

Alcuin Montessori School  
Infant, Toddler Two, Two- to Three-Year-Old  
Parent Handbook



Infant Program 6 weeks – 14 months  
Toddler Two Program 15 months – 35 months  
Two to Three Program 24 – 35 months

*Hours: 7:15 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.*

**Roosevelt Campus**  
6942 Roosevelt Rd.  
Oak Park, IL 60304

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## **MISSION STATEMENT**

We empower our children's inherent love of learning, inspiring and challenging each child to engage the world as an independent thinker, creative problem solver, and compassionate citizen.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

We are a community of parents, professionals and children brought together by common goals and values dedicated to an education based on Montessori principles.

Our first major goal is to use these principles to provide children with an excellent education firmly based on life skills; an appreciation of history, literature, and the arts; an understanding of nature, the environment, and the world; and a mastery of mathematics, language arts and sciences. This knowledge enhances relationships, highlights similarities and contrasts between and among disciplines.

At Alcuin, children are encouraged to discover and reach their full potential. We strive to provide an atmosphere that encourages each child's confidence and curiosity, while teaching them the value of self-discipline, motivation, and accountability. Such attributes, when coupled with a sound knowledge base, foster clarity of thought and objectivity when solving problems.

As an educational community, we are accountable for the education of our children. We use collaboration among all constituents, parents and professionals alike, to build a secure and supportive environment in which each child can prepare for his or her future in a rapidly changing world. On a larger scale, Alcuin strives to be an active and responsible member of the surrounding community that includes alumni families, Chicago and its suburbs, our local community, and the national and international Montessori associations.

## **ALCUIN'S PREPARATION FOR LIFE**

*"In Every Child the World Begins Anew"* – Maria Montessori

Respect for oneself, for others, and for the classroom materials are the "ground rules" of a Montessori community. We believe, as Maria Montessori did, that the world's future depends upon how children grow up. This philosophy serves as the cornerstone of Alcuin's focus: commitment to the child.

We strive for a Montessori program in which a child's need for movement and social interaction, coupled with their equally compelling need for order, independence, and concentration, are fostered and met. Montessori-trained professionals and experienced assistants guide a child to moments of discovery that yield great joy and a sense of dignity as an independent human being.

## HISTORY OF ALCUIN

The idea for Alcuin Montessori School was conceived in 1960, when Oak Park residents Dr. Paul and Mrs. Kathryn Dunn visited what was then the only Montessori school in the United States, the Whitby School in Greenwich, Connecticut. Impressed by what they saw, the Dunns gathered a group of local Oak Park parents to discuss the benefits of a Montessori education.

They agreed with Dr. Maria Montessori's conviction that children in their early years can learn a great deal more than conventional educators believed. Montessori classrooms, with carefully designed educational equipment, lead children to independence and create a life-long love of learning. They were deeply impressed with the method's respect for the individual child's role as creator and explorer of his/her own world.

Alcuin Montessori School was started from these discussions. Named for an English educator of the Middle Ages, Alcuin opened in a rented space at Oak Park's Lowell School on September 6, 1961. Mary Flynn was recruited from the Whitby School to be the first Directress. The pastor of St. Giles Parish donated tables and chairs, while parent volunteers prepared the classrooms. Thirty children between the ages of three and four were pioneer students in one morning and one afternoon class.

By 1967, the school had grown to 150 Primary children and an Elementary class for six-to-nine year-olds was added. The following year, ground was broken for a new building in Oak Park, on the corner of Ridgeland and Randolph.

A facility in Maywood was added in 1971 that provided space for Elementary children up to age twelve. The site included a greenhouse and some sheep that the children cared for as part of their nature study. At the same time, Alcuin added classes for two-year-olds.

In 1979, all of Alcuin's classes moved to a former public school building at 7970 Washington Boulevard in River Forest. Leased from District 90, the building provided a comfortable and attractive facility for Alcuin's approximately 160 students. In the fall of 1997, Alcuin returned to its roots, a central location in Oak Park. In 2019, we opened the doors to our beautiful new campus on Roosevelt Road which houses the Infant, Toddler, Redwood, and Middle School programs.

