

Parent Handbook



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Welcome!

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Introduction

Our Mission Statement

The mission of Rainbow Montessori is to facilitate the total development of each child's unique style of learning, by providing an environment that will be age-appropriate, safe, healthy, caring, and stimulating. In this environment, the child's physical, intellectual, social, and spiritual growth flourishes.

Montessori education provides the foundation for children's *natural inner discipline* and *control*. A feeling of caring and respect for others (as well as respect for one's self) is fostered in the Montessori classroom. The use of special learning tools and materials developed by Doctor Montessori and others help children in the discovery of their world and of themselves.

The Montessori Method

The Montessori method of education is implemented through five areas of study: *Practical Life, Mathematics, Language, Sensorial,* and *Cultural* (Biology, Botany, History, and Geography). The children are also provided with materials designed for use in areas of Art, Music, and Foreign Language.

Dr. Maria Montessori was an Italian psychiatrist, philosopher, and educator. She was one of Italy's first female doctors, and developed her unique method of education by directly observing and working with mentally disturbed children in Italy's institutions. During this time, she created and utilized a system of manipulative materials, based on observations of how children interact with the world around them. Due to its success, Dr. Montessori's method soon gained popularity in the schools of Italy, and eventually throughout Europe and Asia. In the United States, the Montessori method has continued to gain in popularity, even extending its reach to some public charter schools.

Days and Hours of Operation

Rainbow Montessori is open Monday through Friday, from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Admission Policy

Children are admitted to Rainbow Montessori on a first come, first served basis, without regard to race, creed, color, sex, or religion. Physically challenged children are admitted when possible, on a case-by-case basis. All applications will be processed upon receipt of the application form and registration fee. The first month's tuition will be due on the start date. The registration fee is refundable only if Rainbow Montessori does not accept the child.

Programs and Age Requirements

Rainbow Montessori offers five separate programs for childcare and education. These are explained as follows.

Infant Program

Children from the ages of 6 weeks to 24 months are accepted for the program. Members of the staff closely watch the infants during the entire day. The Child's hygiene and development are of main concern to the teachers in this room. Daily infant activities include naps, feeding and supervised playtime. Children are also taken outside for "stroller rides" around the school grounds. The child to staff ratio is 4 to 1.

Toddler Program

Children from approximately 24 to 34 months old are accepted into this program. Daily activities include simple Montessori jobs, music, lunch, naps, free time, indoor/outdoor supervised activities, and the mastering of toilet training, which is a focal point at this age. The child to staff ratio is 8 to 1.

Preschool Program

Children aged approximately 34 months to 5 years are accepted for the Montessori Preschool program. Children must be toilet trained and be mature physically and emotionally to participate in the Preschool Montessori program. Daily activities include Montessori instruction and development, art projects, music, lunch, naps, free time, and indoor/outdoor supervised activities. The child to staff ratio is 12 to 1.

Kindergarten Program

Children aged 4 years, 9 months to 6 years old are accepted for the Kindergarten program. Daily activities include: Instructions in English, math, natural science, art projects, physical education, supervised play time, lunch, and naps. The child to staff ratio is 15 to 1.

Elementary School Program

Grade levels 1 through 6 are taught using both conventional and Montessori methods of child education and development. Daily activities include instruction in English, mathematics, computer science, natural science, art, reading, writing, lunch, physical education, and supervised play. The child to staff ratio is 25 to 1.

Optional Programs

Instruction in Chinese, Japanese, Greek, Hindi, public speaking, music, gymnastics, Tae Kwon Do, and dance is offered at an additional fee. Some of these programs have age requirements and are offered by third-party vendors, so please check with the instructors for more information.

Other Important Information

The Daily Schedule

The daily schedule is usually posted in each classroom and can differ from room to room, so check with your child's teacher for further information. Montessori exercises are done in the morning, with playtime and lunch afterwards. Free time and other educational exercises are scheduled for the afternoon. Once again, this can vary from class to class.

Lunches and Snacks

Rainbow Montessori's full-time Toddler, Preschool and Kindergarten programs include hot lunches. Optional hot lunches are available for all other programs. Optional breakfast is also available for all programs. The lunches consist of nutritious, well-balanced meals, including vegetarian dishes. Daily snacks are also offered to part-time and full-time students.

