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Sammamish, WA 98075

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Family Handbook

Administration Directory

Position	Name	Duties	Email
Executive Director	Sean O'Brien	Supervision of the family of three schools (Arbor Montessori, Issaquah Montessori, Mt. Si Arbor), oversight of financial operations, governmental liaison, campus security	sean@arborschools.com
Head of School	Nicole Champoux	Institutional and program development, program policies, staff and faculty development, Elementary program director	nicole@arborschools.com
Bookkeeper	Sarah Starkey	Bookkeeping, student billing and finances	business@arborschools.com
Assistant Head of School / Admissions Director	Melissa Laight	Licensing director, admissions, enrollment, marketing, communications, website	melissa@arborschools.com
Early Childhood Director	Riddhi Dave'	Toddler and Primary program coordination, classroom activities and schedules, curriculum and instruction,	riddhi@arborschools.com
Office Manager	Anna Prasanth	Attendance, family & community connections, student records, student database support, logowear, after school clubs, forms	annap@arborschools.com

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Welcome to Arbor!

Dear Families,

I am so happy to welcome new & returning families to Arbor! We pride ourselves on being a strong and connected community. As members of that community, we all have an important role to play.

This Family Handbook is designed as a reference tool to help you access information about Arbor Montessori School's policies and procedures. The partnership between parents, teachers and administrators is key to a successful relationship and our goal is to provide the tools for good communication from the start.

Please familiarize yourself with the contents of this handbook and refer back to it as needed throughout the school year. If you have questions or comments, please reach out to me.

I look forward to a wonderful school year. Thank you for choosing Arbor and welcome to the Arbor community!

Warm regards,

Nicole

Nicole Champoux, M.Ed.
Head of School
nicole@arborschools.com
425-392-3866

Introduction

About Arbor Montessori School

Arbor Montessori School is entering its 32nd year! Mary O'Brien founded the school in 1993 with one clear purpose: a commitment to educating each student as a whole and unique person. As a family-owned Montessori school, we hold respect for each student as our guiding principle and work to create a community where all families and students feel welcome. Our goal is to provide an outstanding and authentic Montessori education for each student by guiding and advocating with genuine compassion for the child's natural exploration and development. We strive for a peaceful environment that fosters respect, collaboration, a love of learning, and leadership skills which nurture the child's spirit. We provide a rich environment for social and academic growth. In addition to academics, we stress the basic human values of honesty, respect for others, and love of life. We have no religious affiliation and we welcome diversity in all forms as something that strengthens the school experience and community.

Mission & Vision Statements

Guiding the future within the child

Arbor Montessori is a vibrant learning community in the heart of Sammamish, where children are empowered to discover their unique potential through an authentic Montessori approach that nurtures their natural curiosity, independence, and love of learning in an academically stimulating and multicultural program.

Nondiscrimination Policy

Arbor Montessori School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, nationality, religion, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, disability, age, national or ethnic origin, or other legally protected status in admission of otherwise qualified students, or in providing access to the rights, privileges, programs, or activities generally available to all students and their families, including educational policies, financial aid and other school administered programs. Similarly, it does not discriminate in its hiring or employment practices.

Land Acknowledgement

At Arbor Montessori School, we acknowledge that we sit on the Indigenous Land of the Coast Salish peoples who have reserved treaty rights to this land, specifically the Snoqualmie Indian Tribe (sduk^walbix^w). We thank these caretakers of this land who have lived and continue to live here since time immemorial.

It is through education and awareness that individuals can integrate land acknowledgement and respect for the Snoqualmie Tribe into their recreational practices and experiences. To learn more about the Snoqualmie Tribe Ancestral Lands Movement, please visit their website at <https://snoqualmietribe.us/snoqualmie-tribe-ancestral-lands-movement/>.

School Philosophy

Dr. Montessori's philosophy and observations are our foundation. At Arbor Montessori School, we support intrinsic motivation and encourage independent learning, curiosity, and creativity so that students can solve problems, define what is important to them, use their time purposefully, assume responsibilities, build healthy relationships, and continue to learn and grow.

Through small group learning, close relationships, individualized instruction, and flexibility, teachers and students collaborate. Together, they have the freedom and responsibility to choose the strategies and materials that will benefit the student at a given moment, while continually meeting or exceeding educational standards. We value parents and caregivers as vital partners in the educational process, inviting collaboration and involvement.

At our core, we recognize that individuals, families, staff, faculty, and the entire community benefit from unbending commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.

We hold ourselves to a high standard when implementing social-emotional learning and outdoor education. Children who are connected to and expressive about themselves, each other, and the natural world are better prepared to navigate the world in which they will live.

Through Montessori pedagogy, we are helping our students to become adults who think both logically and creatively, have a good self-image, and are problem solvers capable of reaching beyond their own needs to those of others. We believe that these characteristics will be as valuable to them, if not more, than standard achievements such as excellence in handwriting or speed in computation.

Above all, we strive to foster a feeling of respect. We want our students to understand that each human is an important person whose uniqueness is to be enjoyed. We believe that the security found in acceptance of individuality leads to independence and genuine individual growth.

Affiliations, Memberships, and Licensing

Arbor Montessori School is affiliated with the *American Montessori Society (AMS)*, and is an official Accreditation Candidate School. During the 2024-25 school year, we completed our accreditation process. As of July 2025, we are awaiting news from AMS regarding our accreditation.

Arbor's Toddler and Primary programs are licensed by the State of Washington Department of Early Learning. Reports from the most recent licensing visit are available in the main office. The Elementary program is an approved private school by the Washington State Board of Education.

Arbor is a member of the *Washington Federation of Independent Schools (WFIS)* and the *Pacific Northwest Montessori Association (PNMA)*.

Partnership & Communications Agreement

The relationship between the family and the school is essential to a child's success. In order to ensure that the best relationship is formed, we enter into this Partnership Agreement together.

What does the school expect from each child's adult caregivers (including parents, grandparents, hired caregivers, guardians, and other essential adults)?

Make continuing efforts both to understand and to embrace the Montessori approach and to work in partnership with the school.

Arbor desires parents and caregivers who understand and embrace our mission. To that end, we help each child's adults learn about the Montessori approach by providing information and opportunities for adult education throughout the school year. Parents and caregivers are expected to attend regularly scheduled parent-teacher conferences, meetings, and Montessori education events and to read articles provided. Also, each family's connected adults should familiarize themselves with the philosophy, policies, and procedures contained in the Family Handbook and other school publications.

Demonstrate respect for all adults, teens, and children, the school, and the school's programs.

Through your behavior, you contribute to your child's moral development and to the culture and climate of the school. We ask that you become a model of respect for your child; actively demonstrate respect for themselves, their work, their classmates, parents of classmates, teachers and other school staff. Respect begins with civility and deepens into trust. Our most fundamental behavioral guidelines for the children are: respect for self, respect for others, and respect for the environment. We expect the same from all family members and school staff at all times and in all relationships within the school community. Support your child by speaking of their teachers, classmates and school in positive terms. Respect and abide by the school's policies and procedures. Honor your commitments. Look for ways to make a positive contribution to the life of the school.

Strive to raise your child according to Montessori principles.

Learn as much as you can about Montessori principles as they apply to your interactions with your child and preparation of the home environment. Remember that you should never do for the child what they are able to do for themselves. Prepare the home so that you allow your child to engage in all of the simple tasks of practical life. Children develop a love of learning and become responsible, independent and capable when parents' values and expectations are consistent with those of the school.

You have chosen Montessori education for your family. Extra academic activities are not necessary (working with your child at home, tutoring, outside math programs, etc.) and, in fact, undermine the Montessori principles.

The Montessori philosophy is built on concrete experiences for the young child. As the child grows and develops, their thinking naturally relies on concrete experiences while also becoming more abstract. Arbor highly encourages parents to limit exposure to "screens" and to experience the natural world around them.

Maintain active, direct and respectful, two-way communication with the school.

Read communications that are sent home including memos, letters, newsletters and calendars. Inform the school in a timely fashion of pertinent changes in your child's life as well as any changes to your contact information.

Bring your concerns and questions directly to the people who can help.

If you have a concern about your child or their classroom experiences, please talk directly to your child's teacher first. A trust-filled relationship between parent and teacher is central to the child's success at school. If you still have lingering concerns after speaking with your child's teacher, please reach out to the director of your child's program (Riddhi Dave for Toddler and Primary, Nicole Champoux for Elementary).

Concerns or questions regarding school policy should be addressed to the Head of School. Financial questions should be addressed to the Business Office.

What can parents and caregivers reasonably expect from the school?

Arbor is an Accreditation Candidate School with the American Montessori Society (AMS) and is completing the multi-year process of achieving accreditation. We maintain high standards for training and professionalism among our faculty and staff. All lead teachers at Arbor maintain Montessori teaching credentials from AMS or the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI).

Our commitment to AMS accreditation ensures:

1. a teacher who is credentialed at the appropriate level leads each class;
2. each class has a complete set of materials;
3. classes made up of children representing the multi-age groupings, including a well balanced division of ages to ensure social development;
4. an uninterrupted two to three-hour work cycle each morning.

Arbor Montessori School aspires to fulfill its mission as an AMS Montessori School.

As a Montessori school, we are different from traditional schools. Our first commitment is to the multi-dimensional development of the child. Montessori children amass a great deal of factual knowledge in school. However, our aim is for each child to be far more than a repository of this information: we guide each child to think for themselves. Cognitive development and a solid academic foundation are important, yet they represent only one dimension of our aspirations for your child. Equally significant is your child's social, emotional, spiritual and physical development.

We aim to maintain open, honest, timely, and respectful communication with you about your child and about information affecting the school community.

There are three regularly scheduled parent-teacher conferences each year. In the event of special concerns, your child's teacher will contact you to discuss these concerns. Each lead teacher is a well-trained professional and their evaluation is confidential between parent, teacher and administration and based on direct observation and assessment of your child's development and progress. All conferences are done face to face where the teacher will offer their current best understanding of your child's progress, strengths and needs. The teacher's observations may be augmented by input from administration.

In addition to the parent-teacher conferences, Arbor Montessori School also distributes a weekly all-school newsletter, weekly classroom updates, a school calendar and frequent communication. We hold regularly scheduled parent education nights as well as curriculum and community-based family events.

The administration of Arbor Montessori School focuses on the needs of the individual child in harmony with the life of the community. All decisions are driven by our mission to guide the future within the child by providing a sound academic foundation while aiding in the development of character, concentration, independence and a respect for the rights of others.

Administrative staff members work with all aspects of the school: students, parents, extended family, faculty, alumni, prospective parents, professional visitors, government officials, other schools and educational organizations, and the general public. In your interactions with administration, you can expect professional, friendly, and business-like conduct, as well as mutually respectful communications.

The administration often faces decisions requiring balance of competing priorities. Sometimes those factors are mutually exclusive; sometimes equally well-intentioned adults see matters differently. In making decisions, the administration will focus on the interest of the individual child in balance with the needs of the school.

Arrival & Dismissal

Parking Lot Safety & Courtesy

Quick Driveway Do's and Don'ts

- **Do** drive one way, always staying to the right and going around the traffic circle.
- **Don't** cut across the driveway, crossing the yellow line, to avoid the speed bumps and traffic circle.
- **Do** keep children, pedestrians, and other drivers safe by following the traffic rules at all times.
- **Don't** leave your car in the driveway. Always park in a designated parking space.

Important Reminders

Parking at Arbor is limited and managed through careful safety systems.

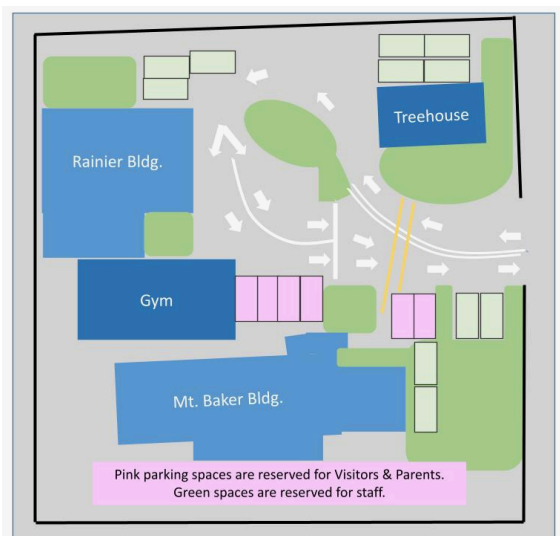
Parking spaces are reserved for Toddler families, visitors, and staff only. They are also available for families who are participating in Before Care and After Care.

