



# Alder Montessori

## PARENT HANDBOOK

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**Montessori Office Phone: 503-893-5598**

**Alder Elementary Phone: 503-491-2722**

**Classrooms:** ***Madrone Class***

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## BASIC INFORMATION

Address: Alder Montessori  
17200 SE Alder Avenue  
Portland, OR 97233

### Daily Schedule

Hours:	10:30am – 3:50pm 9:20am – 3:50pm	Mondays, (Late Start) Tuesday-Friday
Schedule:	9:05 – 9:30am  9:20 – 12:30pm 12:30pm – 1:15pm 1:45 – 3:40pm 3:50pm	Arrival (10:15 – 10:45am on Mondays, breakfast 10:25 – 10:50am) Arrival time accommodates the bus schedule. <i>9:35am or later arrival is tardy.</i> Morning Work Cycle (Breakfast 8:50 – 9:50am Tuesday - Friday) Lunch & Recess Rest/Afternoon Work Period Dismissal (children ride the bus or are picked up at the school's front doors)
Calendar:	Alder Montessori's calendar closely follows the Alder Elementary School calendar, with a few exceptions. Please see the last page in this handbook for a copy of the Alder Montessori calendar.	
Phone:	<b>503-893-5598</b> Any phone calls, texts, or messages should be made through the number above. Voicemail and text messages can be left any time.	
Director:	Shazia Abdulla (503) 893-5598 sabdulla@montessori-equity.org Questions or comments about daily school life should be directed to Ms. Abdulla.	
Substitute Directors:	Vivian Aubrey (503) 893-5598 vaubrey@montessori-equity.org	Jaime Greene (971) 401-9426 jgreene@montessori-equity.org
Absences:	<b><i>Please let the administrator know by 9:20 a.m. if your child will be absent.</i></b>	
Closures:	We follow Reynolds School District with regard to school closures for weather and other needs. In the event of an emergency, schools may need to close, delay the start of school or release students early. All information about school closure is released to all local media outlets, including radio, television, newspaper and school and district websites. In most weather-related closures the announcement will be made by the school district. Please subscribe to Flash Alert for RSD notifications: <a href="http://flashalert.net/id/RSD7">http://flashalert.net/id/RSD7</a> .	
Remind:	We use the Remind app to communicate directly with our families about school news, including schedule changes. Please make sure you are signed up to receive those notifications on Remind. <b>You can sign up for Remind by texting @cedarrm (if your child is in the Cedar Room) or @madrone (for Madrone Room) to 81010.</b>	

*Alder Montessori admits students of any race, color, nationality, and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities available to students at the school. Alder Montessori does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, and other school-administered programs. Alder Montessori has no religious affiliations.*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>BASIC INFO.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>ABOUT US.....</b>	<b>1</b>
WELCOME TO ALDER MONTESSORI! .....	1
WHO WAS MARIA MONTESSORI?.....	1
WHAT IS MONTESSORI EDUCATION?.....	1
INSIDE THE CLASSROOMS.....	1
THE STAFF .....	1
ABOUT OUR PARTNERS .....	2
LICENSING .....	2
<b>SCHOOL LIFE .....</b>	<b>3</b>
DAILY SCHEDULE.....	3
ARRIVAL.....	3
WORK PERIODS & RECESS .....	3
MEALS: BREAKFAST & LUNCH .....	3
<i>Mealtime Routines and Expectations .....</i>	<i>3</i>
AFTERNOON WORK PERIOD & RECESS.....	4
REST/NAP.....	4
DISMISSAL .....	4
SCHOOL SECURITY.....	4
<b>FOR PARENTS.....</b>	<b>5</b>
SCHOOL FORMS .....	5
OBSERVATIONS .....	5
CONFERENCES .....	5
ASSESSMENTS .....	5
<i>Observation: .....</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ):.....</i>	<i>5</i>
GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE POLICIES.....	6
HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES .....	6
<i>Exclusion guidelines:.....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Illness/Injury: .....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Medications: .....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Hand Washing:.....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Lice:.....</i>	<i>6</i>
TRANSPORTATION .....	7
FIELD TRIPS.....	7
EMERGENCY PLAN .....	7
<i>Lockout:.....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Lockdown:.....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Evacuation (fire): .....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Shelter (earthquake, tornado, bomb, hazmat):.....</i>	<i>7</i>
<b>FLOOR PLAN &amp; EMERGENCY EXIT ROUTES.....</b>	<b>8</b>

