



# Alder Montessori

## PARENT HANDBOOK

*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*



# CONTACT INFORMATION

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***Alder Montessori also has on-call substitute staff, as well as trained student interns who have background clearance and have completed all mandatory health and safety training.***

## BASIC INFORMATION

Address: Alder Montessori – We are located within the Alder Elementary School  
17200 SE Alder Avenue  
Portland, OR 97233

DAILY SCHEDULE		
ACTIVITY	MONDAY (Late start)	TUESDAY TO FRIDAY
Arrival, doors open	8.55 am	7.45am
Breakfast	9.00am-9.30am	7.50am – 8.20am
Morning work period & snack	9.30am-10.30am	8.30 – 10.30am
Gathering/Lunch	10.45am 11.30am	10.45 - 11.30am
Recess	11.30-12.15pm	11.30 – 12.15pm
Rest/afternoon work period	12.30-2pm	12.30 – 2pm
Bus students AM/PM	8.05am/1.50pm	6.50am/1.50pm
Remaining students dismissal	2.15pm	2.15 p.m.

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: **Main Line Alder Montessori: 971-500-4326**  
Phone calls, texts, or messages for the Montessori program should be made to this number.  
Voicemail and text messages can be left any time. Staff respond during standard office hours.

Manager/Site Director: Sandip Brar 971-500-4326  
sandip@montessori-equity.org  
Questions or comments about daily school life should be directed to Ms. Brar.

Substitute: Sarai Lopez, Bilingual Program Coordinator  
Site Directors: Call Main Line 971-500-4326  
sarai@montessori-equity.org

Absences: ***Please call or text the Alder Montessori Main Line by 7:45 a.m. if your child will be late or absent: 971-500-4326 It is important students arrive on time - if you have arrived after the window of drop off please call/text the main line to let us know when you are outside of the building and a staff member will come and collect your child. Please do not take your child to the office.***

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: <http://flashalert.net/id/RSD7>.**

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## ABOUT US

### Welcome to Alder Montessori!

Alder Montessori is a free early learning program of the Alliance for Equity in Montessori Education (AEME), in partnership with Reynolds School District, Preschool Promise and Preschool For All. Our goal is to provide high-quality Montessori preschool for families living in the Alder Elementary neighborhood. AEME is responsible for Alder Montessori operations and care of your child while attending Alder Montessori. AEME is a non-profit organization.

We are excited to offer a full-day preschool at no cost to families. This includes:

- Free meals and snacks during the school day
- Free transportation for children of families who live within the Alder Elementary Catchment Area in the Reynolds School District.

Every child in our program -whether enrolled through Preschool Promise or Preschool for All – receives the same high-quality care and education, including:

- A strong educational program with hands-on materials and structured learning time (which we call the “work cycle”)
- Nutritional support with meals and snacks provided
- Developmental screenings (ASQ)
- Educational curriculum which is aligned with Oregon’s Early Learning and Kindergarten Readiness Guidelines and we complete regular child-level progress assessments each school year
- Parent-teacher conferences and fun family events
- Transportation for eligible families within the school area

Additionally, children enrolled in the Preschool for All program who have an IFSP (Individualized Family Service Plan), or who have identified developmental, behavioral, or health needs, may qualify for extra support services through that program.

### Our Mission and Vision

**Mission:** We increase access to high-quality, early childhood education for children and families impacted by economic and racial inequities by providing tuition-free Montessori schools for preschool-age children.

**Vision:** We share the vision that all families in Oregon have equitable access to early childhood education.

## **Welcome Alder Montessori Parents!**

At Alder Montessori, we believe parents are their child's first and most important teachers. Your involvement is key to your child's success, and we want you to feel welcomed, supported, and engaged throughout the school year.

