  
 Aug 8 & 9: New Student Orientation Days  
 Aug 10: First Day of 2022/23 Fall Semester

SEPTEMBER 2022						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

Sep 5: Labor Day - No School or Child Care

OCTOBER 2022						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Oct 10: Federal Holiday - Teacher Professional Development  
 No School or Child Care  
 Oct 25: Trunk or Treat - Early Dismissal  
 2:30 Toddlers & Elem / 3:00 Primary

NOVEMBER 2022						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

Nov 21 & 22: Parent/Teacher Conferences  
 No School or Child Care  
 Nov 23-25: Fall Break - No School or Child Care

DECEMBER 2022						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Dec 16: Last Day of Fall Semester - Early Dismissal  
 11:30 Toddlers & Elem / 12:00 Primary  
 Dec 19, 20, 21, 22, 27, 28, & 29: Winter Break - Holiday Care  
 Dec 23, 26, & 30: Winter Holiday - No School or Child Care

JANUARY 2023						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Jan 2: First Day of 2022/23 Spring Semester  
 Jan 16: Federal Holiday - Teacher Professional Development  
 No School or Child Care

FEBRUARY 2023						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				

Feb 20: Federal Holiday - Teacher Professional Development  
 No School or Child Care

MARCH 2023						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

Mar 13: Teacher Professional Development - No School or  
 Child Care  
 Spring Break: Mar 13-17 - Holiday Care Only

APRIL 2023						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

Apr 6: Early Dismissal for Conferences  
 11:30 Toddlers & Elem / 12:00 Primary  
 Apr 6: Parent/Teacher Conferences in Afternoon  
 Apr 7: Good Friday - No School or Child Care  
 Apr 10: Parent/Teacher Conferences: No School or Child Care

MAY 2023						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

May 23 Last Day of School - Early Dismissal  
 11:30 Toddlers & Elem / 12:00 Primary  
 May 24-26: Teacher Prep for Summer - No School or Child Care  
 May 29: Memorial Day - No School or Child Care  
 May 30: 2023 Summer Camp Begins

### KEY

<span style="background-color: #d9ead3; border: 1px solid #ccc; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span> School Days	<span style="background-color: #f4cccc; border: 1px solid #ccc; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span> Teacher Professional Development No School or Child Care
<span style="background-color: #d9ead3; border: 1px solid #ccc; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span> Early Dismissal	<span style="background-color: #cfe2f3; border: 1px solid #ccc; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span> Parent/Teacher Conferences - No School Child Care During In-Person Conference Only
<span style="background-color: #fff2cc; border: 1px solid #ccc; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span> No School/Holiday Child Care Offered	<span style="background-color: #fce4d6; border: 1px solid #ccc; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span> Summer Camp
<span style="background-color: #f4cccc; border: 1px solid #ccc; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span> No School or Child Care	

### S U M M E R 2 0 2 3



**OUR BEAUTIFUL EARTH**  
 A THREE YEAR AROUND THE WORLD ADVENTURE

*Canada, Mexico, &  
 South America*