Primary and Elementary families are asked to use the carline for dropping off and picking up their students at the designated times. Since parking on campus is quite limited, this will ensure we are able to support the arrival and dismissal of our students efficiently and safely.

For the convenience of parents with multiple students at Arbor Montessori School, there are special arrival and dismissal procedures of Primary siblings. Primary students with Elementary-aged siblings who attend Arbor will be escorted by staff from the car to their classrooms during the Elementary arrival time.

We ask parents and caregivers to remember that Dismissal is not the time for conversations with a child's teacher. The safety of the children is the most important concern during this time. If you want to speak to the teacher at length, ask for a call or make an appointment to come and visit.

Below is a map of our driveway, with traffic patterns and guest parking indicated.



School Hours

Arbor Montessori School is open Monday through Friday, 7:30am to 6:00 p.m.

Signing In & Signing Out

All Toddler, and Primary students are required to sign their children in and out every day, using the Procure system. Each authorized adult must use the family pin numbers provided by the Office.

Elementary students who participate in Before and After Care are also required to be signed in and out on paper.

Arrival & Dismissal Times for Half and Full Day Students

Toddler	Full Day Hours: 8:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.	
Morning arrival	8:00 a.m. - 8:15 a.m.	Toddlers without Arbor siblings
	8:15 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.	Toddlers with Arbor siblings
Afternoon dismissal	2:30 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.	Toddlers without Arbor siblings
	2:45 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.	Toddlers with Arbor siblings
Primary	Full Day Hours: 8:30 a.m.-3:15 p.m.	
Arrival	8:15 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.	Primary students with Arbor siblings
	8:30 a.m. - 8:45 a.m.	Students without Arbor siblings
Half Day Dismissal	12:00 p.m. - 12:15 p.m.	Half Day students

Lunch Add On Dismissal	12:45 p.m.	Half Day + lunch students
Afternoon Dismissal	3:00 p.m. - 3:15 p.m.	Afternoon dismissal
Elementary	School Hours: 8:15 a.m.-3:30 p.m.	
Morning arrival	8:15 a.m.-8:30 a.m.	Arrival and sibling drop-off
Afternoon dismissal	3:15 p.m.-3:30 p.m.	Dismissal and sibling pick-up

Program Specifics

- **Toddler** – Parents park in front of Mt. Baker building to walk their students to and pick them up from the classroom. Parents sign their child in/out using school-provided technology.
- **Primary** – At the start of the school year, families are provided with two carline signs that say their child's name. These signs must be displayed in the vehicles that will be dropping off and/or picking up. Extra carline signs are always available from the office.

How To Use the Driveway at Arrival and Dismissal - Please pull forward to the white line, forming two lanes. In the morning, a staff member comes directly to your car with the sign-in tablet and walks your child to their classroom. At Dismissal, a staff member walks each child to their car. Parents sign their child in/out using school-provided technology. Parents are required to stay in their vehicles. Do not leave your car unattended during Arrival or Dismissal.

- **Elementary** – At the start of the school year, families are provided with two carline signs that say their child's name. These signs must be displayed in the vehicles that will be dropping off and/or picking up. Extra carline signs are always available from the office.

How To Use the Driveway at Arrival and Dismissal - There is no sign-in or sign-out for full day elementary students for regular school hours. At Arrival, please pull up in the lane closest to the school and allow your child to exit your vehicle from the passenger side only. Children are not to cross a traffic lane to access the building.

At Dismissal, please pull up to the white line, forming two lanes. A staff member will escort your child to your car.

Unexpected Early & Late Arrivals

- If you arrive early, our staff will ask you to exit the carline. We cannot allow early arrivals to wait in our carline due to traffic. If you are early, please park at the Sammamish Commons and wait for your arrival window before entering the driveway.
- If you arrive late, you must park in a designated parent/visitor parking space and walk your student to the front desk where you must sign them in (Primary), and then walk them to their classroom.

Extended Care Hours

Program	Before Care	After Care
Toddler	7:30-8:00 a.m.	2:30-6:00 p.m.
Primary	7:30-8:30 a.m.	3:00-6:00 p.m.
Elementary	7:30-8:15 a.m.	3:15-6:00 p.m.
Childcare Only Days	School opens at 7:30 a.m.	School closes at 6:00 p.m.

During Before Care, parents and caregivers park in front of Mt. Baker building to walk their children directly to their designated Before Care classroom. Each child must be signed in upon arrival.

During After Care, parents and caregivers park in front of Mt. Baker building to pick their children up from the classroom. Each child must be signed in upon arrival.

Late Pick Up

Late pickup fees apply if a child is picked up after their scheduled dismissal or pick up times. Prior to 6:00 p.m., families are charged **\$1 per minute**. When a parent arrives late, our staffing ratios can be adversely impacted.

If a child is not picked up by 6:00 p.m., families are charged **\$6 per minute**. These charges are billed to monthly tuition. If a child is still at school at 6:00 p.m. and the parent has not communicated about their delay, an administrator will be notified and after care staff will begin calling the child's emergency contacts.

Childcare Options***Extended Care***

For families that need consistent care for their children before or after a full day schedule, Arbor offers extended care starting at 7:30 a.m. and running until 6:00 p.m. After care program activities include indoor playtime, snack, and outdoor time.

We offer three different schedule options to meet the diverse needs of our families. These options include adding before care only (available for full and half day schedules), adding after care only (available for full day only), and having full extended care that has both before and after care.

Extended Care is available through the Enrollment Contract. The Extended Day contract includes all childcare only days. For families seeking to add or drop Extended Care, the office will assist with the schedule-change process.

There is a \$50 schedule change fee for all changes. Any schedule change must continue for at least three months before another schedule change can be requested.

Drop-in Childcare

Before Care: We offer drop-in childcare for families who have infrequent need for Before Care. This must be arranged at least 24 hours in advance through the office, and is only possible if space is available. The charge is \$28/hour with a minimum of half an hour and rounded to the next quarter hour after that. For example, if a Primary student needs care from 7:45-8:30, the charge would be \$14.

Drop-in Afternoon Sessions may be available for Primary students on half-day schedules. The cost for an afternoon session is \$75. The hours are 12:00-3:00 p.m.

Drop-in Aftercare may be available to children who are attending a full day of school. This must be arranged at least 24 hours in advance through the office, and is only possible if space is available. The cost for Drop-In Childcare is \$28/hour with a minimum of one hour, and then billed in 15 minute increments rounded up to the next 15 minutes. For example, if an Elementary student is signed up for Drop-In care from 3:30-3:50 the cost would be \$28; if an Elementary student needs care from 3:30-4:25 the cost would be \$28; if care is needed until 4:40, the cost would be \$28 for the first hour + \$7 for the first 15-minute increment for a total of \$35.

Childcare Only Days

The school calendar includes a selection of days when Arbor is open for childcare only. Extended Day Contracts include Childcare Only days. However, parents of Extended Care students are still required to reserve a space for their child in order to help us determine staffing needs.

For students who are not enrolled in Extended Care, attendance may be reserved on Childcare Only days on a space available basis at a rate of \$140 per day (no hourly option is available). Staffing is arranged carefully to ensure that teacher-student ratios are maintained and that staff members get to take time off if possible. For that reason, if you sign your child up for care on a Childcare Only day, you are fully responsible for the full charge unless you cancel your reservation by the published deadline. This cancellation must be confirmed with the Business Office (business@arborschools.com) or the Head of School.

Summary of Childcare Related Fees (billed with Tuition)

Type of Fee	Amount	Explanation
Late Pick Up (prior to 6pm)	\$1/minute	
Late Pick Up (after 6pm)	\$6/minute	
Drop-In Before Care	\$28/hour	24-hour written request and administrative approval are required, 30 minute minimum, rounded to next quarter hour
Drop-In Afternoon Session	\$75	12:00-3:00, Primary only, 24-hour written request and administrative approval are required
Drop-In After Care	\$28/hour	24-hour written request and administrative approval are required, 60 minutes minimum, rounded to next quarter hour

Schedule Change Fee	\$50	Any schedule change must continue for at least three months before another schedule change can be requested.
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School Closures

Holidays & Planned School Closures

Arbor Montessori School will be closed the following holidays each year: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, President's Day, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, Independence Day, Labor Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving Day + Wednesday before and Friday after

Completely CLOSED for Winter Break (2 weeks including Christmas and New Year's Day)

Childcare is not available on federal holidays. On all other non-school days, childcare is generally available except for two weeks of classroom preparation, inventory, and faculty inservice and several faculty inservice days. Please consult this year's calendar for specific dates that the school is closed. Monthly tuition remains the same each month regardless of illness, absence, vacation, school closure, and/or legal holidays.

Snow & Severe Weather Policy

We follow the Issaquah School District for weather closures. Opening and closing times may change based on the severity of the weather. On days when you suspect a possible late start, early closing, or cancellation of school, please check our Facebook or Instagram page, and the Issaquah School District website. Arbor will follow the lead of the Issaquah School District on all weather related closures unless otherwise indicated.

In the case of a two-hour late start, there will be no school for half day toddlers or half day primary students. In addition there will be no Before Care. For all other students, school will start two hours later than the usual start time.

As a private school in Washington State, we are required to offer at least 1000 instructional hours at the Elementary level. We exceed this requirement to the extent that it is unlikely that Arbor will need to make up days due to Snow or Severe Weather, or Emergency Closure.

No refunds will be given because of closure due to snow, severe weather or emergency.

Emergency Closure

On occasion, we may have to close school because of loss of water or power/heat or sudden snowstorms. When we are in the midst of a school day, closure decisions are made only if we will compromise the health and safety of children by remaining open. We will alert families to come and pick up their child on such occasions. If parents/guardians are unavailable, emergency contacts will be called. Staff will always remain at the school until the last parents have arrived.

In the event of an emergency, we ask that you try not to flood our phone lines immediately in case of a major widespread emergency such as an earthquake. We need to keep our phones open so that we can contact the families of anyone who might be injured or to get help.

All students of all ages must be signed out at a central location before they are taken home in an emergency. Please understand the importance of doing this and help us by being calm and patient. We need to keep track of everyone and relay messages to others in a family who are equally concerned about the whereabouts of their children. Make sure you have as many people as possible authorized to pick your child up in the event of the colossal traffic jams that occur in widespread emergency.

Attendance

How to Report an Absence

If your student is going to be absent, please notify the school by 9:00 a.m. by sending an email to attendance@arborschools.com.

Include the following details in your email:

- Student's name and classroom
- Reason for absence
- Return date
- If absence is illness-related, please include your child's symptoms so that we can track illnesses and may be aware of other issues that might prevent future school attendance

Importance of Attendance

Regular attendance is important at all stages of school enrollment; therefore, attendance must be a priority for all families.

It is important that each child arrives at school on time and ready to learn. Academic performance and social and emotional stability is enhanced by timely, consistent attendance. Any disruption of their regular schedule will impact this performance. Therefore, we appreciate knowing of any changes in your child's life, such as a parent traveling or grandma coming to stay.

There are numerous breaks during the school year. All families are asked to take family trips out of town during school vacation times so that children will be in class on school days. If you are planning a family vacation or extended length of time away from school, please inform your child's teacher and the office as soon as you know of the dates of your absence so that we can support your child and plan accordingly.

We understand that some absences are unavoidable in the event of a family death or funeral, religious holiday, and urgent doctor's appointment. Please email attendance@arborschools.com and cc your child's teacher when your child has an unexpected absence for sickness or other reason.

It is important that your child is in class every day. Each child is an essential part of the classroom dynamics. Lessons are planned for children each day, thus a child's absence impacts the schedule. We do

not, however, expect you to send your child to school when they are sick or recuperating. Please reference our Illness policy found in this handbook.

Tardiness

Late Arrival, also called tardiness, is both stressful for the child and disruptive for the classroom.

A child misses a very special part of the day when they arrive late: classmates greet each other; friends join together to choose work; the teacher plans special lessons for each student. It is harder for a child to enter the class after missing the beginning rituals of the day. It is also a disruption to the entire classroom community when a child arrives late. Children are eager to see their friends and become distracted.