- **Explore the Classroom:** At the start of the school year, you'll be invited to visit your child's classroom. You can explore the classroom, handle the unique Montessori materials, and ask questions.
- **Family Events:** Throughout the year, we'll host family-friendly events—some just for adults, and others for the whole family. For example, at our Parent Lesson Night, your child gives you a Montessori lesson, and in June, we celebrate with our annual family picnic. You are also invited to events held by Alder Elementary.
- **Share Your Ideas:** We love hearing from you! We'll send out a survey during the year, but you're welcome to share your event ideas anytime. We also look for parent volunteers to help plan and support activities.
- We encourage every parent to schedule at least one classroom observation. You'll sit in our special "observer chair" and watch your child at work. We'll provide tips on what to look for and how to stay quietly present. In Montessori, observation helps us understand how each child is learning and what they're ready to learn next.

### **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Conferences are a time to share and connect. You'll tell us about your child, and we'll share how they're doing in class—what they're learning, where they're thriving, and where they may need extra support. For many children, this is their first classroom experience, and we're here to make it a positive one for both you and your child.

### **Stay in Touch**

If you have any questions or concerns during the school year, don't hesitate to reach out to your child's teacher. Our school manager and coordinator are also available and will be checking in with all families throughout the year. We're excited to partner with you and make this a joyful and meaningful year of learning for your child!

### **What is Montessori Education?**

Montessori education is a child-centered approach to learning. It focuses on hands-on activities, self-directed learning, and working together. In a Montessori classroom, children choose their activities while teachers gently guide them with age-appropriate lessons. Children learn both on their own and in small groups, developing their full potential at their own pace.

There are four main areas of learning in a Montessori preschool:

**Practical Life:** Children learn real-life skills to take care of themselves and their environment. These activities build independence, coordination, and confidence. Examples include:

- Watering plants
- Washing clothes or leaves
- Zipping & unzipping, buttoning & unbuttoning,
- Cleaning up spills
- Putting materials and toys away
- Blowing nose, washing hands

Repeating these activities helps children develop focus and self-control. These activities also are part of developing the “mathematical mind” using logical movements, sequences, and refinement of movement using repetition, error control.

They also learn social skills like manners, cooperation, and setting healthy boundaries.

**Mathematical Mind:** Montessori math is hands-on and visual. Children use colorful, physical materials to understand numbers and math ideas. They explore:

- Size, weight, and shapes
- Quantities through touch and sight
- Patterns, order, and sequences
- As well as identifying numbers, addition and subtraction

This helps them truly understand math, not just memorize it.

**Sensorial Learning:** Children learn through their five senses. Montessori sensorial materials help them notice details in the world around them—like colors, textures, sounds, and sizes. For example, they may:

- Compare rough and smooth surfaces
- Match sounds or colors
- Sort objects by size or shape

As they explore, teachers introduce words to describe what they see and feel—like “long,” “short,” “heavy,” “light,” “bright,” or “rough.” This builds vocabulary and helps children organize their thoughts and experiences.

**Language:** At age three, most children already use many words from home. At school, we build on that foundation with songs, stories, and conversations. Here's how language grows in Montessori:

- Sounds to Letters: Children learn to listen to the sounds in words.
- Sandpaper Letters: They feel and trace letters while saying the sounds.
- Writing Practice: They begin forming letters and writing simple words.
- Moveable Alphabet: Kids use letters to build and spell words on their own.
- Reading: As children write more, they begin to read their own words—and then others’.

This process helps children fall in love with language and discover the joy of reading and writing.

In addition, our Montessori classroom also focuses on social/emotional development, geography and science, and offers art opportunities throughout the school day. Alder Montessori has a curriculum that is aligned with the [Oregon Department of Education : Early Learning and Kindergarten Guidelines](#).

**Maria Montessori** (1870-1952) was an Italian physician and scientist 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 believed strongly that all children are eager learners, and that it is up to educators to create a learning environment which promotes each child to be a joyful and successful learner. Dr. Montessori designed a model of teaching which included child centered learning environments, along with teaching methods and specialized educational materials designed for each developmental stage of the children, to meet and match the needs of each child.