Disciplinary Procedures

Montessori is a type of education that strongly believes in respecting the child and his/her feelings and ideas. We attempt to help each child develop a sense of ***responsibility, self-discipline, and self-control***. Children are not allowed to interfere with the learning process or safety of another child. Children are never "talked down to" or yelled at. Instead, they are made aware of the consequences of their actions, and are given choices for more positive behavior. In the Elementary, there is a contract. There are certain rules that apply to the discipline procedure of all ages.

1. No physical restraint or corporal punishment of any type is used or allowed.
2. Disruptive children will be removed from an area or activity and asked to sit on a chair or bench for a period of time.
3. ***Parents must pick up any child who does not respond to disciplinary procedures.***
4. If uncooperative behavior continues with little or no improvement, ***the parent will be asked to permanently remove the child from school.*** Before this final measure is taken, however, referral for psychological evaluation and therapy sessions could prevent action.

Summer School and Field Trips

Our summer program combines learning with fun, relaxation with intellectual stimulation, and knowledge with adventure. Activities include computer literacy, physical education, Spanish, art, science, and music.

In addition, field trips and a variety of extra-curricular activities are available, such as, swimming, music, gymnastics, dance, and tae kwon do.

Winter and Other Holidays

All winter holidays including Christmas, Hanukkah and Kwanza are celebrated.

Rainbow Montessori is closed on the following days: New Year's Day, President's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day. Please check the current school calendar for specific dates.

Bringing Things to School

Toys are not allowed at school. Certain games and sports equipment may be acceptable to bring for use during playtime or after the school curriculum has ended. Check ahead of time to make sure. Books, nests, tools, natural phenomena, etc. are welcome. Some classes engage in a sharing program on Fridays. Please make sure the sharing item is for educational purposes.

Birthdays

Please let the staff know in advance when your child's birthday is. We like to observe this special day for the children. You may bring cupcakes, cookies, cake or whatever he/she wishes to share at school. We encourage foods with little or no artificial sweeteners. Birthday parties normally take place after naptime.

Conferences and Class Observations

Formal parent conferences are held twice a year, and all parents are expected to attend. Conference dates are announced ahead of time, and signup lists are posted in each class. A conference can be requested and scheduled at any time, should the teacher or parents feel that it is necessary. Parents are welcome to observe their child's class; however, an appointment must be obtained from the Director.

Address and Telephone Number Changes

It is important that the school knows where and how parents can be reached. If you move, change jobs, or change your phone number (cell phone, home phone, work phone), it is important to let the school know. In the event of an emergency or accident, it is the information that you have provided that assures your prompt notification.

Daily Procedures

Starting the Day

The school opens at 6:00 a.m. Please log your time in and sign the entry on your child's sign in/out sheet, located in the reception area. You must sign each time entry with your full signature. It is also at this time that you should put an entry in the medication log, if your child needs to take any medication. This log is also located in the reception area. ***Please do not store any medication in your child's locker, cubby, backpack, etc.*** All medication must be logged in.

Walk your children to their individual classroom, and help them place their belongings in their personal cubby or locker. If other children and their teacher are out on the playground, deliver your child to that teacher. Please do not leave your child unattended in a classroom, even if another parent is there.

At the end of the day, the morning procedure is reversed (sign child out, let the teacher know you are taking the child home, etc.).

This procedure is required to ensure the security of each child, so please remember to follow through. Make sure that you list the people who are authorized to pick up your child on the emergency information card. Children will not be released to any person who has not been authorized, or whose identity we are not able to verify. If you designate another adult to pick up your child and they are not listed on your emergency card as an alternate pickup, an alternate pickup form must be filled out. You may also call in an authorization. Please inform your alternate pickup to bring their photo I.D. to the main office, so that they can obtain their alternate pickup form.

Ending the Day

The school closes at 6:00 p.m. Before that time, you can pick up your children from their respective rooms. After 6:00 p.m., children will be taken to the program's designated late room. Ask your director for its location. All personal belongings and artwork, as well as medication for the day, should also be picked up at this time. It is extremely important to pick up your child before 6:00 p.m. An additional charge will be issued for any children picked up late, or who are at school for more

than 10 hours in one day. Standard full-time tuition rates are for 6 to 10 hours of attendance per day, during normal school hours.