Today, Alcuin offers programs for infants (6 weeks through 14 months), toddlers (15 to 23 months), and two to threes (24 to 35 months) at our Roosevelt Campus, and programs for ages 3 to 12 at our Main Campus (324 N Oak Park Avenue.) Middle School, ages 12 to 14, is offered at our Roosevelt Campus. Throughout the years, Alcuin has demonstrated its commitment to children and parents by providing community programs in the arts, parent education workshops and a variety of educational programs for families.

*Alcuin Montessori School's Non-Discrimination Policies*  
*Alcuin Montessori School complies with applicable federal and State laws prohibiting discrimination, including, but not limited to:*

1. *Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq.)*
2. *The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.)*

3. *The Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (29 U.S.C. 621 et seq.)*
4. *Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq., 2000e et seq.)*
5. *The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.)*
6. *The Illinois School Code [105 ILCS 5], and relevant case law including Plyler v. Doe, 457 U.S. 202, 102 S.Ct. 2382 (1982)*

## **ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

The corporation was founded in 1961 to educate children, to conduct and maintain a Montessori school, and to conduct other activities customarily carried out by such a school. Alcuin Montessori School is a board-governed, administration-directed, parent-supported school.

### **Board of Trustees**

*Board Mission Statement:* The Alcuin Board of Trustees exists to create plans, to set policies and make decisions that will best insure the viability of Alcuin's mission for the current students' children.

The Board of Trustees (BOT) is responsible for the strategic governance of Alcuin. It establishes policies, oversees finances and provides continuity and direction for the school. The Board of Trustees establishes annual goals and sets an agenda based on the long-range strategic plan. The Board of Trustees approves the school's annual budget.

The BOT shall consist of not fewer than eight and not more than fifteen persons, plus the Executive Director of Alcuin Montessori, who shall serve on the Board of Trustees *ex officio*. Each Trustee other than the Executive Director shall have one vote on each matter submitted to a vote of the Board.

The BOT meets monthly from August through June. Parents and visitors are welcome to attend the open session portion of the meetings. Board meetings are scheduled on the annual calendar and are announced in the weekly newsletter. Meeting minutes are available in the Main Campus office upon request.

Board members serve on at least one of seven committees: the Executive Committee, the Finance Committee, the Facilities Committee, the Development Committee, the Marketing Committee, the Committee on Trustees, or the Director's Evaluation and Support Committee. The BOT establishes *ad-hoc* task force groups for special purposes and projects as needs arise. Information provided on the Parent Volunteer form helps to identify and recruit committee members with expertise needed. Except for the Executive Committee, volunteers need not be board members to serve on these committees

The Director's Evaluation and Support Committee (DESC) advises, supports, and evaluates the Executive Director in the implementation of the annual goals. Additionally, DESC functions as a grievance committee for parents. Before approaching DESC, a parent who has a conflict with a

teacher must first seek resolution with that teacher. If the parent remains dissatisfied, they may seek resolution with the Executive Director. If the parent is dissatisfied with the Executive Director's decision, they may appeal in writing to the Chair of DESC, Leslie Katch Dobos (lesliekatch@gmail.com).

### **2022-2023 Board Members**

Kellie Beumer  
Mark Donovan  
Leslie Katch Dobos - President  
Karen Lualhati Becker - Treasurer  
Fred McClendon  
Ted Nourie  
Meghan Premo-Hopkins - Secretary  
Heidi Schmid Whiting

### **Development at Alcuin**

*Mission:* The Development Committee of Alcuin's Board of Trustees seeks to advance the school's fundraising efforts and instill in its community a culture of giving with the goal of ensuring a strong future for the school and supporting the strategic initiatives that drive the school forward.

*Fundraising:* Alcuin Montessori has only two annual fund-raising events: the Annual Fund and the Auction. It is vital that families commit to participating in both events because tuition does not cover the total cost of providing your child with an exceptional Montessori education. These two fundraising events help cover the gap between tuition and operating costs and ensure the ongoing financial strength of our school.

*Annual Fund:* The Alcuin Montessori Annual Fund is a program in which current parents, former students and their parents, grandparents and friends of Alcuin Montessori School are asked to support the school with annual financial contributions. Annual giving goals are set yearly by the Board, Administration and the Development Committee. Trustees, Faculty and Administration set a strong example with 100% participation and the Annual Fund seeks and has been proud to reach 100% participation from currently enrolled families as well.