## **Inside the Classrooms**

Child-sized furniture, bright and attractive colors, natural materials, 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 classroom, choosing activities that interest them, working with the teacher, individually, or in small groups. Our classroom is designed to:

- Encourage social skills through respectful, clear communication, and safe natural consequences



- Offer a wide range of activities to help children develop movement, sensory skills, literacy, and math.
- Offer opportunities for imaginative exploration and express themselves creatively and confidently.
- Develop strong language skills that lead to writing and reading when the child is ready
- Teach children to appreciate teamwork and their role in the classroom and community.
- Use beautiful hands-on learning materials with guidance from a trained adult.
- Allow children to make choices and develop their own initiative.
- Support the growth of independence, focus, and self-control.

## **The Staff**

In the 2025-26 school year, Alder Montessori has a full-time School Manager, a full-time Program Coordinator (also known as on-site administrators). Both classrooms have a dedicated lead teacher and two classroom assistants. We will also have student interns this year through Portland Community College. Throughout the school year there will be times when the lead teacher will be out of the classroom in order to plan and prepare learning experiences for the children. We will maintain staff to student ratio at all times.

Staff members participate in ongoing training 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, and safe food handling.

In addition to college diplomas, the lead teachers and school manager hold diplomas from the Association Montessori International (AMI), the training organization founded by Dr. Montessori. Classroom assistants are also highly trained, with training verified and documented within the State of Oregon ORO system. All staff are trained in professional ethics.

Our school manager is also an experienced and trained Montessori teacher and has completed a wide range of training on early childhood development, education, and program management. Our program coordinator is fluent in Spanish/English, has completed a wide range of training on early childhood development and education, and is an experienced preschool teacher.

We also use substitute staff in our school. Assistant staff are also enrolled in the Oregon Child Care Central Background Registry system, and have completed training as

mandated by the State of Oregon. Most speak Spanish and English. If they are substituting as a teacher, then they meet the teacher training requirements.

AEME and our community partners work to collaboratively meet the needs of our students and families. The below list describes key roles each of our partners play:

	<p>Alder Montessori Operations Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Lottery &amp; Enrollment</li> <li>• School Staffing</li> <li>• Student Education- Montessori Method</li> <li>• School Policies &amp; Procedures</li> <li>• Student &amp; Program Staff Evaluation</li> <li>• Student Attendance (Lead)</li> <li>• Parent Conferences</li> <li>• Student Developmental Screenings &amp; Educational Assessments</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 (Our two classrooms)</li> <li>• Janitorial Services</li> <li>• Student Transportation</li> <li>• Student Nutrition Program (Breakfast &amp; Lunch)</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Registration</li> <li>• Student Attendance</li> <li>• Student Health</li> <li>• Leads School Safety Drills</li> <li>• Family Events at Alder Elementary School</li> <li>• Coordination of Student Photo Day</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Montessori Student Learning Packages - At Home Use</li> <li>• Facilitates Alder Elementary Community Partner Connection/Collaboration</li> <li>• Family Assistance Programs</li> <li>• Long Term Transition Services- Special supports for Alder Montessori students/families who transition into Alder Elementary School and remain within Reynolds School District up through High School</li> </ul>

### Licensing:

Alder Montessori (CC503762) is licensed 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.

## SCHOOL LIFE

### Classroom and Teacher Assignments

Prior to the start of the school year, all children are assigned to either Madrone or Cedar Classroom. Madrone classroom has 20 students, and Cedar has 25 students. In Oregon most preschool classrooms have only 18 students, as a Montessori classroom due to our educational model we get approved by the State of Oregon each year to have this number of students in our classrooms.

Madrone and Cedar classrooms have an assigned Lead teacher and two classroom assistants. The team stays with the classroom and with your child for the full year. This provides a consistent and stable adult teaching team for all students.

Alder Montessori maintains a staff to child ratio of 1 staff to every 10 children, and this is approved by the State of Oregon.

We assign students based on the following structure:

- Returning students stay with the teacher/classroom they had the year before.
- New 3-year-old students will be placed in both classrooms for age balance.
- New 4-year-old students will be placed in a classroom to achieve age balance.
- For new students who speak a language other than English or Spanish, we will try to place them in a classroom where another child shares their primary language.
- New students with an IFSP, will be placed in a classroom for support and need balance.

