

Arrival Time

All students, half day or full day, may arrive anytime between 7:30 AM and 8:30 AM. Arrival after 8:30 AM is considered late. We take our scheduled academic time very seriously and we ask that you do the same by respecting the importance of the Montessori school day and arriving on time.

School-aged students who arrive after 8:30 AM are considered late and their tardiness is recorded in school attendance records. Late arrivals negatively affect your student and disrupts the entire classroom environment.

If there is a valid reason for your student to arrive late to school, such as a doctor or dentist appointment, please notify the school beforehand by emailing Sara.Madero@PalmValleyMontessori.com or calling (623) 986-9516.

School arrival should be drama-free regardless of the age of the student. Students should be signed in at the front desk by a parent/guardian and proceed to their classroom independently. Escorted to drop off at the door, if in the Toddler program. Please keep goodbyes short and sweet. Remember major goals in Montessori education are independence and confidence. Although this is a tempting time to “have a quick conversation” with the teacher, we ask that parents and teachers and assistants do not engage at this time of the day. It is extremely important that the teachers and assistants are focused on greeting students, getting them settled into the classroom, and engaging students with work upon their arrival.

Please be mentally and emotionally present when picking up and dropping off your child. Cell phone conversations should be finished outside. During this transition period, your child deserves your full attention. When your child is being picked up or dropped off, please do not allow him or her to run around the property. The school's parking lot is a potentially dangerous place and should be treated as such.

Pick Up Time

Half day students should be picked up at 12:15 PM. Full day students should be picked up at 3:15 PM. Parents will be charged \$1.00 per minute per student for late pick up times after the end of the school day.

Allergies

There are several students with food sensitivities and a couple of students with severe and life-threatening food allergies at our school. For this reason, we do not allow any peanut or tree nut foods on the school grounds. The risk of exposure is too great. The staff closely monitors food consumption for these children. Please be mindful of these restrictions when packing your child's lunch, providing snack for the class, or preparing a potluck dish. For example, peanut butter, Nutella, and trail mix are potentially life-threatening foods in our school environment. If you are attending a school function which includes food, such as International Day or Summer Sizzle, do not give food to any student but your own.

Snack & Share Day

Primary students (Pre-school and Kindergarten) will be given pre-selected snack & share days.

On these pre-determined days, Primary students will bring some healthy foods to share with classmates for snack time and also an item for show-and-tell. Primary students are encouraged to bring foods that they can help prepare: apples to wash and slice, bananas to peel and cut, carrots to wash and peel, cantaloupe to scoop, etc. Primary students will have a snack & share day approximately once every two months. The schedules will be available on The Weekly Connection and in the school lobby.

Lunches

All students will need to bring a packed lunch from home. All lunches are refrigerated and food can be reheated for students. ***Please package food items requiring reheating in microwave-safe storage (i.e. glass instead of plastic containers).*** We ask that lunch boxes be relatively small in size so we can accommodate refrigerating all lunches.

Lunch boxes should be free of characters (no Spider Man, Barbie, Disney Cars, etc.). For example, a lunch box with a turtle design is great, but a Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle is not acceptable. A horse picture is fine, but My Little Pony is not. Lunch boxes also need to be a reasonable size. Lunch boxes are kept refrigerated and oversized lunch boxes take up too much space. Every lunch box should be clearly labeled with the student's name. At school, we do our best to promote and model healthy eating and good table manners.

- Please DO NOT SEND junk food in your child's lunch.
- Please DO NOT send squishy packet foods such as Go-Gurt or squeezable apple sauce. Foods packaged in this way discourage the table manners we are working so hard to achieve.
- Please DO NOT send Lunch-able kits, Macaroni and Cheese kits, or packets of noodles. These items take too much time to assemble and/or cook, causing the student to be behind schedule.

Foods requiring *reheating* are fine, but foods requiring *cooking* are not. The teachers and assistants help the students to unpack their lunches, but our goal at lunch is the same as the rest of the school day in that we try to encourage independence and have the student do as much as he can on his own. Please support our efforts by having your child practice unzipping their own lunch box, opening their containers, and eating independently and politely at home.

Lunches will be consumed either inside at tables or at outdoor tables. Students will need to pack all necessary utensils in their lunch box and bring the utensils back home for cleaning. These students will also need to bring a cloth or paper napkin in their lunch box. Students will use their water bottles during lunch.

Please remember **NO PEANUT or TREE NUT** products may brought to or consumed at school.