## ABOUT US

### Welcome to Alder Montessori!

Alder Montessori is a program of Alliance for Equity in Montessori Education (AEME), in partnership with Reynolds School District and Preschool Promise. Its purpose is to provide a free, high-quality early learning program to children living in the Alder Elementary neighborhood.

### Who was Maria Montessori?

Maria Montessori (1870-1952) was an Italian physician and anthropologist who devoted her life to understanding how children develop socially, intellectually, physically, and spiritually. By carefully observing children all over the world, she discovered universal patterns of human development that are found in all children, regardless of culture or the era in which they live.

In 1907, Dr. Montessori was given the responsibility of caring for a group of children in a low-income housing district of Rome. She began to see the importance of a positive nurturing environment that changes with the developmental needs of the child to meet and match the needs of each individual child. Over the next several decades she crafted an educational method in response to her observations.

### What is Montessori Education?

Montessori is a method of education that is based on self-directed activity, hands-on learning, and collaborative play. In Montessori classrooms, children make creative choices in their learning while the teacher offers age-appropriate activities to guide them. Children work in groups and individually to develop their maximum potential.

### Inside the Classrooms

Child-sized furniture, bright and attractive colors, natural materials, fascinating cultural objects, music, and art all offer the children complex sensory and intellectual experiences. When children first enter our classrooms, there is an immediate and touching moment when they realize that this place is for them. Once they are oriented to the room, children move freely throughout the environment, choosing activities that interest them, working with the teacher, individually, or in small groups. Our classroom is scientifically designed to:

- Support social development through respectful, clear communication, and safe natural consequences
- Provide a large variety of activities for the control and coordination of movement, refinement of sensorial perception, and development of both literacy and mathematical understanding
- Offer opportunities for imaginative exploration leading to confident, creative self-expression
- Develop strong language skills that lead to writing and reading when the child is ready
- Foster within the child an awareness and appreciation of their collaborative role in both the classroom and their community
- Contain beautiful hands-on materials for the child and a trained adult to help guide the child's activities
- Provide the opportunity to exercise free choice and develop initiative
- Foster the growth of independence, task persistence, and self-regulation





### The Staff

In the 2022-23 school year, Alder Montessori has two on-site administrators, with two lead teachers and four assistants making up the classroom staff. In addition to college diplomas, the lead teachers hold diplomas from the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI), the training organization founded by Dr. Montessori.

Staff members participate in regional and national workshops and attend professional in-service days. All staff are enrolled in the Oregon Child Care Central Background Registry system, and are certified in emergency first aid/CPR, child abuse recognition and prevention training, and safe food handling procedures.

## About Our Community Partners

The Alder Montessori program is administered by AEME, and our community partners work to collaboratively meet the needs of our students and families. The below list describes some of the roles each of our partners play:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Student Lottery &amp; Enrollment</li><li>School Staffing</li><li>Montessori Method</li><li>School Policies &amp; Procedures</li><li>Student &amp; Program Staff Evaluation</li><li>Parent Conferences</li><li>Parent Observations</li><li>Community Education</li><li>School Tours</li><li>Community Outreach and multi-agency interface</li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Facilities Management</li><li>Student Transportation</li><li>Student Nutrition</li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Student Registration</li><li>Student Attendance</li><li>Student Health</li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Family Engagement</li><li>School Volunteers</li><li>Facilitates community partner connection/collaboration</li></ul>

## Licensing

Alder Montessori (CC503762) is licensed annually by the Oregon Department of Education/Early Learning Division's Office of Child Care. Sanitation and Fire inspections are conducted every year. Program policies and procedures are re-evaluated annually and updated as needed.