*Note: All of the 10 Preschool for All students At Alder Montessori may be assigned to only the Madrone classroom based on the funder's decision. This school year the 10 students will be split across both classrooms.*

### Nutritional Program

All Alder Montessori students are provided breakfast and lunch from the nutrition services program at Alder Elementary School. We also provide a scheduled snack. All meals and snacks 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 fruit and/or vegetables, 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 restrictions (serious allergies), staff work with the nutrition services manager at Alder Elementary School to support the needs of the child.

If families do not want their child to participate in any of the Meals, please talk to us as early as possible. Families can provide their child with pre-packed meals, and most children want to eat what the other children are eating, so we can work together if this is important for you. Note: we are an egg and nut free preschool. If you are providing a packed lunch please ensure those foods are not in your child's lunchbox.

*Note: You can see a copy of the monthly menu displayed outside of your child's classroom or on Alder Elementary's website*

<https://www.reynolds.k12.or.us/nutrition>

**Mealtime Routines and Expectations:** Children wash their hands before and after each meal. After handwashing, they go to shelves 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 the School Manager or Program Coordinator.

If your child has allergies to any food items, please notify your child's teacher, and School manager right away. There are forms you will need to complete.

## Daily Schedule Details

DAILY SCHEDULE		
ACTIVITY	MONDAY (Late start)	TUESDAY TO FRIDAY
Arrival, doors open	8.55am	7.45am
Breakfast	9.00am-9.30am	7.50am – 8.20am
Morning work period & snack	9.30am-10.30am	8.30 – 10.30am
Gathering/Lunch	10.45am 11.30am	10.45 - 11.30am
Recess	11.30-12.15pm	11.30 – 12.15pm
Rest/afternoon work period	12.30-2pm	12.30 – 2pm
Bus students AM/PM	8.05am/1.50pm	6.50am/1.50pm
Remaining students dismissal	2.15pm	2.15 p.m.

### Arrival

Bus pick-up is between 7-7:15am (8:05-8:20 am on Mondays). Parents/guardians are required to wait with children at the bus stop (please refer to the bus route schedule provided by staff, it is important you wait at the bus stop for 10 mins before scheduled pick up time and at least 10 mins after scheduled pick up time if bus has not shown up as sometimes the bus can be late - please contact the bus phone on 971-500-4324 if you need to. A staff member will be on the bus to supervise and assist the children with their safety belts. Once at school, the children will exit the bus with the staff members, who will walk them to the classroom and sign them in for the day.

School drop-off is at 7:45am (8:55am on Mondays.) 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 at school after 7:55am, please call/text the office number on 971-500-4326 and wait outside the building where a staff member will come and greet you.

**Breakfast:** All Alder Montessori students are provided breakfast from the nutrition services program at Alder Elementary School. Breakfast is free of charge and is offered within their classroom. Children learn how to wash their hands, set their table, place the food on their plate, take their plate to their table, and clean up after eating. This includes clearing their plate & utensils, wiping up spills, and pushing their chair back in.

**Morning Work Period:** The morning work period offers 3 hours of uninterrupted time where children are free, within limits, to choose their own learning activities with which they have had lessons on, 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 gardening, working in the courtyard, sewing, music and art activities, and time outside.

**Recess:** Recess is a mostly unstructured play and movement 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. We provide rain boots and rain jackets for all of our students to use at our school during outdoor activities.

**Lunch:** All Alder Montessori students are provided lunch from the nutrition services program at Alder Elementary School. Lunch is free of charge and is offered within their classroom. Children learn how to wash their hands, set their table, place the food on their plate, take their plate to their table, and clean up after eating. This includes clearing their plate & utensils, wiping up spills, and pushing their chair in when they are done. As the year progresses, children will also be offered the opportunity to help set up tables with place settings (placemats & napkins) for the classroom. Information on RSD's nutritional program is available to all parents.

**Rest/Nap:** After lunch and recess, preschool-aged students rest for a minimum of 30 minutes. Rest/Nap occurs within the child's assigned classroom. 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 30 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.