Driveway Arrival assistance ends promptly at 8:45 a.m. for Primary and 8:30 a.m. for Elementary.

If you get to school after Arrival and staff have left the driveway, you must park in a marked parking space. Do not leave your car in the driveway or in front of the Rainier Building. After you park in Parent & Visitor Parking, you must walk your child to the office to sign them in. The staff member will then walk your child to their classroom.

For Primary and Elementary students:

Repeated tardiness is observed and recorded by the teachers in Transparent Classroom. After five (5) tardies, parents are notified and asked to correct the problem. After eight (8) tardies, parents are notified and this record is reported to the Head of School. If the tardiness continues, parents may be contacted by the Head of School to discuss the issue.

Tardiness and absenteeism are kept on file and on your student's permanent record. Private and public schools ask for this information as part of their enrollment procedures.

If you expect your child to arrive late because of an appointment, please send an email to attendance@arborschools.com and your child's teacher in advance so that lessons can be re-arranged according to their arrival.

Early Pick-Up

If your child needs to be picked up early, please send an email to attendance@arborschools.com in advance so that lessons can be re-arranged according to the dismissal. To pick up a child early you must park in Parent & Visitor Parking, then come to the office to sign them out. The staff member will then bring your child to you in the lobby.

Excessive Absences

Arbor Montessori Schools and the State of Washington consider 10 or more absences per semester to be excessive. Absences of this nature must be discussed verbally and in writing with the classroom teaching team and the program director and must be documented as medically necessary. Excessive absences jeopardize student progress in every academic area as well as disrupt the classroom. While we can provide some make-up work, please realize that it is impossible to account for all aspects of school that are missed when a student is absent. For some students this becomes a very serious issue, affecting overall academic progress and attitudes about the importance of school.

Admissions & Enrollment

Admissions Process

Arbor Montessori serves children from Toddlers through Grade 6. Admissions processes can be found on our website.

Relevant age parameters and minimum licensing teacher:child ratios include:

- Toddler - 15 months to 3 years, with a 1:7 ratio
 - Child must be able to stand, walk, and eat confidently and independently
- Primary - 2 ½ to 6 years (includes Kindergarten), with 1:10 ratio
 - Child must be able to manage the toileting process with complete independence
 - To qualify for Kindergarten, child must be 5 years old by August 31
- Lower Elementary - 6 to 9 years (1st-3rd Grade)
 - Child must be 6 years old by August 31
- Upper Elementary - 9 to 12 years (4th-6th Grade)

Admissions Timeline

Priority Re-Enrollment for current families begins in January. We also begin to accept applications from new families for the upcoming school year in January. These new applications are placed in our wait pool. In mid February, we begin accepting applications from our wait pool. We accept midyear new enrollment as well, when a space is available and we have an applicant in our wait pool who matches the opening.

Acceptance

After a family takes a tour of the school, and submits their child's Application for Admission, they are placed in the Wait Pool. When space becomes available, a family may be offered Enrollment for their child. Acceptance is based primarily on the child's readiness. Siblings of current students are prioritized for acceptance. Families who are transferring from one of our sister schools (Issaquah Montessori School and Mt. Si Arbor Montessori) are also prioritized. Additionally, the Admissions team also takes into account the level of the family's commitment to Montessori philosophy. Preference is given to those who intend to keep their child in the classroom for the full cycle of the program and beyond.

Classroom Placement

Classes are multi-aged and Arbor makes every reasonable effort to balance each class with respect to age and gender. Class placements are made after careful consideration of classroom communities and individual student needs. These are professional decisions made as a result of faculty and administrative discussions. Classroom placement is based on several factors — personality and developmental level of your child, space availability, social and age mix ratios per classroom, and child's schedule. Any parental concern regarding a student's learning needs or accommodation should be disclosed during the admissions process and also directed to the program director.

Transition Period

Every effort will be made to help your child make a smooth transition into Arbor Montessori School. The teachers and administrators are dedicated to working with each family to make their child's transition

positive and successful. If a parent expects separation anxiety, it is their responsibility to work a plan with the program director and their child's teacher to make the child's transition and integration into the classroom community as smooth as possible.

Kindergarten and Elementary Entry Cut-Off Dates

A child must be five by September 1 to be considered a Kindergartner and six by September 1 to be considered a first grader. The only exception is if a child completes the early-entrance assessment for the public school and is accepted early into Kindergarten at the public school, then we will also accept them for early entrance into our Kindergarten program.

Enrollment Forms

Arbor Montessori School requires parents to complete online paperwork **prior to** the child's first day of attendance. **If paperwork is not turned in by your child's first day, they will need to delay their start date** until all forms have been submitted and accepted. Required paperwork includes, but is not limited to:

- **Enrollment Contract (due in advance, to confirm child's place at Arbor)**
- **Student Information**
- **Annual Emergency Card** provides staff with essential information about your child including information regarding the authorization for the release of your student to adults other than parents, as well as emergency contacts. Please list your emergency contacts in the order that you would like the school to call them; in the case of an emergency, staff will call the first number on the list and work their way down the list until we reach someone able to respond. The Medical Consent portion of the form gives Arbor Montessori School permission to seek emergency medical treatment should your student require such care. These forms accompany students when they participate in field trips or other excursions away from the school.
- **Allergy/Medication Forms and Action Plans** if applicable
- **Driving Field Trip (Kindergarten & Elementary) & Walking Field Trip (all students) Authorization Forms** allows your student to participate in off-campus activities.
- The **Certificate of Immunization Status (hard copy)** is required by the Washington Department of Licensing. Parents must keep the school up to date with their student's immunization status. Please note forms directly from doctors cannot be accepted. They must be on the state form either through the myir platform or printed and vaccines handwritten in. If you choose to handwrite, a caregiver must also sign the form on the top left side.
- Parents are also required to sign off on School Policies:
 - **Pet Policy** allows your student to safely handle animals on school property.
 - **Family Handbook Agreement**
 - **Emergency Preparedness Manual**
 - **Parking & Driveway Policy**

Updating Information

It is the responsibility of parents to keep us informed of any changes to student information so that we can maintain up-to-date records. This includes items such as name, address, email address, workplace, emergency contact numbers, authorizations, immunizations, medications and allergies or changes in parent's marital status.

Summer Camp

At Arbor, we are happy to offer year-round care in our Toddler Program.

For Primary age children, we offer a Summer Camp Program. In the early spring every year, students who are returning for the upcoming school are offered the opportunity to sign up for Summer Camp. Summer Camp is offered in 4 two-week sessions.

For Elementary age children, from ages 6-12 years, we offer Summer Camp as well. This camp is open to current and former students, as well as current students' siblings.

Enrollment Contract

An **Enrollment Contract** is required in January to initiate your student's enrollment process each year. This contract outlines the specific policies that obligate your family to tuition payments for the year and the timeline you will need to follow when making your final enrollment decision each year. A **Tuition Deposit** is required each year in March for the upcoming school year.

Failure to pay this deposit is an indication that you no longer wish to enroll your student at Arbor Montessori School. The deposit is distributed and applied to the following year's monthly payments. **All fees and deposits are non-refundable upon receipt.**

When a family decides not to re-enroll their child at Arbor Montessori School, we ask them to notify the Head of School in writing.

Tuition & Fees

Payment of Tuition

Tuition payments remain the same each month regardless of attendance, vacations, school closures, holidays, illness or absences. Payments are due on the 10th day of the prior month to which it applies. (Aug 10—for September tuition). We prefer that you make payments by automatic withdrawal (ACH). If you pay by check and we receive two late payments, we will require that all future payments be made by automatic withdrawal. If you need to make other payment arrangements, we will be happy to discuss reasonable alternatives. We offer a 10-percent discount for the first sibling of a full-time enrolled student. This discount applies to the student with the lower tuition fee and cannot be combined with any other tuition discount.

For Toddler students, enrollment is considered year-round. Primary and Elementary tuition is based on a ten-month period. Payments will be made in ten equal installments.

Fees

An annual non-refundable **Registration Fee** is required at the time of initial enrollment and again each January that enrollment continues. Payment of the Registration Fee reserves a child's position for the following school year and covers costs related to record keeping, assessment, emergency preparedness, and other registration and enrollment obligations.

Families also pay a **Materials Fee** each year, assessed in March. This fee covers the cost of classroom supplies and materials.

Please note that Elementary and Kindergarten field trip fees are included in tuition, so they are not assessed as separate fees.

Financial Aid

The purpose of the financial aid program is to support current families who have demonstrated a commitment to the school and to promote socio-economic diversity in the Arbor Montessori School community. Financial aid awards are still available for families experiencing unexpected needs. Please reach out to the Head of School for more information.

Eligibility for financial aid is determined on a needs analysis of the information concerning taxable income, assets, and expenses indicated on a standard application form.

Since the determination of the award is based on the analysis of the information submitted concerning the family's ability to pay school fees, it is important to have current and accurate information about family income and assets. This information is kept in strictest confidence and is reviewed by school officials. If parents are separated or divorced, it is important that both parties submit a financial statement. Generally, it is expected that both parents will contribute to their student's educational expenses.

Extra Charges

The following is a list of extra charges and fees for optional programs available to students.

Extracurricular Programs – Any extra programs provided by Arbor Montessori School on an optional basis (field trips, art class, etc.) will be assessed as an additional fee as needed.

Late Pick Up – A late charge will be assessed to those families picking up after 6:00 p.m. for all students. Our late fee is \$6 per minute.

Insufficient Funds – A bookkeeping fee of \$25 will be charged for any ACH return or check that is returned from the bank due to insufficient funds.

Schedule Change Fee - After September 1st any changes made to your student's schedule will incur a \$50 change fee which will be charged to your monthly account.

Financial Policies

Arbor Montessori School is dependent upon tuition as the source of income. Student accounts must be kept up-to-date. Annual re-enrollment will only be permitted for students with up-to-date accounts.

Collection Procedures

A late fee of \$100 will be assessed on all past due payments and fees. It is Arbor Montessori's policy that if a student's tuition or fees become 60 days past due: 1) A student may be dismissed from school. 2) Their enrollment may be terminated without affecting the obligation for tuition and fees. 3) Arbor will not release the student's progress reports, teacher evaluations, transcripts, or other student records. 4) Arbor will not permit re-enrollment for the following year. In the event Arbor initiates legal action to collect amounts due for tuition fees, the parent agrees to pay for collection costs including attorney's fees. All progress reports, teacher evaluations, transcripts, and other student records shall remain property of Arbor Montessori School at all times.

Should it become necessary for Arbor School to commence collection procedures to enforce financial obligations arising from a student's enrollment, the parent agrees to be liable to Arbor School for all fees, costs, and expenses of any kind incurred, with or without suit, including but not limited to attorneys' fees, all costs of court, and compensation for efforts conducted by the school's employees or agents.

Termination of Services

Toddler Program

Tuition deposit is one month's tuition payment and due at the time of registration. During contract renewal, a family may already have a "Last Month Tuition Deposit" on file but may be required to supplement it to meet the current tuition rates. If a family wishes to withdraw their child from the program, they must provide thirty days written notice by the first of the month. If appropriate notice is provided the tuition deposit may be applied to the last month's tuition.

Primary & Elementary Commitment for the Full School Year

Enrollment is considered a commitment for the Full School Year. Each parent signs a contract in which they state that they understand that Arbor School has granted their child one of a limited number of student placements. Having accepted one of the limited number of places, the parent acknowledges that their tuition deposit is nonrefundable and agrees that as of July 15 prior to start of the school year, they are liable for the full amount of the child's annual tuition and there will be no refund, credit, or remission of the annual tuition in the event of absence, withdrawal, or exclusion of the student from Arbor School and any such event, will in no way change, alter, modify, or revoke the contractual relationship that exists as a result of the execution of this contract between themselves and Arbor School except as provided in the No Abatement of Tuition clause in the contract.

Primary Program Only

Notice of voluntary withdrawal must be submitted by the parents/guardians to the Head of School. It is understood and agreed that when a student is withdrawn from Arbor it is extremely difficult to determine the amount of damage that withdrawal will cause the school. If a student fails to begin or complete the contract term for any reason whatsoever, including but not limited to voluntary withdrawal, dismissal, or account delinquency, the parent/guardian is liable for the following charges within ten business days of written notice of withdrawal:

- Tuition liability before July 15, is the Enrollment Deposit;
- From July 15-March 1, Tuition liability is 20% of Total Annual Tuition;
- After March 1, Tuition liability equals the remaining Balance of Total Annual Tuition

Behavior Standards & Expectations

Expectations

Arbor Montessori School our expectations are straightforward: Everyone in our learning community must act safely and responsibly at all times. This means respecting the rights and property of ourselves, others, the school, the community, and the places we visit. We expect all students to arrive at school on time with a positive, cooperative attitude toward learning.

