

THE PARKSIDE MONTESSORI SCHOOL

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PARENT AND CAREGIVER GUIDELINES

Here are some guidelines for our parents and caregivers which should serve to help maintain for your child a happy atmosphere of order and peace, thereby allowing them to thrive in our setting and allowing us to do our job in the most loving and effective way. As many of you already know, our teachers here at Parkside are a real team. We have been together for a long time, and we worked as a group on these guidelines. Our motivation, as always, is to ensure the highest quality pre-school experience for your little ones, and for you as well.

1. Please mark all items of clothing and all lunchboxes clearly. Dismissal can be confusing if teachers are not sure which coat or lunchbox belongs to which child.
2. Please hand in both the emergency and health forms promptly. This is state mandated, and obviously, the information on the emergency form is crucial.
3. Please observe our arrival and dismissal times carefully (9:00, 11:30, 12:30, and 3:00). Please do not arrive before 8:55, 11:25, 12:25 or after 3:05 unless you have made prior arrangements for extended care that is available if you need it. We ask this so that our teachers are able to do their planning, prep work, and end of session clean-up, while making sure that your children are properly greeted and cared for. It can be very disruptive and unsettling to both the child and the class if a child arrives late either at the beginning of the session or at lunch. Equally unsettling are late pick-ups. It is also most important to pick up very promptly at our 3:30 extended care time.
4. At drop-off time, please do not enter the classroom to either help with coat hang-up or sit and play with your child. This is most important. We ask that you bid your child farewell at the door and allow us to greet and help hang up the coats. We feel that this will alleviate confusion and congestion at the beginning of the school day and allow the children to get their day started in a quiet and organized way. We will make sure that there is a teacher at the door or nearby to greet and guide your child in.
5. At pick-up time, please come to the door of the classroom where a teacher will be waiting. Our hallway is quite narrow, and we want to keep it clear and safe. Strollers are better left outside as they block the hallway and are therefore a fire hazard. At dismissal, please do not enter the room. The teacher at the door will alert your child to your arrival and bring him or her to you. We ask that then you clear the hallway as quickly as possible, as other parents and caregivers will be trying to pick up their youngsters. It is certainly understandable that you may want to socialize with other parents in order to arrange playdates, carpools, or simply have conversation. We ask that you do this in our entrance foyer or outside. Please refrain from conversing at the door or in the hallway near the door as it can be very distracting to the teacher who is reading a story, singing, or playing a game with the children. Also, children who have been dismissed could easily slip away from the adults. At pick up time, the teachers will make a serious effort to have your child ready with coats, papers, etc. in order to enable you to depart quickly. Again, labeling of both outerwear and lunchboxes is crucial to a smooth dismissal time (and outdoor play time too).

If you need to speak to the teacher, let us know and we will arrange a convenient time for you to do that, either in person or by phone.

6. Sometimes there will be signs on the wall in the foyer. Keep an eye out for them. They are usually on the right wall as you enter (left as you leave). Occasionally there will be signs right outside the doors of each classroom. One such sign to anticipate and respond to quickly is the one showing preliminary class list. It will go up in late September for you to look at and change should any information be incorrect. The more quickly you approve that preliminary, the more quickly you will receive your list. We will be holding a Parent Orientation (or Reorientation) Meeting during the third week of school. We ask that at least one parent attend this evening meeting. Information will follow.

7. For those parents who are using the lunch program, please cooperate with us in discussing lunchtime procedures at home. Lunch is very popular, and it is a period of fun socializing. However, it is also a mealtime. We carefully watch the children at this time, but it would be helpful for you to reinforce our guidelines at home. We will help them to wash their hands before eating. We will help them unpack their lunches and keep the food on the provided placemat. We want them to remain seated while they are eating, and we do not want them to share their food. Food that is not eaten will be sent home. Also we will be asking them to use their “indoor voices” and table manners.

8. If you want to use our lunch program or extended care program on an irregular basis, please let us know by note, phone or in person one day ahead. Also, place a note to that effect on our message board in the hallway close to the small bathroom.

9. If there are changes with regard to who will drop-off or pick up your child, please tell the teacher again by note, by phone or in person, and write the message out as well and place it on our message board. We will not release a child to someone (even a grandparent!) if we have not had prior notice.

10. For the safety of our families and out of consideration for the neighbors, please observe our Parkside Parking Guidelines carefully. There is NO PARKING immediately outside our door on the south side of Fernwood. The Parking Guidelines are available in our foyer. Please read them carefully and feel free to ask us any questions.

11. Please check your child’s “pocket” regularly. It is important to remember that a youngster may not have a project to bring home every day. There are many important “hands-on” activities in the classroom, which do not result in a physical product. Maria Montessori believed in the importance of “the process not that product.”

12. Parent-teacher conferences will take place in November. There will be a sign up sheet outside the classrooms on the wall in early November. School will not be closed on conference days.

13. Please check our school calendar regularly. There is one posted on the foyer bulletin board in addition to the one you have at home.

Thank you for your consideration of these guidelines. We are certainly available to discuss individual problems or needs. We are delighted that you and your children are part of our Parkside family, and we look forward to a fun-filled, productive, and happy year.