All private/independent schools rely on annual giving to pay for special programs and projects that may not be included in the yearly operating budget. Annual giving helps control tuition increases and provides a tax-deductible way for current, as well as former families and friends, to support the school. The monies raised from the Annual Fund are used to support the current operation and long-term goals of the school.

Families are asked to generously support the Annual Fund in amounts appropriate to their individual circumstances. *When schools seek foundation grants it is critical to show high levels of participation from all members of the community.*

Alcuin Montessori is a non-profit organization, and all contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

*The Auction:* The Alcuin Auction/Gala has two major goals: to raise money which will help support the current and long-term strategic needs of our school, and to provide a fun-filled event that will bring our busy families together for entertainment and community building.

The Auction is a two-fold event. The first part is an online auction where donations from the outside community and the Alcuin families are presented through an online auction site. Many creative and unique items are auctioned there in a high-spirited competition.

The second part of the Auction is the live event. All adult members of our community are encouraged to come and bid -- or cheer on the bidders -- and enjoy an entertaining social evening.

The Auction is truly a whole-community event at Alcuin. The Auction Committee works tirelessly to get great donations from the community and friends. Families who are able often offer vacation homes or special skills they have to be auctioned. The students from each class create classroom projects which are auctioned off at the live event. Many teachers offer their time for special auction items.

As with the Annual Fund, the money raised by the auction is important for keeping our schools current and long-term visions viable.

## **Administrative Team**

### ***Executive Director***

The Executive Director is the chief administrative officer and the educational leader of the school. The Executive Director reports to the Board of Trustees and implements the general and financial policies of the board. The Executive Director is responsible for day-to-day school operations, leading the administrative and educational staff in delivering "Education for Life" and advancing Alcuin's long-range strategic plans.

### ***Business Manager***

The Business Manager is responsible for all aspects of finance and operations including budget, billing and collections, purchasing, accounts payable, employee compensation and benefits administration. The Business Manager works with the Executive Director, the Board Treasurer, and the Finance committee to implement the strategic financial plan.

### ***Day Care Director***

The Day Care Director is responsible for the daily operations of the center. They ensure a safe and educational environment for young children, manage teaching staff, develop curricula in coordination with teachers, communicate with parents, and uphold the center's reputation.

### ***Director of Advancement***

The Director of Advancement focuses on recruitment, admissions, enrollment and registration; as well as the implementation of the annual fund and spring fundraiser, maintains the alumni and friends database and relations and leads the school in advancement efforts. The director also spearheads Alcuin's internal and external communications, including memos, marketing and advertising materials. The Director of Advancement is the first point of contact for new and prospective families.

## **PROGRAM AND CURRICULUM**

The essence of Dr. Maria Montessori's method is to allow for the development of natural human tendencies and to help children as they adapt to their culture. The curriculum is grounded in the universal laws of human development that include movement, language, order, adaptation, work, self-discipline, exploration, self-perfection, abstract thinking, imagination, and creativity. A goal of the Montessori program is to help children think for themselves and to be actively involved in their own education. This is one distinction between a Montessori program and many conventional school programs. The Montessori environment is filled with beautiful and enticing age-appropriate materials.

### **The Montessori Curriculum**

Before age seven, a child's primary relationship with their environment is sensorial. Children develop through their experiences, learning to walk, talk and explore the environment with their senses. They absorb information, concepts, and skills from their experiences with little effort, and form a sense of trust and security through the continuity of relationships both in and out of the family. In the Infant and Toddler programs, children are exposed to experiences in the classroom that help them to foster independence while doing age-appropriate activities that focus on the process of learning rather than the product of learning.

#### ***Practical Life***

A natural extension of the home environment encourages children to continue their learning through purposeful work while building fine motor, problem solving skills, independence, and social-emotional development. The Infant and Toddler classroom is specifically designed to meet the needs of the child aged 6 weeks-35 months. The layout of the classroom facilitates independence and accessibility to materials.

#### ***Mathematics from Concrete to Abstract***

The goal is the development of the *mathematical mind*. *Introduction to these concepts through songs and counting are always consistent throughout the daily routine.* From the Infant room to Toddlers, Montessori children use hands-on materials to help make abstract mathematical concepts concrete.

#### ***Cultural Education***

From the earliest age, children are guided to respect all life forms and acquire sensitivity to the natural environment. Our diversity is celebrated through music, art, literature, specific cultural experiences through books and community involvement.