If you have an emergency and you cannot pick up your child by 6:00 p.m., it is imperative that you call to let us know. Please bear in mind that ***once you have picked up your child, you must leave the campus.*** This is especially important after 6:00, as the campus must be cleared for the cleaning service. Please do not take your children to the playgrounds. All parents and children must leave the campus once it is closed.

What Parents Should Bring

Children from the Infant to Kindergarten program should bring the following:

- One or two changes of clothing (including socks, underwear, and shoes)
- A blanket
- Two standard size crib/bed sheets

If your child is in the infant program, you should also provide the following:

- Prepared formula and an appropriate amount of baby bottles
- Supplies for personal hygiene (diaper wipes, destine, etc.)

Your child's clothing should be comfortable, and should allow for freedom of movement. The children will be playing outside whenever the weather permits, and may also work with clay and paints. A good approach is to layer clothing, so that your child will be ready for the constant changes in weather indicative to this area. Please avoid thongs, slippers, sandals, clogs, safety pins, etc., as they can be unsafe. Also, nametags must be on all pieces of clothing.

The school will provide regular vitamin D milk for children in the Infant program who are between the ages of 12 months – 24 months. ***State law prohibits us from preparing baby formula.*** Therefore, if your infant or toddler is on formula, it must be prepared at home. The Infant program tuition includes cloth diaper service but the parent must supply take home diapers.

Attendance

Children are expected to attend daily. Most programs start at 8:30 a.m. Irregular attendance, especially when the child is young or just beginning to adjust to school, can interfere with a pleasant first school experience. For school age children, irregular attendance and constant tardiness will affect a child's advancement and future placement in other schools. Please bring your child to school regularly. If you will be late or your child is ill, please notify the office.

Tuition

There are discounts available for additional children of the same family. It is expected that tuition be paid on time. Late charges will be assessed on delinquent accounts. Should this happen, you will not be allowed to bring your child back to school until your balance is paid in full. Extremely delinquent accounts will be terminated and sent to a collection agency. Please read your tuition schedule for details.

Sick Children:

If your child has an active cold or fever, he/she cannot be brought to school. Children with contagious symptoms such as sore throat and/or elevated temperature *must be kept at home.*

We can only administer medicine that has been entered into the medication log. No medication will be given to a child unless written instructions from the parent are entered into the log.

If a child becomes sick while at school, he/she will be kept in isolation and the office will contact his/her parents so that the child may be picked up as soon as possible. ***We cannot accept children back in school until contagious symptoms have been absent for 24 hours, or if a doctor releases the child.*** Due to a state law prohibiting sick or contagious children from being at school, it is very important that your child be picked up within an hour of being called.

Parking

Due to heavy traffic in our parking lot, we have initiated the following regulations. These regulations will be strictly enforced.

1. The Speed limit in the parking lot is 5 mph.
2. 5 spaces are reserved for non-ambulatory infants at the front of the parking lot next to the handicapped slots.
3. The main (entry) lanes are one-way. Please do not attempt to use these lanes as a route to the exit. The two other aisles are for two-way traffic, as indicated by the arrows.
4. Please do not cross over the double-yellow line at the parking lot entry.
5. The first two lanes are for client parking only. The rear lanes are for staff parking. In addition, the spaces behind building V are reserved for staff parking.
6. The parking spaces on the left-hand side of the front lot are closed to help improve traffic flow and safety. No parking is allowed in these spaces until further notice.
7. Children must not be "dropped off" at the front gate. They must be accompanied into the school and signed in as per the above regulations for sign in and out.
8. There shall be no parking or standing in the handicapped slots except as authorized, and the NO PARKING areas indicated as such by red striping.
9. All crosswalks will be respected as those on the city streets.

Conclusion

This handbook is intended to be a basic guide as to how Rainbow Montessori functions. If you have any further questions concerning our policies, feel free to ask the director or call the main office.

Thank you for
choosing us!

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Children Learn What They Live
If a child lives with Criticism,
He learns to Condemn.
If a child lives with Hostility,
He learns to Fight.
If a child lives with Ridicule,
He learns to be Shy.
If a child lives with Jealousy,
He learns to feel Guilty.

If a child lives with Tolerance,
He learns Confidence.
If a child lives with Praise,
He learns to appreciate.
If a child lives with Fairness,
He learns Justice.
If a child lives with Security,
He learns to have Faith.
If a child lives with Approval,
He learns to like Approval.
If a child lives with Acceptance and Friendship,
He learns to find Love in the World.