**Afternoon Work Period:** When each child ends their rest time they will start the afternoon work period. This work period is shorter but also offers uninterrupted time where children choose their own learning activities, can join a small group activity, or may receive a new lesson from their teacher. This work period is usually within the classroom and involves quieter learning activities to not disturb children who are still sleeping.

**Snack:** The snack may be provided in the morning or in the afternoon, depending on the teacher's evaluation of the children's nutritional needs cycle during the school day and snack is free of charge. Alder Montessori provides fresh produce (fruit or snacking

vegetables, and a grain such as crackers/bread). Children wash their hands before and after snack.

## **Dismissal**

Children who ride the bus leave their classroom at 2pm to give them enough time to walk to the bus and sit in their assigned seat.. Those families collecting children directly from school - please wait at the back of the school for a staff member to begin dismissal. Please be at the back by 2:15 as dismissal begins promptly. If you are running late - please call the main line to let the admin team know. If you are arriving at 2:20pm or later please collect your child from the front of the building.

**Bus drop-off is between 2:10-2:25pm.** A parent/guardian or other authorized adult 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 at 2:15pm.** Children are released to their parents/guardians/or other authorized adults at either the walking or driving pickup location at Alder Elementary School. Please be on time, as young children become anxious when their parent/guardian or family member 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 up at the school office before exiting the building. If you or your child has an appointment - please inform the staff as soon as possible so we can have your child ready to collect at an earlier time.

## **FOR PARENTS**

### **School Security & Confidentiality**

Parents and any family members are required to check in at the Alder Elementary office for a permit to access school premises at all times. This includes parent/family 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/guardian, or another person named and identified by the parent(s)/guardian. Staff will verify the identification of any person, other than the parent/guardian, who picks up the child.

If a child arrives at or leaves the building without a parent/guardian, 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. If a parent/guardian wants us to release their child to another trusted adult, then you will need to complete a signed and dated statement/or form listing their name, relationship, phone numbers, and a copy of the person's photo ID. Any changes during the school year must be in writing.

Our program upholds the privacy and confidentiality of our students, and student education records.

### **Religious Instruction**

Alder Montessori will not advance any religion or religious belief during school hours and activities. We value having a welcoming and inclusive environment for all children, families and staff. If a child wants to talk about religion or religious symbols, our staff will respond in a consistently neutral way that is appropriate for a young child.

### **School Forms**

At the beginning of school, your registration forms must be completed and returned to the Program Manager. 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. We maintain a file for each student, which is kept in a locked cabinet in our office on-site.



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.

## **Attendance & Absences**

It is important that children attend 5 days a week. Preschool Promise sets minimal attendance at 85% of all school days. We track attendance every day and submit attendance reports to our funders each month. Your child's daily attendance will help them learn and gain the skills they will need for kindergarten. We will reach out to families whenever we need information related to a child's absence.

In order for your child to get the greatest benefit out of our educational program, it is important that every child arrives every morning on time throughout the school year. The mornings in our classroom are our most important time of the school day for your child to learn, gain, and strengthen their skills. We know our school starts early; our schedule is the same as Alder Elementary School for all hours and days of operation.

Please notify us of any planned or unexpected absences, or if there is a special reason why your child is arriving late or being picked up early. You can communicate with the Manager or Coordinator via email, text or phone call. If you do not contact us in the event of an absence, our Manager or Coordinator will reach out to you via email, text or phone call.

**Preschool Promise Enrolled Student Attendance Rules:** For children with an IFSP or with a medical exception, we may adjust expected attendance for those students with a documented specialized educational and/or medical need who must leave the program for a specified period during Alder Montessori hours to receive specialized services. If your child needs to be absent for medical reasons, please notify the manager/coordinator right away.

Any absences beyond 15 consecutive days from Alder Montessori requested by the family must be approved by Alder Montessori School Manager. We are not allowed to approve an absence for more than 25 school days without approval by Oregon's Department of Early Learning & Care (Funder). We are expected to dis-enroll a child that is absent for more than 15 consecutive school days, and we have been unable to connect with the family and the child is eligible to remain enrolled. If a child is dis-enrolled, we are expected to quickly enroll another child. The dis-enrolled child remains

eligible and may be re-enrolled at Alder Montessori if a new slot becomes available. We will always reach out to parents for information.