**Office of Child Care Licensing Specialist for this facility: Michelle Barnes-Lewis (503) 314-6458**

## SCHOOL LIFE

### Daily Schedule

9:05 – 9:30am	Arrival (10:15 – 10:50am on Mondays, breakfast 10:30 – 11am) Arrival time accommodates the bus schedule and the building schedule. 9:35am or later arrival is tardy.
9:20 – 12:30pm	Morning Work Cycle (Breakfast 9:20 – 9:50 Tuesday - Friday)
12:30-1:15pm	Lunch & Recess
1:35 – 3:40pm	Rest/Afternoon Work Period
3:50pm	Dismissal (children ride the bus or are picked up at the school's front doors)

### Arrival

Bus pick-up is between 9:00 – 9:25am. Parents/guardians are required to wait with children at the bus stop (please refer to bus route schedule provided by staff). A staff member will be on the bus to greet and assist the children with their safety belts. Once at school, the children will exit the bus with the staff member, who will walk them to the classroom and sign them in for the day.

School drop-off is between 9:05 – 9:30am. Parents are required to escort their children to the building. A school staff member will greet them and sign them in for the day. If you arrive to school after 9:30am, please stop in the school office. A staff member will walk your child to their classroom.

### Work Periods & Recess

Work periods are blocks of uninterrupted time where children are free, within limits, to choose their own activities from lessons with which they have had a lesson, can join a small group activity, or may receive a new lesson from their teacher. In addition to the Montessori materials, the Montessori work periods may include activities such as cooking, gardening, working in the courtyard, sewing, music and art activities, and time outside.

Recess is a mostly unstructured play and movement time outside on our own playground. Our program goes outside in almost all weather, appropriate clothing and a full extra set of clean, dry clothes are necessary.

### Meals: Breakfast & Lunch

All Alder Montessori students are provided breakfast and lunch from the nutrition services program at Alder Elementary School. All meals are free of charge and follow the USDA food program guidelines set by the Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service. Alder Montessori students also benefit from Alder Elementary School's participation in the federally assisted Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP), which supports providing children with fresh fruits and vegetables with their meals. Each meal served to the children includes a fruit and/or vegetable, a protein, and a whole grain. Milk is served at both meals. Water is available to the children at any time throughout the day. If children enrolled in Alder Montessori have specific dietary guidelines, staff work with the nutrition services manager at Alder Elementary School to support the needs of the child.

### Mealtime Routines and Expectations

Children wash their hands prior to every meal. After handwashing, they go to shelves to where plates, bowls, cups, and cutlery are accessible for them to set their own place at a table. Children are placed in groups of two to four at a table during meals and it is expected that children will sit while eating. Once a child has set their place, they may carry their plate to where the food has been laid out to serve. Serving utensils that are sized to provide the correct portion of each food are provided by the nutrition services staff. It is a program requirement that each child receive one portion of every food provided, but it is not a requirement that they eat everything on their plate.

During mealtimes, the teachers and assistants sit with different groups of children to model how to have a meal together. The teachers and assistants engage children in conversation as well as facilitate and encourage children to have conversation among themselves. Mealtimes are naturally occurring times to talk about food and its nutritional properties with children. At the pre-school level it is important to talk about how different foods help our bodies grow.

Initially, the teaching staff is very involved in assisting children in getting their meals. As the year progresses, the goal is for children to be able to independently manage setting their place and cleaning up after they eat.

If you have any questions or concerns about meals in the classrooms at Alder Montessori, please speak with your child's teacher or a program Administrator.

## Afternoon Work Period

See Morning Work Period.

## Rest/Nap

After lunch and recess, preschool-aged students rest for a minimum of 20 minutes. Each child is assigned a cot for the school year. The program provides a light-weight blanket and sheets to fit over the cot. The blankets and sheets are washed on-site every week. Children who do not fall asleep after 20 minutes of rest get up and choose work for the afternoon. Children who do sleep are woken up with enough time to put away their nap items, join the end-of-day group gathering, and prepare to go home.