Our approach to child guidance is rooted in Positive Discipline. Created by Dr. Jane Nelsen, this proactive and empathetic approach allows students opportunities to develop self-regulation, find solutions to problems, learn effective ways to work and play together, and ask for help when they don't know how to reach their goals.

Sometimes a student's choice or behavior requires additional attention. It is our goal to help the child correct any inappropriate behavior within the confines of our program. However, we will bring a particular behavior to the parent's attention if we feel changing the behavior requires the parent's support at home, or if we have determined that the behavior is repetitive or severe enough in nature to warrant further follow-up. Conferences will be scheduled when necessary, providing an opportunity for teachers, parents, and the student to create a behavioral plan.

At such a support meeting, parents will be given an opportunity to review the dates and nature of the incidents along with the actions taken by the teaching staff. At this meeting we will:

- Outline the expected behavior,
- Work together to develop a plan to alleviate, manage, or improve the behavior, and
- Construct a timeline to correct the behavior.

When the plan is in place and being followed carefully by staff and faculty, but the behavior is not corrected during this time period, or if something occurs that could affect the health and safety of the child, other students, or staff members, the child may be suspended or dismissed from Arbor Montessori School.

Discipline

In general, our environment and structure eliminate the need for adult-imposed discipline. We help students learn to make appropriate choices and we encourage self-discipline. Anything we ask a student to do is based on respect for self, respect for others, and respect for the environment. To ensure the safety and wellbeing of every member of the community, we have three ground rules that we enforce:

- A student must obey the adult in charge.
- A student must not engage in behavior that could result in injury to themselves or another.
- A student must not mistreat their own or others' work, materials, or property.

If a child breaks one of these rules, they are counseled and reminded of the appropriate actions. This is done quietly with the child in a respectful fashion. If necessary, the teacher asks the student to participate appropriately or to take time to reset their emotions and gain control of their behavior away from the group.

If at any time a child's behavior threatens or endangers the safety of others or is considered to be serious aggression (such as biting or hitting), at the school's discretion a student may be sent home for a day. The school and parents/caregivers will work together on a case-by-case basis to resolve the issue as soon as possible. The school must be able, under the constraints of normal supervision, to provide a safe, non-threatening environment for all students. At the school's discretion, a student may be asked not to return until we assess whether we can reasonably provide this safety. The information about this occurrence will be covered in an Incident Report that will be sent home and made a part of the student's file.

Intervention Protocol

Montessori is a method of education that can meet the needs of a broad range of students. In the event that a student experiences significant difficulties, or gives the school reason for concern related to developmental or behavioral issues, an intervention protocol process will be followed. This policy takes a team approach involving parents, teachers, and, when appropriate, other staff or other professional consultants. At all times, the safety of the entire group and the integrity of the school program will be given first priority.

Bullying

We follow Washington State's bullying definition, which is: "Harassment, intimidation, or bullying" means any intentionally written message or image—including those that are electronically transmitted—verbal, or physical act, including but not limited to one shown to be motivated by race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, including gender expression or identity, mental or physical disability or other distinguishing characteristics, when an act:

- Physically harms a student or damages the student's property or
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education or
- Is so severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment or
- Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.
- **Bullying** is defined as negative actions which are intentional, repeated, negative, show a lack of empathy, and a power imbalance

If you suspect a bullying incident has occurred, please see the school administration. It may also be helpful to fill out a *Bullying, Intimidation, Harassment Form* (Appendix C). This policy covers all members of the Arbor community, as well as third party vendors and customers.

Food Policies

Eating in the Classroom

Students eat lunch in their classrooms every day. All classrooms follow common social courtesies during eating times:

- Students must be seated while eating.
- Eating happens in a prepared, clean space.
- Students must use placemats.
- Students may not share food.
- Students may not make negative comments about other students' food.
- We expect students to use appropriate manners and utensils while eating.
- All students must be respectful and careful of other students' allergies.
- All students are expected to fully clean up their table, floor area, and push in their chairs before leaving their lunch space.

Tables are washed before and after lunch.

Lunch

Lunch is provided by each individual family. Please send lunch in an insulated, labeled bag or lunch box along with any necessary utensils and napkin.

We ask that you refrain from using superhero or other comic character-themed lunch boxes or napkins, as this can cause disruption during lunch.

Soda, gum, or candy of any kind should remain at home and will be returned unconsumed if brought to school. If you wish to provide special treats related to cultural celebrations or holidays for your student and their classmates, please make prior arrangements directly with the teacher to ensure all dietary restrictions are considered.

We encourage the development of independence in all aspects of the student's day. To assist your student at meals, we ask that all containers used for school lunch are able to be opened by the child. Teachers will provide assistance with opening packages and containers only as needed. Classrooms do not have the capacity to refrigerate or reheat individual lunch items. Hot food should be sent in an insulated thermos and an ice pack included for food items requiring refrigeration.

Healthy Eating

Nutrition and healthy eating are important for children. We are working to help our students understand how to eat in ways that help a body stay strong and healthy. We ask you to partner with us in this important work by sending your child with food that supports their learning, growing, and self-regulation.

The Department of Child, Youth and Families requires that a student's lunch contain the following (with equivalent substitutions for allergies or sensitivities):

- A source of calcium (such as a dairy product like milk, cottage cheese, yogurt, cheese)
- A source of protein (such as fish, poultry, legumes, tofu, or beans)
- A source of whole grains (such as bread, cereal, bagel, or rice cake)
- Fruits or vegetables (two fruits or two vegetables or one fruit and one vegetable to equal the total portion size required.) When juice is served in place of a fruit or vegetable it must be 100% fruit or vegetable juice.
- Please **exclude** soda, gum, or candy of any kind (this includes Fruit Roll-Ups). These will be returned home uneaten.

There are no facilities that students may use for refrigeration or warming up food. Eat child must bring a lunch that is ready to be eaten and is already at the correct temperature. Ice packs and thermoses work well to ensure that food remains at the correct temperature until lunchtime.

Snack - Toddler and Primary

Arbor Montessori School provides three snacks daily (morning, afternoon, and aftercare) for the Primary and Toddler communities. The snack menu is published by the program director monthly. All attempts will be made to provide alternative snack items that adhere to any dietary restrictions. If your student has very limiting food sensitivities/allergies, you may wish to provide a weekly supply of a specific substitute snack items (i.e gluten free crackers, lactose free milk/cheese, etc) for just your student.

Snack Cart - Fridays

The Upper Elementary students maintain a student-run business called Snack Cart. On Fridays, a team of students bring Snack Cart to visit Primary and Elementary classrooms, providing an opportunity for students to purchase a snack using their own coins. Many different varieties of snacks are for sale. Efforts are made to keep these snacks nutritious and the Upper Elementary class always welcomes feedback from their younger customers, their parents, and their teachers about snack preferences and nutritional priorities.

Snack - Elementary

Elementary students bring their own snack, in their lunchbox. Parents and caregivers are advised to send a healthy snack and to ensure that their student knows which foods are designated for snack. For aftercare students, Arbor provides a PM snack every day.

Grab-n-Go Breakfast - Elementary

In order to help Elementary students start the school day feeling ready to learn, we provide a variety of wholesome morning snacks and foods that are easy to eat and nutritious. We aim for food options that are high in protein, low in sugar, and/or incorporate whole grains. Our grab and go breakfast mobile food cart, tentatively named Vital Vittles, is maintained and staffed by a teacher every morning from 8:15-8:30.

Food Allergies

Students are not allowed to share food at lunch or from their lunch boxes during snack time due to food allergies and dietary restrictions.

Toddler and Primary

In the event your child has a food allergy and/or intolerance, an Allergy Action Plan with a doctor's diagnosis and signature are required. Staff are specifically informed about students' ingested food allergies and take all precautions to support the student's wellbeing. In the event a student has a diagnosed and documented touch allergy with risk of anaphylaxis, the food will be prohibited in the classroom. Classrooms in which there is a student with a severe touch allergy will prohibit the food item in the classroom for snack, lunch (for all students), and class celebrations.

Children ages 16 months to 6 years are not yet of an age to be responsible for their own food choices. This policy is designed to minimize the risk of severe allergic reactions and minimize anxiety on the part of the younger students, their parents, and the staff around the issue of food allergies.

Elementary

In the event your child has a food allergy and/or intolerance, an Allergy Action Plan with a doctor's diagnosis and signature are required. Staff are specifically informed about students' ingested food allergies and take all precautions to support the student's wellbeing. Students in Elementary with an ingested food allergy are asked to self-regulate and avoid those items to

which they are allergic. In the event a student has a diagnosed and documented touch allergy with risk of anaphylaxis, the food will be prohibited in the classroom.

Birthday Celebrations

Your student's birthday is their special day to share with family and friends. At the Primary and Elementary levels, we celebrate with birthday circles. For these celebrations to go smoothly there are a few simple rules to observe:

- Please contact your child's teacher well in advance to make plans for a time and day if you hope to attend the birthday circle.
- If you are planning a birthday party for your student at home, we strongly recommend that you keep invitations separate from school. If it's absolutely necessary to distribute invitations at school, that is only possible if the entire classroom is invited in order to avoid any child feeling excluded.
- Please reserve birthday balloons and/or presents for celebrations outside of school hours

Please note that we do not serve birthday treats or distribute "goody bags" to celebrate birthdays. A student is welcome to donate a special book to the classroom in honor of their birthday. This policy applies to all levels of students.

Dress Code & Supplies

Overview

The intent of this policy is to help our students learn to appreciate one another authentically. At Arbor, our goal is to ensure that every student, family member, and staff member feels welcomed and valued for who they truly are as a full and complete human. We do not want any child's regard for another to be based on the clothes they wear, the house they live in, the car their parents drive, the kinds of toys they have, their knowledge of current social media memes, their adherence to specific brands or logos, or any other superficial characteristics. Clothes should be comfortable, well-fitting, and durable since students spend a great deal of time outside in lots of weather conditions.

The following items are not allowed, except by special arrangement or at specific special events:

- costumes, including tails
- one-piece pajamas suits, also called onesies
- face paint

We ask that all personal belongings be free of graphics and images, including characters. Your student may wear solid colors, stripes, dots, florals, plaids/checks and sports team apparel. We also ask that lunch boxes, backpacks, shoes, slippers and socks also be character-free. The dress code (acceptable colors, patterns, decorations, etc.) extends to socks, shoes, and accessories – anything visible that a student might wear on school grounds. If you have any questions about the dress code please contact the office.

Hats and head coverings may not be worn inside unless for religious reasons. Outerwear is exempt from the dress code, though we prefer that students dress sympathetically to the code for school-sponsored outdoor events such as field trips.

Elementary and Kindergarten students are required to wear their Arbor sweatshirts and/or logo wear on all field trips.

Toddler Clothing Guidelines

Toddlers should wear clothing that allows for free, unrestricted movement. In an effort to promote growing independence, we request that toddlers wear clothing that is easy to put on and take off themselves such as pants with elastic bands, pull over shirts and velcro or slip on shoes only. No onesies, overalls, hooded sweatshirts, or belts, as these clothing choices do not support independence.

Indoor Shoes

All students must wear shoes at all times. Shoes with wheels are not allowed. Indoor shoes must be rubber-soled, slip-on shoes, with covered toes and free of any decorations. Indoor shoes are required for toddlers, primary, and elementary students.

Extra Clothing

Playground time is an important part of a child's day. We will go outside even in inclement weather, so children can expect to get wet and dirty, especially living in the Pacific Northwest! Please send an extra set of labeled seasonally appropriate clothes, which meet the dress code requirements in a labeled bag that can be kept at Arbor.

School Supplies

All additional items needed for school will be provided by Arbor Montessori School. There is no need to purchase school supplies. School bags for Toddler and backpacks for Primary and Elementary students are distributed to all new students during the first week of school. Returning students can let the office know if they require a new backpack or totes. Complementary logowear items are distributed to students at the beginning of the year.