**Preschool for All Enrolled Student Policy Statement & Attendance Rules:** Preschool for All (PFA) encourages regular attendance for all enrolled families to support children's learning and development and to support good attendance habits early. Consistent attendance is a powerful predictor of a student's success in K-12. The overall monthly attendance goal is 80% or higher, and each program plays an important part in supporting regular attendance. Preschool for All providers must communicate regularly with families about attendance and must create a program attendance policy that is supportive and relational.

## **Additional Supports**

**Translation & Interpretation Services:** We are committed to doing our best to arrange translation & interpretation services for our school families. In some situations, only phone interpretation services may be available. If the family has a trusted friend or adult family member, they would like to attend in order to have interpretation assistance at an Alder Montessori event, parent-teacher conference, or other meeting/conversation, please let us know. Interpretation services will be provided at no cost to families.

- Our parent handbooks and calendar are available in multiple languages. If you need the handbook translated into your primary language, please let us know.
- Both Madrone and Cedar classrooms have staff who are fluent in Spanish and English.
- All family events will be presented in Spanish and English. If you would like an interpreter for a family event, please let us know about 2 weeks in advance.
- Our website [www.montessori-equity](http://www.montessori-equity) contains information for families. At the top right of the website there is a tab where parents can choose the language for the web site.

**Supporting Children with Delays and Disabilities:** During early conversations with our manager and teacher, we hope that you will share information with us about your child's strengths and needs, and about their struggles or challenges, disabilities, or developmental delays. Our staff is interested in learning more about your child and talking with you about how we can support your child in our classroom. We also can assist parents in learning about resources or connecting with the Multnomah Early Childhood Program (MECP). If your child is working with MECP or has an Individualized

Service Plan (IFSP) prior to starting with our school, please let us know so that a placement meeting can be quickly scheduled so that we can collaborate with you and your child's MECP service provider to incorporate your child's educational goals within our classroom activities. A release of information will be arranged by MECP. MECP is responsible for ensuring that IFSPs are followed and is responsible for services outlined in IFSPs. MECP staff provide specialized educational services and interventions within our classrooms for children who have an IFSP. Families with children with an IFSP may also submit requests to MECP for additional home based educational services. For more information you can visit the MECP website below:

<https://www.ddouglas.k12.or.us/departments/multnomah-early-childhood>

**Family Assistance:** If your family is experiencing financial difficulties or needs help connecting with community resources or financial assistance, please communicate with our Program Coordinator or School Manager. While we are not a service provider, we have partners on-site at Alder who can offer assistance and information on food resources, emergency utility or rent assistance, health care access, culturally or language specific supports, and additional educational or family services. All requests for information will be confidential and decisions to access any services are voluntary.

## **Parent 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. Before the observation - the admin team will provide you with our 'observation guidelines' document to read through. 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 Manager 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 Manager.

## **Parent Involvement**

At Alder Montessori, we believe parents are their child's first and most important teachers. Your involvement is key to your child's success, and we want you to feel welcomed, supported, and engaged throughout the school year.

- **Explore the Classroom:** At the start of the school year, you'll be invited to visit your child's classroom. You can explore the classroom, handle the unique Montessori materials, and ask questions.
- **Family Events:** Throughout the year, we'll host family-friendly events—some just for adults, and others for the whole family. For example, at our Parent Lesson Night, your child gives you a Montessori lesson, and in June, we celebrate with our annual family picnic. You are also invited to events held by Alder Elementary.

**Share Your Ideas:** We love hearing from you! We'll send out a survey during the year, but you're welcome to share your event ideas anytime. We also look for parent volunteers to help plan and support activities.