## Dismissal

Children leave their classroom at 3:40 to give them enough time to walk to the bus or the front of the school to be met by parents/guardians.

Bus drop-off is between 3:50 – 4:05. **A parent is required to be at the bus stop to receive their child** (please refer to bus route schedule provided by staff). A staff member will be on the bus to assist the child off the bus and say goodbye. If a parent is not present, the child will be brought back to school. The parent will be called to come and pick up the child.

School pick-up is between 3:50 – 4pm. Children are released to their parents/guardians at the front doors of Alder Elementary School. Please be on time, as young children become anxious when their parent is late.

If you need to pick up your child earlier in the day, please sign in at the school office and classroom staff will be notified. A staff member will assist your child in leaving for the day and sign them out on the daily attendance sheet. You must also sign out in the school office before exiting the building.

## School Security

Parents are required to pass by the office for a permit to access school premises at all times. This includes parent engagement events, open houses, as well as any other time parents might need to access the building.

*Staff will only release a child to their parent or another person named and identified by the parent(s). Staff will verify identification of any person, other than the parent, who picks up the child.*

*If a child arrives at or leaves the building without a parent, there must be arrangements in advance, **in writing**, from the parent(s) for the arrival and departure times and what to do if the child has not arrived at school by the expected time.*



## FOR PARENTS

### School forms

At the beginning of school, your registration forms must be completed and returned to the Program Director. The registration forms contain vital information. It is critical that these forms are accurate and up-to-date at all times. Any changes in telephone numbers, emergency contact persons, persons authorized for pick-up, or additional vaccine information must be submitted immediately so that our records reflect current information and ensure your child's welfare.

For families new to Alder Montessori, staff will meet with you near the beginning of the school year to get to know you and gain input from you about your child. The meeting will be at Alder Elementary School. Translation services will be available if needed.

### Observations

Once the classrooms have settled in for the year, we welcome and encourage you to observe in your child's class. Keep in mind that your presence in the classroom may result in behavior from your child that is different from that which is displayed on a routine day. The child may "show-off," do nothing, or busy themselves with works they have already mastered. Knowing this, sit back and take in the whole environment. Your child's teacher or the Director can take a few minutes with you afterward to discuss your observations and answer questions. Parents are invited to discuss appropriate observation times with their child's teacher and/or the Director.

### Conferences

Parent/teacher conferences are offered twice a year: once in the fall and once in the spring, along with Alder Elementary School's parent/teacher conference days and hours. Conferences are an opportunity for you to share your observations of your child at home, and for the teacher to share theirs of your child at school.

Conferences also give both you and the teacher time to share concerns, exchange ideas, and ask questions. You are also welcome to schedule an appointment with your child's teacher at any time during the school year.

### Assessments

#### Observation:

Staff conduct daily observations of each child. The purpose of using observation is to assess a child's developmental progress so the teacher can create informed lesson plans for each child. If we notice any issues surrounding a child's development or behavior, we will contact you, the parent(s)/guardian(s), to set up a meeting to discuss how best to support your child. We welcome your ongoing communication about your child to assist us in supporting her/his learning and development.

#### Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ):

The Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) is a developmental screening program required by our Preschool Promise funders which addresses five developmental areas: communication, gross motor, fine motor, problem solving, and personal-social. The screening includes 21 questionnaires and covers ages one month through 5 ½ years of age. ASQ screenings are offered in English and in Spanish.

Alder Montessori is required to complete the ASQ for each child three times annually. Parents complete two assessments: once at the beginning and once again at the end of the year. The January assessment will be completed by staff. If necessary, Alder Montessori staff can assist you with the ASQ, and can also arrange for help with translation with other languages outside of English and Spanish. ***We request that the ASQ be completed within 45 days of your child's enrollment at Alder Montessori, or by the first parent/teacher conference, whichever comes first after your child's enrollment.***

If the ASQ results indicate your child needs further specialized assessment to support them in their development, Alder Montessori staff can help you make connections with outside professionals and/or agencies.