Backpacks

Arbor backpacks are required for Primary and Elementary students. Any non-Arbor backpack will be sent home and the family will be reminded to send their child with their Arbor backpack only. This policy is in place for several important reasons: 1) Arbor backpacks are specifically selected to be the correct size for our cubbies, 2) consistent use of Arbor backpacks makes it possible for students to feel a strong sense of community, and 3) teachers and classmates are able to help students find and organize their belongings.

If an Arbor backpack is damaged due to normal wear and tear or manufacturer's defect, Arbor will replace it free of charge. If an Arbor backpack is willfully damaged, there will be a minimal replacement charge.

Lost & Found

Lost and found articles are kept in a basket in the Rainier Building lobby. They may be claimed at any time. Items not claimed from the lost and found are periodically donated to local charities. Prior to donating the items to charity, reminder notices will be sent home. Despite these measures, the best way to ensure that your student's belongings will be returned to them is to put your student's name on all items of clothing, bags, lunch boxes, or other possessions that they might misplace.

Health & Safety

Overview

The personal contact and interaction of students and our staff are such that sharing bacteria and viruses is inevitable. Even with appropriate hygiene practiced regularly at home and at school, illness and disease can spread in school environments.

Our Health Care Policy helps us minimize the illness or disease exposure to Arbor Montessori School's students, staff, and families. It is to everyone's advantage that the health policies and procedures of our school be respected and adhered to at all times. This will ensure a much healthier environment for everyone in our community.

Arbor Montessori School has an extensive Health Policy, dictated by the Department of Children, Youth, and Families. This policy is available for your viewing at the main office.

Caregiver/Parent Requirements

Keep us informed – Tell us if your student has been exposed to or has symptoms of an illness or disease. Staff can then be prepared and alerted to the specifics of a particular disease. Our weekly newsletters may then be used to alert the Arbor community.

Report illnesses or diseases – Let us know when an illness or disease is diagnosed so we can take preventative measures to protect the health of the other students in our community. Please let us know about warning signs to look for in other students and any special precautions we might take. Please note there are specific illnesses/diseases that the State Department of Health requires us to communicate to classroom communities. If your child has an illness or disease that must be communicated, we will protect their anonymity and will not share the origins of onset.

Be certain that students are immunized – Check with your physician regularly to be certain your student receives immunizations as needed. **Be sure to provide us with updated immunization information on an ongoing basis, as required by State Licensing Regulations.**

Immunizations

Washington State Immunization Law requires each student to have a completed Certificate of Immunization Status (CIS) form on file before the start of the school year. This information is completed by the family at the time of registration. Please alert administration of any changes or required updates regarding immunization.

Communicable Diseases

Any student having symptoms of a known communicable disease will be excluded from school immediately. These include, but are not limited to:

- Covid-19
- strep throat
- chicken pox
- measles, mumps, rubella
- bacterial meningitis

- diphtheria
- hepatitis pneumonia
- conjunctivitis (pink eye)

Students diagnosed with a communicable disease may return to school **when cleared by a physician or a nurse practitioner** through written notification or as dictated by public health and/or licensing guidelines. If their illness requires antibiotics, they must be treated for 24 hours before returning to school (strep throat is an exception, as it requires 48 hours of treatment). Please report any communicable or contagious diseases immediately so we may inform other Arbor Montessori School families as well as contact the local health department for further guidance and information.

When to Keep Your Child at Home

We have outlined our policies and procedures regarding illness in regard to attendance.

Please keep your student home for the following:

Covid-19 - Any student who has Covid-19 must stay home until their symptoms are improving and they are fever-free for 24 hours without medication. When a student returns to school after having Covid-19, they are required to wear a mask for an additional five days.

Arbor is a mask-friendly school; families and staff members are welcome to wear masks. Masks may be required if there is an outbreak; we will follow governmental guidance if that occurs. If a child develops illness symptoms at school, their parent/caregiver will be called and they will be required to wear a mask while waiting to be picked up.

- fever (a temperature of 100.4°F or higher)
- cough
- shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- chills
- muscle pain
- headache
- runny or stuffy nose
- sore throat
- diarrhea
- vomiting
- new loss of taste or smell
- or other signs of new illness unrelated to a preexisting condition (such as seasonal allergies)

Fever – Any student with an oral temperature of 100.4°F or higher or underarm temperature of 99°F or higher, as well as behavior change or other signs and symptoms of illness (including sore throat, earache, headache, rash, vomiting, diarrhea shall be excluded from school until free of fever for 24 hours.

Vomiting – Any student having two or more occasions of vomiting will be excluded from school until having gone 24 hours without further occurrence.

Diarrhea – If a student has two or more loose stools in a day, we will exclude them from school until having gone 24 hours without further occurrences. Watery, loose stools generally indicate a

bacterium, virus, or parasite may be present. Students having diarrhea caused by medication or food intolerance should not be in school if their condition cannot be stabilized within 24 hours. If diarrhea is being controlled by Imodium, BRAT diet, etc., the stooling will slow, but the student may still be contagious, therefore should not be in school.

Eye Discharge, Pink Eye, Conjunctivitis – Any student having drainage, discharge, or pink and itchy eyes will be immediately excluded from the classroom. Pink Eye is conjunctivitis and can be caused by many bacteria and viruses. Students must be seen by a physician and treated for 24 hours prior to returning to school.

Head Lice – Any students suspected of having, or diagnosed with, head lice will be excluded from school until two treatments of RID, Kwell, or similar medications have been applied. They can also return to school after one treatment at a lice specialty facility such as “Lice to Know You” and they have provided a certificate of completion. We also require parents to wash all personal belongings prior to returning to school.

Respiratory or Nasal Drainage – Any student having progressive symptoms of a respiratory infection (green-yellow mucus, watery eyes, congestion, etc.) for three consecutive days will be excluded from school at our discretion. Any student having these kinds of symptoms must be able to participate in regular activities or they will be excluded from school.

Severe or Progressive Coughing – Any student having severe or prolonged coughing that interrupts their daily activities will be excluded from school at our discretion. If the student has a high-pitched, croupy sound associated with the cough, we will require medical advice prior to the administration of any cough medicines or prescriptions, and we will exclude them from school until symptoms disappear or stabilize.

Rash- Not associated with heat, diapering or allergic reaction

Open Sores or Wounds – discharging bodily fluids that cannot be adequately covered with a waterproof dressing or mouth sores with drooling

Attendance is at our discretion. Arbor Montessori School may exclude any student from school whom we feel is physically or emotionally unable to participate in daily activities, or who requires one-on-one attention that may compromise the learning of others.

Participation without Restriction

Any student unable to participate in regular daily activities may be excluded from school at our discretion. If a student needs special attention, has severe diet restrictions, needs to stay indoors, or has limited activity, their situation may be such that the wellbeing of other students in the class is significantly compromised. Thus, we feel it appropriate for students to be kept at home until such time that they are able to participate in regular activities. If your student becomes ill during the day, they will be removed from the group and you or someone on your emergency contact list will be contacted to pick up your student within the hour. As many of our families include working families, it is advisable to have an alternate care plan in place should your student become ill.

Medication Management

Medications needed by a student during the school day will be dispensed by a staff member according to the directions received from the student's physician and/or parent included within the **Medication Authorization Form**.

A **Medication Authorization Form** and communication note must be filled out by the caregiver for both prescription and non-prescription medicines before they will be administered. In addition, a **Medication Authorization Form** and communication note must also include a physician's signature for all prescription medicines as well as non-prescription medicines not mentioned below before they will be administered. This form will be kept on file and a copy will be given to the student's teacher.

Medicines will be inaccessible to students.

Prescription medication must be in the original bottle or container from the pharmacy, and must have the prescription label present. The label must include the physician's name and contact information, student's full name, date the prescription was filled, dosage, legible instructions regarding frequency to be administered as well as length of time to give medication, expiration date and instructions on storage. **Note:** Our policy limits our administration of any medication to two times per day. If your child takes regular medication, a 3 day supply is required to be provided to Arbor and stored in the office in case of disaster requiring the child to remain in care past usual hours. A **3-Day Critical Medication Authorization Form** must also accompany the prescription, and requires a signature from a healthcare professional.

Non-prescription (over the counter) oral medications must be in the original packaging. It needs to be labeled with the students full name and accompanied with a Medication Authorization Form that has the expiration date, medical need, dosage amount, age and length of time to give the medication. It must have instructions on the label, or caregivers must provide a medical professional's note.

Other nonprescription medication including vitamins, herbal supplements, fluoride supplements, homeopathic or naturopathic medication and teething gel or tablets (please note amber necklaces for teething are prohibited) must have written authorization from a caregiver OR a healthcare provider IF the item does not include age, expiration date, dosage amount and length of time to give the medication.

Non Medical items such as diaper ointments, sunscreen, lip balm, lotion, hand sanitizer with alcohol (2 years old +) and fluoride toothpaste can be applied with an annual authorization from a student's caregiver.

Homemade medications cannot be accepted or administered on campus by staff at any time.

Unused medications will be sent home or discarded.

We maintain written records of all medications we administer.

Staff members must wash hands before preparing medications and after giving medications.

Blanket authorizations from a physician are allowed **only** for certain chronic or life-threatening conditions requiring medication. These authorizations must include a signed statement from the student's physician or a prescription indicating that the treatment is for the above-mentioned condition (administration of non-aspirin pain relievers does not fall into this category). Authorization will not be taken over the phone.

We may request a physician's authorization for any medications that we are uncomfortable or hesitant to administer. We also reserve the right to refuse the administration of certain medications even with a physician's authorization where and when we feel uncomfortable assuming responsibility.

Injuries and Accidents

If any minor injuries should happen to a child while at Arbor Montessori School, an **Injury Report Form** will be emailed via Transparent Classroom detailing the events that led to the injury and the care administered. In the event of a more serious injury or any injury to the head or face, we will contact you immediately. Please note parents are required to sign the injury report should you visit a healthcare professional seeking treatment for any injury that occurred on our campus. In certain cases, we are also required by Washington State to notify our Licensor as well as CPS.

Minor Injuries

In the case of minor injuries such as small cuts, bruises, strains, or bumps, Arbor Montessori School's staff trained in first aid will take the appropriate steps for treating your student's injury. An **Injury Report Form** will be filled out by a staff member and emailed to the parent/caregiver. We will inform you immediately if the injury requires any medical attention.

Major Emergencies

In the event of a life-threatening or major medical emergency to a student at our school, one staff member will remain with the injured or ill student while another calls 911. The parent will be notified as soon as medical care has been obtained. If Arbor Montessori School is unable to reach the parent, we will contact the emergency contacts, in the order listed, on the **Emergency Card**. Transportation to a care facility will be arranged through a rescue team or the student's parents. If at all possible, transportation will default to the requested facility located on the student's Emergency Card.

Please keep the school informed with updated phone numbers and emergency contacts.

Allergies/Sensitivities/Dietary Restrictions

Parents must notify and keep us updated of any allergies, sensitivities and dietary restrictions that their student has. Annual allergy information is collected with the enrollment packets each year. If you need to update your student's forms, please download a copy in the **Classroom Information Section** located in Transparent Classroom.

Field Trips

Elementary students regularly participate in educational field trips for students. These field trips add another exciting dimension to our daily curriculum and thematic program. Occasionally, Kindergartners go on field trips as well.

Families are given advance notification of field trips. You must notify the school well in advance in writing (email to Nicole and the child's teacher). A child who skips a field trip must stay home for the day; we do not have replacement programming when a class is off campus.

Upon enrollment, we require parents to sign a **Field Trip/Walking Field Trip Authorization** form that allows students to participate in off-campus field trips and walking field trips around Sammamish and the greater Seattle and Eastside areas. For particular excursions, additional specific information – such as special admission costs, lunch requirements, or drop-off and pick-up locations other than the school – will be sent to parents as needed.

Safety during field trips is of the utmost importance. Arbor Montessori School faculty and staff are trained in first aid and CPR. Our faculty and staff take frequent head counts of the students when arriving, departing, and during field trips.

Arbor Montessori School-Provided Transportation

Transportation will be provided by chartered buses, public transportation, or approved parent drivers. All parent drivers are required to have copies of their valid driver's license and current insurance information on file with the school, as well as filling out a background information form and authorization for a criminal history background check through Washington State Patrol. Families are notified in advance regarding the mode of transportation to be used on field trips.