## Conferences

Parent/teacher conferences are scheduled three times a year: the first one will occur before school begins during orientations. . One of these events will be aligned with Alder Elementary School's conference days and hours which will be in the fall and the last conferences will take place before spring break. Conferences are an opportunity for you to share your observations of your child at home, and for the teacher to share school day observations.

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

**Observations & Formative Assessments:** Staff observe each child's learning throughout the year. 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. The teacher will complete formative assessments per year for each child. Information will be provided to parents during parent-teacher conferences. Our formative assessment tool was developed by Oregon Montessori Association in coordination with the State of Learning to be aligned with Oregon's Early Learning and Kindergarten Guidelines.

**Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ):** The ASQ is a developmental screening program required by our Preschool Promise & Preschool for All funders which addresses five developmental areas: communication, gross motor, fine motor, problem solving, and

personal-social. The ASQ provides a snapshot of a child's skills to help determine if they are meeting age-appropriate developmental milestones. Our team is experienced in ASQ screenings in English and in Spanish. For other dual language learners, we will want to arrange for a parent or interpreter to do this with the student and a person trained in completing ASQ screenings. Screenings completed by Alder Montessori staff will be shared with the family, in writing and verbally. Parents may also be asked to/or may offer to complete an ASQ for their child, and are also invited to provide their input into the screening process.

- By enrolling in Alder Montessori, you have provided consent for this screening. If you do not want this screening to occur, you must notify us in writing immediately, and we will schedule a meeting with you to listen to your concerns and discuss options.
- Alder Montessori is required to ensure completion of the ASQ within 45 days of the student's first day of attendance. If your child has an IFSP an ASQ may not be required. If your family doctor has recently completed an ASQ, please provide us with a copy.
- 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. We are expected by our funders to refer the family to the local education Agency (MECP) for a formal evaluation and we are here to support you and your child throughout the evaluation process.

## **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. We adhere to the Preschool for All and Preschool Promise policies of no suspensions or expulsions of children.

If the teacher is concerned with a particular child experiencing recurrent difficulties, the school will work with the family to do whatever is necessary to support the child. This might include: observing the child and sharing information with families via behavior logs regularly, 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. If the child has an Individual Family Support Plan (IFSP), MECP services will be involved and partner with families and the school to obtain the

appropriate support for the child. If the child does not have an IFSP, Alder Montessori can provide a referral for individualized services with the consent of the parent to ensure the child's needs are met and we are providing all of the support possible to keep the child in school. Sometimes the parents may request a temporarily modified school schedule for their child. Our goal is to support the family and maintain a happy and safe learning environment for all children and staff.

We believe that children learn best in environments that are safe, responsible and nurturing. Alder Montessori staff do not use physical disciplinary methods, such as spanking or other harsh or severe methods. Teaching staff listen to children with attention and respect and respond to their questions and requests. We are dedicated to providing warm, nurturing and positive individual relationships with every child by providing care that is attentive, responsive, comforting, supportive and culturally sensitive. Rules and behavior expectations are clear, and they are stated to students in a simple and positive manner. Staff provide for the safety of the child and others in the classroom.

Parents/guardians will be promptly notified of any behaviors of their child/student which is impacting the safety of the child, other children, and the staff. To keep the school environment safe, and to support your child, we will need the parent/guardians to work collaboratively with our team to create a plan to address the problematic behaviors and support the teaching team to maintain a classroom environment which is safe for children and adults. This may include multiple meetings, and potentially involvement by behavioral specialists and referral for a MECP evaluation.

## **Mandatory Reporting**

As a licensed childcare center, and a provider of Preschool for All and Preschool Promise programming, all Alder Montessori staff are mandatory reporters of child abuse and neglect and must complete mandatory State sanctioned training in Child Abuse & Neglect. In Oregon, Mandatory Reporter responsibilities are 24hrs/7days a week/365days per year.

As a mandatory reporter all AEME and Alder Montessori staff must promptly report any allegations of suspected sexual or physical abuse and neglect that may have occurred for the child inside or outside of the program.

This includes specifically that All AEME and Alder Montessori staff must immediately report any concerns or allegations of suspected sexual or physical abuse and neglect that may have occurred at the school site or in the program to the School Manager or Executive Director, and the appropriate legal authorities. Let us know if you would like a copy of our current written policy.