## Guidance and discipline policies

In the Montessori learning environment, children learn and acquire skills in socialization and practical living. The teacher establishes clear guidelines and limits as to acceptable behavior, reinforcing those behaviors gently but consistently. The teacher also carefully prepares and demonstrates lessons in *Grace & Courtesy*. As a result, the child builds their own self-control, which fosters harmony in the classroom.

If the teacher is concerned with recurrent difficulties with a particular child, the school will work with the family to do whatever is necessary to support the child. This might include: observing the child, redirection of the child to positive pro-social behavior, discussing the child's behavior with the teacher, other staff, and/or the parents, or even seeking outside professional help. The goal for Alder Montessori staff is to support the family in achieving a feeling of empowerment and to create a happy and safe learning environment for all children. In accordance with requirements from the Oregon Department of Education/Early Learning Division, Alder Montessori prohibits the suspension and expulsion of students.

## Health and Safety Policies

The health of our community is dependent upon the health of the children. Please exercise good judgement in the daily evaluation of your child's health.

### Exclusion guidelines:

Ask your doctor for guidelines on when your child can return to school without risk of infection to others. A general rule for illnesses *other than COVID-19* is that your child may return to school **24 hours after** the start of antibiotics, the break of a fever, or the last episode of vomiting/diarrhea. More importantly, wait until your child's energy level is back to normal.

*Note: if you notice any signs of illness, please do not send your child to school. Please call the school to report symptoms or any useful information about the illness.*

### Illness/Injury:

If your child becomes ill or injured at school, we will consult the school nurse and make them as comfortable as possible until you arrive to take him/her home (if necessary). In case of an extreme medical emergency, we will make every effort to reach you. However, if we cannot reach you, we will call 911 for an ambulance that will transport your child to an appropriate emergency room.

### Medications:

Oregon law requires that **all** medications administered at school (prescription and over-the-counter) be dispensed from an original labeled container and be accompanied by written consent from the parent. The staff is not authorized to dispense any medication at school unless these requirements are met, and children are never authorized to self-administer medications. Please do not send medication to school without alerting program staff.

### Hand Washing:

Proper and frequent hand washing is the easiest and most effective way to prevent the spread of illness. Staff and children wash their hands before and after certain duties and activities, including: arriving at school; preparing, serving, and eating meals and snacks; playing outdoors; wiping noses; coughing; toileting; and handling bodily fluids.

### Lice:

Head lice can be a nuisance but have not been shown to spread disease. Personal hygiene or cleanliness in the home or school has nothing to do with getting head lice. Students diagnosed with live head lice will not be excluded from school, but please notify staff if you notice or suspect signs of lice on your child so we can minimize spread. It is important to know that lice eggs (nits) may persist after treatment. Combing out the nits and lice with a fine-toothed comb is the only way to successfully eliminate head lice. Lice can only survive in human hair, and it is impossible for lice to live in school furniture, clothes, or cushions for longer than a few hours.

## Transportation

Bussing to and from school is provided by the school district. All busses and drivers meet Oregon motor vehicles division requirements. Staff members ride the bus with the children to assist the operator in ensuring the safety of all children.

## Field Trips

Occasionally, children may go on a field trip. Notice of upcoming field trips will be shared with parents and posted outside both classrooms at least one month ahead of time. Transportation will be provided by the school district, and lunch will be provided by nutrition services at Alder Elementary School.

## Emergency Plan

Throughout the school year, staff works with the students to respond precisely, cautiously, and without fear during our monthly emergency drills.

### **Lockout:**

staff and students return inside and participate in normal day-to-day activities. Staff takes roll and increase situational awareness.

### **Lockdown:**

staff and students move out of sight and remain silent. Staff lock classroom doors, turn out lights, take roll, and wait for responder to arrive.

### **Evacuation (fire):**

staff and students form a line and walk hand in hand to evacuation location. Staff takes roll and notifies responders of any injured or missing students.

### **Shelter (earthquake, tornado, bomb, hazmat):**

staff and students take the appropriate shelter based on the emergency. Staff takes roll and wait for responder to arrive.

## FLOOR PLAN & EMERGENCY EXIT ROUTES