When using parent or staff drivers, these important laws are always followed:

- Children under the age of 13 may not ride in the front seat of a vehicle.
- All children who are less than 4'9" tall must ride in an approved booster seat that is provided by the parent.
- Talking on the phone, texting, or accessing the internet is prohibited while driving Arbor Montessori students.

Note to parent drivers: Transportation provided for field trips is between the school and the destination only; there can be no "frolic and detour" stops for snacks, meals, or other treats for the students riding in a parent's car.

Students must be on time for a field trip in order to take advantage of school-provided transportation. Students arriving late for a field trip must be taken to the field trip by their parent, or check in at the main office where they will be placed with another class for the duration of their class' outing. If the parent decides to drive the tardy student to the field trip location, the parent is responsible for locating the class and turning custody of the student over to the teacher. Students arriving late are permitted to use Arbor Montessori School's transportation back to the school at the end of the field trip.

On occasion, parents will be asked to transport their students directly to and from a field trip location without dropping their student off at school first.

All costs associated with a field trip are the responsibility of the parent, and will be included on a family's monthly invoice. The exception to this is transportation; Arbor covers the cost of charter bus transportation.

Building Security

For security purposes and to ensure the safety of our students, all entrances to the school are locked after morning arrival. Arbor Montessori School's families are given a door code to use to enter the building during school hours. This code only works on the main entrance doors to the Rainier and the Mt. Baker buildings. ***This code must not be shared with students at any time. This is an adult-only code.***

Emergency Preparedness

Arbor Montessori School is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for our students, families, and staff. We understand that in order to consistently maintain the high-quality standards we have adopted, we must have appropriate systems in place. Every family is provided a copy of our Emergency Preparedness Manual within our annual enrollment packet and signs an acknowledgement of receipt. We also have Disaster Preparedness Plans and Emergency Procedures posted in every classroom.

Emergency Closure

Occasionally we may have to close school because of loss of water or power/heat or sudden snowstorms. If we are in the midst of a school day, closure decisions are made only if we will compromise the health and safety of children by remaining open. We will alert families to come and pick up their child on such occasions. If parents/guardians are unavailable, emergency contacts will be called. Staff will always remain at the school until the last parents have arrived.

In the event of an emergency, we ask that you try not to flood our phone lines immediately in case of a major widespread emergency such as an earthquake. We need to keep our phones open so that we can contact the families of anyone who might be injured or to get help.

All students of all ages must be signed out at a central location before they are taken home in an emergency. Please understand the importance of doing this and help us by being calm and patient. We need to keep track of everyone and relay messages to others in a family who are equally concerned about the whereabouts of their children. Make sure you have as many people as possible authorized to pick your child up in the event of the colossal traffic jams that occur in widespread emergency.

Arbor Montessori School's staff will remain on site and provide assistance until all students have been retrieved by their caregivers or other authorized personnel, or until everyone is instructed to leave. Should we request that you pick up your student, please come to the main office. Please remember to bring identification. Our staff members may not recognize you and will not release your student unless proper identification is presented. No student will be dismissed on their own accord. In the event that you are not able to return for your student, and you have no alternate person to send, please contact us on our emergency cell number at (425) 647-4685. This way, we can plan accordingly for those students that may require longer term assistance.

Fire, Earthquake, and Safety Drills

Fire drills are conducted at Arbor Montessori School on a monthly basis at various times of the day. Each room has an outlined evacuation plan and a designated meeting area outside the school. Staff members

are trained in evacuation procedures. Fire equipment found in our schools is checked by staff on a monthly basis and by independent services on an annual basis.

To provide students, families, and staff with guidelines on how to react appropriately and confidently if an earthquake takes place during school hours, we have implemented an earthquake preparedness program. Emergency supplies including food, shelter, tools, and a means of communication are stored in a common area, easily accessible. Earthquake drills, in addition to fire drills, are held twice a year and practiced separately.

Safety Drills are held biannually. While it is a reality that practicing safety drills at schools in America are necessary, we work incredibly hard to acknowledge and be cognizant of the emotional damage these drills can cause. The real effectiveness of safety drills at our campus is having children find an adult in a hurry, move as a group, and be able to follow any direction without question. We practice these in a variety of ways, and make it fun. These drills translate to many different situations, including field trips, etc.

For more detailed information on Arbor's Incident Command and Disaster/Emergency plans, please refer to your **Annual Emergency Preparedness Manual** in your enrollment packet located in the forms section of Transparent Classroom.

Communication from the School

School Newsletters

At Arbor Montessori School, our weekly all-school newsletter, called the Arbor-Read-Em Leaflet, is emailed every Sunday throughout the school year. The Leaflet keeps the Arbor community informed about school events, important parent information, calendar reminders, enrollment and staffing updates, as well as upcoming areas of study and ways that families can supplement learning at home.

Special notifications and reminders from the main office are sent to families in the Leaflet, through Transparent Classroom announcement, or emailed when appropriate.

Teachers send out weekly Friday updates to their classrooms through Transparent Classroom. These weekly updates share curriculum information and reminders.

Parent Visitation

Parents are welcome to visit Arbor Montessori School at any time to speak with staff or observe their students in the classroom. All visitors must check in at the main office and identify themselves when visiting the school. You will be given a visitor badge that must be worn while you are on school property.

Classroom Visitation/Observation Procedures

In an effort to provide normalcy in the Montessori learning environment and out of respect for the students, teachers, and materials in the environment, we ask all parent/caregiver observers, volunteers and visitors to abide by the following procedures during their time in the classroom.

- Always refrain from interrupting teachers and students. Wait at the entrance of the room until the teacher sees you and comes over to you.

- Please enter and leave the room as quietly as possible so as not to disturb the lessons in progress.
- Please do not comment on a student's work or effort unless invited to do so by the student.
- Please help keep the room a peaceful one by using a quiet voice. Refrain from talking across the room. When engaged in conversation, please do so in close proximity to the person to whom you are speaking.
- While the students in our Montessori environments may appear active and free to move around the room, this is what we term "movement with purpose" and is part of their work cycle. We ask that adults keep their movement to a minimum.
- While the Montessori materials are attractive and fascinating, they are handled and used in a very particular manner. Please ask the teacher or assistant if you have any questions or comments about any of the materials you observe. They will be more than happy to demonstrate them to you.
- Trained teachers have carefully prepared the Montessori environment. Please refrain from moving materials or furniture from their designated areas.

Volunteer Opportunities

Field Trip Volunteer & Chaperone Procedures

These guidelines explain school expectations for volunteers and chaperones on field trips to ensure student safety and to maximize student, volunteer, and chaperone participation on field trips. Continued involvement of parents in school activities enables us to enrich, strengthen, and expand learning opportunities for our students.

Volunteers must:

- Complete a background check authorization and all other volunteer and field trip related forms.
- Be respectful, cooperative, and supportive.
- Ensure the safety of all students in your group at all times, especially in your vehicle.
- Understand the expectations and adhere to them at all times.
- Please use positive discipline approaches, including using encouragement and consistency.
- Refer all problems and concerns to the teacher as soon as possible.
- Avoid giving negative feedback or punitive consequences to students.
- Remind students about behavioral and participation expectations (whisper reminders as needed to individuals).
- Acknowledge appropriate student behavior (e.g. "Lee, I appreciate how quietly you are waiting...").
- Refrain from physically touching students.
- Follow the "rule of three" which requires that an adult volunteer never place themselves in a situation where they are alone with a student. There should always be two adults + one student or one adult + two students.
- Ensure that the students in your group stay with you and your group at all times, unless directed by a teacher.
- Avoid gift shops, cafes, snack bars, and other places where students might purchase something. Student purchases are prohibited unless planned in advance and authorized by the teacher.
- Refrain from purchasing anything for a student or loaning a student money.

- Keep all student information, observations, and anecdotes about individual students confidential. You are welcome to speak directly to the teacher about what you have seen, but do not share any information about students with other people.

Students are expected to:

- Use appropriate language and be courteous.
- Keep hands to themselves and off others.
- Follow all school rules related to safety:
 - Respect yourself and keep yourself safe.
 - Respect others and help them stay safe.
 - Respect the environment and keep it safe.
- Leave money at home, unless the teacher sends explicit
- Leave all electronic devices (phones and other internet-connected technologies) at home.
- Stay with their adult chaperones at all times.
- Request permission and an adult escort before going to the public restroom.

Event Volunteers

There are many opportunities for parents to be involved at Arbor Montessori School. Whether you prefer to volunteer by being at the school or working from home, for only a few hours a month or for many hours on a particular event, by working with the students or with other dedicated parents, there is a role (or two!) for you to play in your student's future academic achievement.

Please see us at the beginning of the year, or whenever you have some time to give, to learn about the opportunities available.

Events

This is an overview of Arbor's traditions and family events throughout the school year (subject to change).

Date	Event
August	
	Elementary Summer Social
	Toddler Family Park Meet Up
	Classroom Meet & Greets for Primary & Elementary
September	
	First Day of School
	Parent/Caregiver Orientation
	Back to School Nights: Toddler, Primary, Lower and Upper Elementary
	Back to School Family Carnival
	International Day of Peace Celebration
	Individual School Pictures

	K-Leader Parent/Caregiver Orientation
October	
	Harvest Food Drive
	Caregiver Connections Curriculum Nights: Math & Literacy
	Family Tree: Parent Workshop
	Conferences
	All-School and Class Pictures (plus individual make-up photos)
	Classroom Diwali Celebrations
	Halloween Parade (theme: your favorite character from a book)
November	
	Bring Your Guest to Work Day for K-6th
	Talents & Tastes - Family Potluck and Student Talent Show
	6th Grade Information Night
December	
	Bookfest
	Bookfest Family Night
	All-School Pajama Day
January	
	Kindergarten Information Night
	Preview (Open House for Prospective Families)
	Sci-Fest (Kindergarten-6th Grade)
	Elementary Information Night
	End of Semester 1
February	
	Conferences
	Lunar New Year Parade
Feb. 9-11	NatureBridge for Upper Elementary
	K-Leader Drama Intensive
	MidWinter Break - Elementary Camp & Primary/Toddler Childcare
March	
	K-Leader Performance
	Elementary Play Auditions and Rehearsals begin
April	
	Spring Break - Elementary Camp & Primary/Toddler Childcare

	Earth Day Campus Tree Planting & Environmental Ed stations
	Conferences
May	
	Diaper Derby
	Teacher Appreciation Week
	Toddler Transition Parent/Caregiver Meeting
	Elementary Spring Musical: A Midsummer Night's Dream
	Family Appreciation Week
June	
	Spring Sing Along & Green Team Plant Sale
	Field Day
	Closing Ceremony & Graduation
	Last Day of School

Religious activities

The program offered by Arbor Montessori School is secular in nature. We do not plan, organize or advocate any religious activities such as grace before meals, religious stories or songs, or provide any religious instruction to the students. Our curriculum, however, does respect cultural diversity and recognizes there will be times throughout the year that religious customs may be introduced by students or families during the course of classroom discussions, field trips taken, literature read, or community acknowledgement.

Helping Your Student Succeed

*Our care of the child should be governed not by the desire to 'make them learn things,'
but by the endeavor to keep burning within them the light which is called intelligence.*

Dr. Maria Montessori

By making the decision to send your child to Arbor Montessori School for an outstanding Montessori education, you've already taken a critical step toward ensuring their future success in academia and beyond. Your ability to influence your child's school experience does not end when you pull away from the Arbor parking lot.

Studies have shown that three home-related activities have an enormous impact on a student's success:

- Eating meals together and talking about your day, thoughts, ideas, and plans.
- Playing together – even just rolling around on the ground.
- Reading together – 15-30 minutes a day. Read to children of all ages – high school students who were read to as young children show higher levels of both comprehension and appreciation for reading.

Studies are in agreement that these activities increase important foundational skills such as critical thinking, vocabulary and literacy, and executive function.

Scope & Sequence



Here is a [live link](#) to the Arbor Scope and Sequence.

The school-wide Scope & Sequence provides an overview of the Arbor Montessori School curriculum, highlighting its scope and sequence across developmental levels. It outlines the progression of knowledge from one stage to the next and delves into the depth of each subject area.