## **Inclusionary Practices**

Alder Montessori is an inclusive early childhood educational program. We will make reasonable accommodations for children who are identified as eligible for special education and/or related services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and we work in partnership with our local early childhood education (MECP) provider and parents to appropriately support each child's development. For students enrolled in Alder's Preschool For All program, this will include collaboration and coordination to plan and support the child with PFA's Inclusionary Services Coordinator.

When a student has an Individual Family Support Plan (IFSP) developed by MECP, we will work with the family and MECP to secure a copy of the IFSP, so that we are informed on the goals, accommodations, modifications and supplementary supports to play an active role in fully integrating into all planned learning activities for that child at Alder Montessori.

## **Toilet Training**

Children who are not toilet trained will not be denied enrollment. If your child is not toilet trained when enrolled, we ask that you notify our School Manager, Coordinator or their teacher right away so that we can work in collaboration with you to create a plan for toilet learning in the classroom environment. If toilet learning is impacted by a disability, we may ask your help in learning what supports, or additional training may be needed. Our staff are trained in helping young children gain independent toileting skills. Encouragement is provided, never punishment. We will need a change of clothes available in case of any accidents, toilet related or not. Children will be assisted with washing their hands with soap and running water after assisting with toileting. We have two individual children's bathrooms within our classrooms, with toilets and sinks sized for preschool age children.



## **Dual Language Learners**

The majority of Alder Montessori students are dual language learners. Our education team uses Spanish and English throughout the school day within the classroom. We have books in multiple languages. For families whose primary language is not English or Spanish, we invite you to share book titles in your child's language that you would like to have in the classroom. A Montessori classroom supports dual language learners to build both language, social, and academic skills through its mix of specialized learning materials, individual and small group lesson model, and multi-age classroom. Dual language learners who are with our program for 2 full years with strong daily attendance will prosper.

## **Transportation**

Busing to and from school is provided by the school district. All buses and drivers meet Oregon motor vehicles division requirements. An Alder Montessori Staff rides the bus with the children to assist the operator in ensuring the safety of all children. If you decide to have your child ride the Reynolds district bus, it is with the understanding that AEME is not completing a background check on Reynolds district employees.

## **Field Trips**

We do not anticipate providing any field trips during this school year. Our annual family picnic is offered off-site at a neighboring park, and we ask that parents pick up and attend the picnic with their child(ren). If there are any field trips offered we will communicate with parents and get your written permission.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES**

The health of our community is dependent upon the health of the children. Please exercise careful judgment in the daily evaluation of your child's health. If your child is experiencing a health concern which makes it difficult for them to focus or participate in activities, or if they have symptoms which are likely contagious, please call our office and keep your child home for the day. Please call us daily when your child is absent due to health issues.

If a family plans for their child to be absent for more than 30 days due to medical leave, we are required to document this request. We will make all efforts to ensure your child can return to our school when they are well.



**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. We will make every effort to have one of our staff remain with your child, but we have mandated staff to student ratios which we must also maintain. Please be sure to provide us with current emergency contact information.

**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 reproduce and spread quickly. Treating lice is time consuming and costly, and it may take several treatments, and multiple attempts at combing eggs to get rid of lice completely, and prevent reinfestation. We highly recommend thorough treatment ASAP to prevent the spread to the rest of the school and future reinfestation. If your child is having a lice outbreak, please tie their hair back, and let us know, so we can help minimize the spread without drawing attention to it.

## **EMERGENCY PLAN**

Throughout the school year, staff works with the students to respond precisely, cautiously, and without fear during our monthly emergency drills. The classroom guides are responsible for leading all emergency procedures.

### **Lockout:**

Staff and students return inside and participate in normal day-to-day activities.  
Staff takes roll and increases 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 the responder to arrive.

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

Staff and students form a line and walk hand in hand to the 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 waits with students for the responder to arrive.

# FLOOR PLAN & EMERGENCY EXIT ROUTE