Water Bottles

All students need to bring a water bottle daily. The water bottle should only be filled with water. Please ensure the water bottle is character-free and clearly marked with your child's name. Water bottles should also be relatively small or child-size. Please DO NOT SEND any beverages other than water.

Birthday Celebrations

We love to celebrate children's birthdays, but in the Montessori classroom, we do not celebrate with goodies, cakes, prizes, etc. Instead, the birthday child carries the globe around the birthday mat "sun" symbolizing their own journey. Parents are welcome to attend the ceremony or to send in pictures and short stories to share with the class. We share the child's experiences and accomplishments (visiting the Grand Canyon, getting a dog, learning to swim). We ask what they would like to do in the next year of life. Birthdays are a time for reflection and goal setting. Due to allergy restrictions and a desire to minimize treats, we ask that parents DO NOT celebrate your child's birthday at school with sweets. A snack, miniature muffins instead of cupcakes, for example, are welcome. Plants for our classroom environment, a cultural artifact, or a book would also make a great, long-term contribution to the community to acknowledge and celebrate your child's special day.

If your family would like to donate a book to the Palm Valley Montessori School library in honor of the occasion, please write your child's name and birthday message inside. This is a wonderful way for the young child to contribute to the classroom community and remember his special day. Due to allergy restrictions and a desire to minimize treats, we ask that parents DO NOT celebrate your child's birthday at school with food. Sharing baby photos or making a poster board presentation about your child's year are fun ways to celebrate a birthday in the classroom. Please schedule a birthday celebration in your child's classroom by contacting our administrator at Sara.Madero@PalmValleyMontessori.com or 623-986-9516

Dress Code

It is our goal to provide the best possible learning environment for our students. The Montessori classroom is referred to as “the prepared environment” because teachers are meticulous in their selection and presentation of materials and design of space. Everything has a place and a purpose. Dress also should serve as an aid to the child’s safety and development and not be a distraction to learning. However, uniforms are not desirable as they take away from our individuality and cultural expressions. At this age, we want children to practice making appropriate choices within a reasonable framework. In an effort to shield our students from distraction and commercialism, Palm Valley Montessori School adheres to the following guidelines for dress:

- Sensible play clothes are the best choice for school. Please have your child dress as if he were going to the park for the day. While we do teach children to wear aprons, it is not advisable to send children in clothes that cannot get dirty.
- Shoes, clothing, and accessories should not distract your student or others. Light-up shoes, shoes with wheels, noise making watches, slap bracelets, colored hair pieces, etc. are not permitted.
- Hats are permitted for sun protection while playing on the playground or working outdoors. Students are asked to remove hats indoors.
- Do not allow your student to wear excessive jewelry to school. For example, simple earrings are not a problem, but large bracelets and necklaces are distracting to the child and are unsafe on the playground.
- Movie and television characters on clothing encourage distractibility, silly behavior, and inappropriate fantasy play in the classroom. For these reasons, we have imposed a character-free clothing rule. This rule also applies to lunchboxes, water bottles, folders, and other items.
- Please also evaluate whether the image or message on your child’s clothes are aggressive, violent, or sassy in nature. For example, “here comes trouble” or “talk to the hand” are not appropriate school messages.
- Logos and advertisements based in reality are fine. For example, wearing a Diamondbacks cap or a Phoenix Zoo t-shirt is fine.
- Please do not allow your child to put distracting items from home (lip gloss, stuffed animals, action figures, etc.) in their cubby.
- Temporary tattoos are not to be worn at school.

Extra Clothes

Students should come to school dressed for the work of the day. Primary and Toddler students should bring a complete change of clothes on the first day of school. A shirt, shorts, socks, and underwear should be enclosed in a clear zip-lock bag with the child’s name clearly marked. These items will remain at school. The clothes are not only for toilet accidents, but are also helpful to have on hand in the case of water spills, bloody noses, illness or injury, mud, etc.

Nap Items

Younger students have the opportunity to nap at school. These children rest on specifically designated cots in the nap room or a nap area. The mattresses or cots are cleaned, sanitized, and fitted with a freshly cleaned sheet and blanket. Please do not send attachment items such as a blanket or stuffed animal.

School Illness Policy and Medication Procedures

Ill children will not be admitted to school. If your child should become ill while in our care, we will attend to his needs until a parent can pick up. If your child has an illness please notify us. We are required to report any contagious illness to the Arizona Department of Health Services and to have a communicable illness record on file. Do not bring your child to school with the following symptoms: *fever, diarrhea, vomiting, rash, infectious disease*. Children may return to school after being symptom-free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducers. Medications will not be administered to children.