At Arbor, we embrace our mission statement, “Guiding the future within the child,” by preparing students for life through a rigorous academic program that cultivates creativity, communication, critical thinking, independence, and confidence. This holistic approach supports each student’s academic, physical, emotional, social, and moral growth. Recognizing that children reach developmental milestones at their own pace, Montessori lessons are introduced when students are ready and have built the necessary foundational skills.

Unlike traditional grade-level organization, the Montessori curriculum is structured by strands—clusters of related concepts and skills—and the sequence in which they are taught. This allows students to explore skills and ideas over several years, accommodating their individual learning journeys. Lessons are presented as students demonstrate readiness, with a framework guiding the skills and concepts most students are expected to master within a general age or grade range. This structure ensures a personalized and developmentally appropriate experience for every child.

At Arbor Montessori School, we embrace an inclusive approach that meets the diverse needs of every student, recognizing that each child learns and develops at their own pace. Our individualized expectations and child-centered curriculum ensure that we provide both remediation and acceleration to support every learner. Teachers carefully observe and assess each child’s abilities, interests, and developmental needs, tailoring lessons and materials to match their current stage of growth.

For students needing additional support, remediation is seamlessly integrated into the classroom environment through hands-on materials, small-group instruction, and one-on-one guidance. This approach allows children to revisit foundational skills or concepts without feeling isolated or left behind. For those who demonstrate readiness to advance, we offer accelerated opportunities that encourage deeper exploration and challenge, ensuring they remain engaged and motivated in their learning.

This flexibility in addressing individual needs impacts how students progress through the curriculum's scope and sequence. Movement is based on mastery rather than age or grade level, ensuring that children fully understand and internalize concepts before moving on. By prioritizing the needs of each child, we foster a love of learning, confidence, and a sense of accomplishment, creating an inclusive environment where all students can thrive.

We hope this Curriculum Scope and Sequence document provides a shared language for understanding and discussing Montessori exercises, fostering meaningful conversations among students, parents/caregivers, and faculty about the dynamic learning happening in our classrooms.

Program Overviews

Toddler Program Overview - 15 months to 3 years

Each classroom contains four essential elements: people, tools, ideas, and nature. These elements for self-selected activities seek to encourage and engage each student's physical, mental, emotional, and social being. In the toddler room, we foster this growth through guiding each student toward independence and control of his body. The toddler's first lesson is learning to separate from their parents. They participate in an "easing in" program called a slow start, where they attend class with a parent for a few days until they understand that this new environment and these new people are safe and can meet their daily needs. Students begin to form bonds of attachment to the adults in the classroom and start to tackle their physical needs. From exchanging their outdoor shoes for indoor slippers, they move on to putting their things away in their cubbies and then the favorite morning activity – a snack.

Snack is not just delicious - it is full of lessons. The students learn what they like, how much is enough, leaving some for their friends, how to pour and carry a glass of water or milk. What comes first, putting down the glass or pulling out the chair? Cleaning up spills is often a part of this learning activity.

When the students are ready to set off into the rest of the classroom, they are greeted by a myriad of developmentally appropriate works from which to choose. The teacher is a keen observer, and based on each student's interaction with the works on the shelf, ensures that the next appropriate work is available. The students are not "taught" how to use each item on the shelf, rather they are allowed to explore and interact with each until they ultimately discover the intended purpose of the work. In this way, they are displaying their development and growth, which tells the teacher what each student is ready for next.

While exploring the classroom, the students are provided with opportunities to interact with their peers and the adults in the room. This interaction provides the lessons of grace and courtesy. "Excuse me" "my work", "no, thank you," "yes, please" and "help please" are phrases often heard in the toddler classroom. These are not the only phrases, however. Teachers name emotions, pictures, puzzles, and other items in the classroom and read countless books, passing on to the toddlers a wealth of vocabulary that they then use to clearly articulate their feelings, experiences, and needs.

This independent work time is followed by circle time, where the students are exposed to group dynamics, literacy, and number play. The various books and fingerplays, movement activities, and songs that the students engage in at circle introduce them to a wide variety of rhyming games, prediction skills, recall of events, cause and effect, and following directions.

Circle is followed by the process of preparing for and venturing outside. Toileting is always a part of this process. The toddlers engage in the process by removing their shoes, pulling down and up their pants, helping to fasten the diaper, and trying out the toilet. Once they are ready, the toddlers thoroughly enjoy running, riding, sliding, and climbing on the playground.

Having enjoyed their outside time, the toddlers return to the classroom for lunch. Changing their shoes once more, putting away their coats, washing their hands, and getting their lunch box takes a lot of different skills and a great deal of concentration for a toddler. The complexity of this process is rewarded by their delicious lunch with friends at their own pace, in their own place. Once more, upon the completion of their meal, they are responsible for cleaning up, taking one more trip to the toilet, and then preparing for nap time.

Sleeping away from family can be very stressful, and our toddlers are guided gently through self-soothing until they fall asleep. When waking, the students need to quietly re-engage as their friends continue sleeping. They spend their afternoon occupied with independent work, snack, and outdoor play until their parents return and they can rejoin their family. The skills of calming themselves, being considerate of others, and controlling their bodies prepares them the freedom that comes with independence - the primary room.

Primary Program Overview - 2.5-6 years

In the primary community, students are greeted personally each morning by the teachers. Since the core of the program is focusing on the child's needs, this provides the teacher an opportunity to assess emotional readiness for learning that day. The environment is peaceful and the teacher has researched, studied, and strategically prepared and placed materials relating to practical life, art, use of the senses, math, language, science, and geography. Within this structure, the students constructively choose what they will do. Each child works independently, or with a friend, until they exhaust their interest and return their work to the shelf, ready for the next student. Next, they may be invited by the teacher to receive a lesson, approach the teacher requesting a lesson, join a friend for a snack, or simply move on to another work. They are safely growing within a thoughtfully arranged environment engineered specifically for their developmental needs. By making their own choices, they are able to focus, concentrate, and develop greater powers of discrimination, observation, awareness, control, coordination, and judgment. Free to collaborate with friends, they are experiencing what current neurological and cognitive sciences conclude are best educational practices.

The distinct advantages that Montessori education gives students are self-esteem, confidence, and independence beyond their years. Children are strongly self-motivated, with a keen interest in learning and an awareness of the value of a good education. This is most obvious in their unique ability to share with others their knowledge, tools, and skills.

The three year olds have a very special place in the primary classroom. At this age, they are full of personality and are determined to be independent. They have a great desire to prove that they are equal to any task. Our classrooms are a perfect match for their budding talents and splendid egos. Concepts are broken down into their smallest incremental steps, so that lessons are easily imitated. Much of the learning done in the first year is indirect, or by immersion. The students may sit next to an older student performing a more complex task and just watch for a while. If they choose, they may spend time looking at the order of the materials on the shelf, making sense of the different areas of the classrooms. Eventually, they will choose their own work and apply a great deal of energy and concentration to it.

Once they begin to mimic their older counterparts, they will know that their time to be the "oldest ones" is not very far off.

Four year olds come in knowing the classroom and the works. This is the year of exploration and explosion into learning. They have learned the way of the classroom and are ready to take on the world. Moving through the curriculum effortlessly and continuously, they truly are the worker bees of the class. As spring approaches, they are ready for more ambitious projects. Four year olds provide older students an opportunity to reinforce their mastery through teaching to others. Peer teaching gives students a chance to clarify their own knowledge, while also gaining the ability to relate concepts to others.

Primary students eagerly wait two to three years to be one of the K Leaders in their classroom community. The third year, which we refer to as the Year of Leadership, gives them the opportunity to grow emotionally in ways that complement their burgeoning personalities. This is the year when their earlier experiences are internalized and reinforced. K Leaders are introduced to the concept of taking responsibility for the management of their own work through written work records and work plans. They are expected to practice with language and math materials every day, along with many of the other activities from which they can also choose. Additionally, the older students give help spontaneously to the younger ones, providing inspiration and leading by example in the classroom. During this year, the K Leaders participate in special programming that helps them achieve their potential while preparing for Elementary. By the end of the Year of Leadership, our K Leaders will often have developed academic skills that may be beyond those of students enrolled in local, traditional schools. That being said, academic progress is not our exclusive goal. Our real hope is that our students have an incredible sense of self-confidence, an enthusiasm for learning, and a feeling of being closely bonded to their teachers and classmates.

Elementary Program Overview - First through Sixth Grade

Arbor embraces Dr. Montessori's vision about the foundation of education at the Elementary years from three of her books: *To Educate the Human Potential*, *From Childhood to Adolescence*, and *Spontaneous Activity in Education*.

The passage to the second level of education is the passage from the sensorial, material level to the abstract. The need for abstraction and intellectual activity makes itself felt around the seventh year.

Before age seven, the student focuses himself on a sensorial exploration and classification of the relationships between concrete objects - not exploration on the intellectual plane. The three- to seven-year-old generally is content to know WHAT something is, along with a simplistic explanation of its function. The older student is oriented toward intellectual discovery and investigation.

In the second period, the student needs wider boundaries for his social experiences. He needs to establish social relationships in a larger society and the traditional schools, as they have been conceived for so long, can no longer be sufficient for him. He feels the closed environment as a constraint, which is why children of this age may no longer go to school enthusiastically. He prefers to catch frogs or play with his friends without adult

supervision. An education that suppresses the true nature of the student is an education that leads to the development of unhappy and socially immature adults.

It is at age seven that one can note the beginning of an orientation toward the judgment of acts as right or wrong, fair or unfair... This preoccupation belongs to a very special sensitivity, the conscience. The seven- to twelve-year-old period, then, constitutes one of particular importance for moral education.... The adult must be aware of the evolution that is occurring in the mind of the student at this time and adapt his methods to conform to it.

These three characteristics – the student's need to escape the closed environment, the passage of the mind to the abstract, and the birth in him of a moral sense – serve as the basis for a scheme at the Elementary Level.

The elementary classrooms at Arbor Montessori School have three basic elements to carry out this scheme:

- Mastery of Fundamental Skills and Basic Core Knowledge
- Dr. Montessori's "Great Lessons" which are the foundation of Cosmic Education
- Individually chosen research
- Social and emotional development

Montessori's scheme evolved out of the European tradition of academic excellence and offers a rigorous course of study even in the Elementary years. Students explore the realms of mathematics, science, technology, the work of myth, great literature, history, world geography, civics, economics, anthropology, and basic organization of human societies. Their studies also cover the basics found in traditional curriculum, such as the memorization of math facts, spelling lessons, and the study of vocabulary, grammar, sentence analysis, creative and expository writing, and library research skills.

The Great Lessons are five key areas of interconnected studies traditionally presented to all elementary students in the form of inspiring stories and related experiences and research projects. They include the story of how the world came to be, the development of life on Earth, the story of humankind, the development of language and writing, and the development of mathematics. Each lesson is intended to give students a "cosmic" perspective of the Earth and humanity's place within the cosmos. The lessons, studies, and projects surrounding each of the Great Lessons normally span many months, and the questions that the students pose, and their efforts to find the answers to their own questions, may continue for many years.

Students do not use textbooks; instead they are encouraged to explore topics that capture their imagination using independent reading and library research. Beginning by using an encyclopedia to find answers to a list of questions prepared by their teachers, the students are taught how to use reference materials, libraries, and the internet to gather information and uncover facts. Students gather information; assemble reports, portfolios, and books of their own; and teach what they have learned to their friends. Their oral presentations and written research reports grow in sophistication and complexity over the years.

We continue the multi-age class groupings at the elementary level for several reasons. The students are allowed to progress through the curriculum at their own pace, so there is no reason to group students according to one grade level. With a mixed age peer group, the students can always find someone at

their level to work with. In line with recent brain research, the mixed age groupings offer the younger students constant stimulation by the interesting work in which the older students are engaged.

Our curriculum is integrated. The subjects weave in and out of each other. Literature, art, music, drama, history, social issues, political science, economics, architecture, science, and the study of technology all complement one another in the elementary curriculum.

Elementary students are ready to take on a much higher level of challenge and responsibility. The elementary classroom is a small community run almost entirely by the students. They keep the room in order, care for classroom animals, tend to the plants in our gardens, setup for lunch, organize special events such as the Harvest Festival, and generally move about the school much more independently. Whereas the primary students enjoyed washing dishes and scrubbing tables for the sheer joy of the process, our Elementary students simply work to get the job done. Knowing they are responsible for their classroom, and to some degree the entire school, gives them a tremendous sense of pride.

Homework

There is no homework, per se, assigned to students of Arbor Montessori School. Primary students are provided with the resources, time, and teacher or peer support to complete works within the classroom. Occasionally, families are asked to participate in special projects that may require some additional support from home. Elementary students are given time to work on projects in class. Anything that they do not finish in the allotted time may be taken home for completion. In addition, students are given spelling and vocabulary work to accomplish at home. Daily reading is, of course, an essential component of learning. It is possible that larger projects, especially for the Upper Elementary students, occasionally may require work to be done outside of school hours.

Parents who wish to expand their child's after-school learning are encouraged to check the weekly newsletters for tips on reinforcing education at home, and to look into world language, sports, music, or artistic enrichment programs, according to their student's talents and interests.

Benefits of the Multi-Age Program

Flexible Groupings

In a mixed age class, there are many options for grouping. We can group according to skill, interest, or learning style. We can group heterogeneously with mixed ages, increasing the learning within the group. Grouping patterns change throughout the day, so an individual student may be part of three or four different groups in the course of the day or week. Most importantly, the groups are fluid and temporary; students do not get locked into working with one group for a whole year.

Flexible & Continuous Learning Progression

Since students learn at different rates, the continuous progress model assures that all can have appropriate instruction and make progress, regardless of ability.

Expanded & Flexible Curriculum

Many different materials can be made available for a variety of skill levels and learning styles. Efficient use of time through thematic integration can leave time in the schedule for extras such as foreign language, arts, keyboarding, technology, etc.

Role Modeling

Younger students observe older students doing sophisticated tasks and showing responsible behaviors. A peer guidance system allows younger students to have a mentor for tasks that may be difficult to do alone, such as planning. Many younger students absorb academic concepts from watching and working next to their older classmates.

Learning Leadership

Positive peer tutoring relationships are fostered. Students are given opportunities to teach something they have learned to their peers. This cements learning in the students. Every student has many opportunities to develop leadership skills, rather than just a few (as in a single - grade class).

Responsibility

Students develop independence in a systematic way. Goal-setting, time management, jobs and routines, action-consequence recognition, and opportunities for classroom responsibility are available daily.

Cooperation

Students develop the skills to work together on academic and social needs, as well as the care of the classroom. As age barriers drop, there is an increase in mixed-age relationships. Increased playground harmony is one of the benefits, as students relate to each other in a more positive way. Cooperation becomes a natural part of all learning situations.

Closer to the Real World Model

This multi-age approach parallels the model seen in a family or business environment, where cooperative relationships flourish. In the real world, we don't segregate by age; we have tutors, mentors, apprentices, assistants, and practicums in all aspects of life. We want to develop these responses earlier. The teenage years and early adulthood can be less tumultuous if young people have had years of cooperation and nurturing leading up to them.

Class Stability

In Montessori classrooms, the oldest move on, leaving the younger ones to stay and become the "veterans." They help new students adjust. Most of the class knows the routines, materials, and where things are kept. Therefore, the startup pains at the beginning of the year are greatly reduced.

Social Interaction

Students make friends across grade level lines, thus having many more choices in friendships. Students are allowed to be together in many different configurations, and they are no longer isolated. More opportunities are given to lead, follow, share, nurture, and collaborate.

Equal Chances for Recognition

No matter what their abilities, all students can make progress and have achievements celebrated. Everyone experiences success equally, because success is measured by individual achievement of goals and individual progress along the continuum.

Conferences, Evaluations & Reporting

At Arbor Montessori School, we use a variety of assessment tools to help us evaluate how our students are progressing. Some of these are strictly for internal use in calibrating students' needs, while some are shared with parents. We have a policy of not publishing test results for the student body or particular grades or classes.

Parent/teacher conferences – There are three parent/teacher conferences during the school year, in October, February and April (please check this year's school calendar for specific dates). You will be contacted by the school to schedule an appointment to meet with your student's teacher on these days. All conference appointments must be scheduled by end of business on the preceding day; conference times cannot be reserved or rearranged on the day of the conference because teachers are fully occupied in conferences and are not able to manage schedule changes during that day. Should you wish to speak with your student's teacher on some other occasion, please email them and arrange for a mutually convenient time to meet.

Track My Progress – Two to three times throughout the school year, teachers administer the online Track My Progress Assessment to First-Sixth Grade students in order to get a snapshot of their performance in reading and math. Track My Progress is a norm-referenced formative assessment tool that provides the teachers and administrators with information about the child's demonstration of skills and understanding compared to the Common Core State Standards. Our teachers and administrators use the reports to help tailor the classroom experience to each student's particular needs.

StarCBM - New in 2025-26, the reading specialist will administer the literacy and dyslexia screening tool StarCBM to Kindergarten and Elementary students. **Star CBM** stands for **STAR Curriculum-Based Measurement**, a tool in the STAR assessment suite (by Renaissance Learning) that provides brief, research-based measures of foundational reading for young learners. StarCBM reports will be provided to parents.

Progress Reports – These are shared with Toddler, Primary & Elementary families twice per year at the end of each semester.

Weapons Policy

Arbor Montessori School is a gun-free school. Washington law supports expulsion from school, as well as referral to the criminal justice or juvenile delinquency system, for any student who brings a weapon to school. Our school policy follows state law and requires expulsion for look-alike weapons.

A situation in which a student who makes a serious threat of violence against the school, its property, or any member of the community will be addressed immediately by the Head of School and the Executive Director. To determine the seriousness of a student's action and the necessary response, several key factors are considered including the student's age, any history of aggressive behavior, and the student's ability to follow through with the threat. At a minimum, the student's parents will be contacted. Depending on the nature of the threat, other options also include informing the police, which will put the student on notice that making a serious threat of violence or use of a weapon is a serious issue.

Any student who brings a pocket knife, squirt gun, paintball gun, and/or any other play gun to school will have the item confiscated immediately and will be suspended from school for one week. The student is

still responsible for completing class assignments. Suspension requires a student to be in attendance at the beginning of the school day. The student will be given assignments for the day and will then leave the school premises. The student is then required to return to school at dismissal and turn in the completed work for the day.

Other Policies

The following publications are available in binders in the main office:

Classroom and School Pet Policy

We are required by state policy to notify you of any risks that may exist as a result of having pets in our classrooms. Our pet policy guidelines are provided with our annual enrollment paperwork. Record logs are kept to document cleaning and feeding. If you have any questions or concerns, please call the school office.

Pest Control Policy

We are required by state law to inform you of our pest control procedure. Generally, we do not use pesticides when we professionally treat any area of the school, including landscape areas. However, if necessary, pesticides will be applied on Friday evening when students are not present. For a review of the school's pesticide policies, please see the handbook kept at the Primary Building reception desk. If you have any questions or concerns, please call the school office.

Disaster Plan

In case of disasters, all classroom staff will assist students in evacuation of the building via the established route practiced during monthly drills. Teaching staff will take daily roll sheets, first aid supplies, and emergency contact sheets to the evacuation spot. Administration will search the building, including all restrooms. In the case of fire, the teaching staff will assist the students to designated areas on the playground where attendance will be taken. In case of an earthquake, students will be instructed to drop and cover until the shaking stops as practiced during monthly drills.

If there is damage to the building, everyone will evacuate using the practiced route if accessible or an alternative route if needed. Teaching staff will administer first aid as necessary while assistants care for the other students. Administration will be responsible for searching the building and contacting parents using the emergency contact lists, via cell phones if necessary. Emergency food, water, and other supplies are located outside the building and will be made available as needed. For a complete review of our emergency plan, please see the Disaster Plan located at both of the reception desks. If you have any questions or concerns, please call the school office.

A copy of our Emergency Preparedness Manual is provided to families in our Annual Enrollment Paperwork.

Care Plan

No student will be excluded on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, or natural origin. All Arbor Montessori School staff share your concern for your student's health and safety. In addition, state law mandates that you must immediately report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services or King County Police. School personnel may not be able to notify parents when the police or

Child Protective Services are called about possible child abuse, neglect, or exploitation. This depends on the recommendation of Child Protective Services.

Illegal Drugs, Alcohol, Cannabis, & Tobacco Policy

Drugs, tobacco, and cannabis are prohibited at all times on campus and at any school event. Alcohol may not be served at any school event where students are present, whether on or off campus.

Electronic Devices & Students' Cell Phones

Cell phone (including cellular-based watches) use is strictly prohibited for all students on campus and on class trips. With permission, students may use school phones for necessary phone calls. Parent calls to students or teachers will NOT be forwarded directly to the classroom during school hours. Messages may be left with the Front Office.

Personal electronic devices are not allowed at school except with specific permission from the Head of School. Cell phones are not allowed. If a student needs to have a cell phone at school for familial reasons (for example, switching from one parent's house to the other), it must be turned in to the office upon arrival and will be returned to the student at dismissal. Smart watches may only be used as watches to tell time, but may not be used for games, texting, or accessing the internet. If a student violates this rule, the watch will be held by the teacher until dismissal and will not be allowed back at school.

Arbor Montessori is not responsible for lost or stolen devices

Computers and Tablets

Arbor Montessori School implements safety filters on all classroom computers, laptops, and/or tablets that are in use in the Elementary classrooms. Additionally, Elementary teachers determine specific research sites that are permitted for class use and only these sites may be used. Teachers also establish parameters for computer usage by all students. Personal computers and tablets are not permitted.

Toys

Please do not allow students to bring toys to school. This includes electronic toys and games as well as play jewelry, watches, and fitness trackers.

Biting in the Toddler Classroom

Research tells us that biting is often the result of thoughts and feelings getting ahead of the child's ability to express themselves verbally due to limited vocabulary. It can occasionally be the result of not enough crunchy food or jaw strengthening and stimulation. It is typically a short phase (2-3 months). A child involved in a biting incident will get help from an adult to express their feelings. All occurrences are documented and shared with parents/caregivers. The child will be closely observed for patterns. As with other behaviors, we work with the child to offer better options and assist the child in making different choices. When a child receives a bite from another child, it is treated as any injury would be and parents/caregivers are communicated with in a thorough manner.

Restrooms

Arbor Montessori allows all students equal access to restroom facilities that are consistent with their gender identity. All students have access to gender neutral restrooms. Students, including transgender and non-binary students, determine which restrooms are consistent with their gender identity when not at school (for example, on a field trip).

ADDENDUM A: Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment Incident Reporting Form

Reporting person (optional): _____

Targeted student: _____

Your email address (optional): _____ your phone # (optional): _____

Today's date: _____

Name of school adult you've already contacted (if any): _____

Name(s) of aggressor(s) (if known): _____

On what dates did the incident(s) happen (if known): _____

Where did the incident happen? Check all that apply.

- ☐ Classroom
- ☐ Hallway
- ☐ Restroom
- ☐ Playground
- ☐ Sport field
- ☐ Gym
- ☐ Parking lot
- ☐ Internet Cell phone
- ☐ During a school activity
- ☐ Off school property
- ☐ Other (Please describe.) _____

Please check the box that best describes what the person did. Please choose all that apply.

- ☐ Blocked movement
- ☐ Gestures (Explain)
- ☐ Racial slur(s)
- ☐ Damage to my property

- ☐ Gossip
- ☐ Repeated behavior
- ☐ Derogatory comments
- ☐ Intimidation directed at me
- ☐ Sexual stories/jokes/pictures
- ☐ Disrespectful comments
- ☐ Name calling
- ☐ Sexual Orientation Slurs
- ☐ Electronic / Cyberbullying
- ☐ Offensive writing or graffiti slurs, rumors, jokes
- ☐ Excluding me from activities
- ☐ Physical harm or threats of harm
- ☐ Spreading rumors
- ☐ Hazing (Club, team, class)
- ☐ Pranks
- ☐ Threats (to me, friends, school)
- ☐ Gender slurs
- ☐ Put downs
- ☐ Touching / grabbing
- ☐ Other: (Please describe) _____

Why do you think this occurred? _____

Were there any witnesses? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, please provide their names:

Did a physical injury result from this incident? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, please describe:

Was the targeted student absent from school as a result of the incident? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please describe:

Are there any notes, pictures, texts, screenshots or other evidence of the event(s) you are reporting?

Is there any additional information you can add?

-----For Office Use-----

Received by: _____ Date received: _____

Action taken: _____

Parent/guardian contacted: _____

☐ Resolved ☐ Unresolved Referred to: _____