#### ***Creative Arts***

Music, art, movement, drama, and literature transmit social heritage to succeeding generations. We strive to provide students at all levels with enriched creative experiences. Beginning with an Infants exposure to sensorial artistic activities and a toddler's access to art materials; children are encouraged to express themselves through painting, drawing, coloring, and craft projects.

Music begins with exposure to simple songs from the classics to sing along favorites. A community circle time brings the children together in the Infant and Toddler classroom for this experience. Music experiences range from using rhythm instruments to informal individual and group singing.

## **Language**

Literature inspires creative expression in children of all ages. Infants through toddlers have access early on to books, as well as expressive language, modeled by the teachers in their environment.

## **Class Level Programs + Behavior/Discipline Policies**

- Infant - 6 weeks to 14 months
- Toddler - 15 to 23 months
- Two to Three - 24 to 35 months

### **Program Descriptions**

#### *Classrooms:*

Toddler – Classroom 1 (Capacity 15)

Toddler – Classroom 2 (Capacity 15)

Toddler – Classroom 3 (Capacity 8)

Infant – Classroom 4 (Capacity 12)

Infant – Classroom 5 (Capacity 12)

- The **Infant** program provides learning experiences in an environment that is cheerful, inviting, and rich with opportunities to explore. Low shelves and tables make the materials easily accessible to the infant that is mobile, while there is always a hum of conversation from teachers to children. The Infant teacher is specifically trained to work with very young children. The natural routine in this classroom includes time for feeding, sleeping, exposure to music, outdoor time, and occasional time in our large muscle activity room.

#### DAILY SCHEDULE – Classroom 4 and Classroom 5

7:15-8:30 a.m.	Arrival/Breakfast/Diapering/Toileting
8:45-9:45 a.m.	Work Cycle (Age and developmentally appropriate)
9:45-10:00 a.m.	Cleanup, Song/circle time/story
10:00-11:00 a.m.	Nap time (ages 6 months and up)
11:00-11:30 a.m.	Snack time/toileting/dress for outside or gross motor time*
11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.	Go for a walk/playground/Gross Motor activity
12:30-1:00 p.m.	Wash hands for lunch/toileting
1:30-3:00 p.m.	Nap
3:00-3:30 p.m.	Snack/toileting/school day children get ready to depart
3:30-6:00 p.m.	Work cycle/Gross motor time/outdoor play

\*The schedule for Infants under 6 months varies slightly dependent on the sleeping, feeding and diapering needs of the child, based on their age. The activities vary based on the age and developmental needs of each child.

- The **Toddler** class is a child-sized extension of the home. Here the children can, on their own initiative, pursue the goal of independence. The beauty and order of the classroom and its materials entice them to touch and explore. Activities

focus on the child’s developing motor, language, and social skills. The teacher guides and reassures them in their work.

**DAILY SCHEDULE – Classrooms 3, 4 and 5**

7:15-9:00 a.m. Children arrive, toileting, breakfast, begin work cycle

9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Work cycle, line time, recess

12:00-3:00 p.m. Lunch, naps, employee breaks

3:00-6:00 p.m. Snack, after school play/activities, outside time, departure

**DAILY GROSS MOTOR SCHEDULE**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Classroom</b>
8:30-9:00 a.m.	Infant Rm 4
9:00-9:45 a.m.	Infant Rm 5
10:00-10:30 a.m.	Toddler Rm 1
10:45-11:15 a.m.	Toddler Rm 2
11:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.	Toddler Rm 3
12:00-1:00 p.m.	Infant Rm 4
1:00-2:00 p.m.	Infant Rm 5
3:00-3:30 p.m.	Toddler Rm 1
3:45-4:15 p.m.	Toddler Rm 3
4:30-5:00 p.m.	Toddler Rm 2
5:15-5:45 p.m.	Open

***Behavior, Guidance and Discipline Procedures***

Alcuin Montessori School statement of philosophy regarding discipline is as follows: we pursue a goal of self-discipline for children through lessons in Grace & Courtesy, peace-making and guided respectful social communication. Teachers role play scenarios with the children, identify situations in which skills can be applied and guide the children toward the successful use of these attributes. We provide children with appropriate and enriching activities, anticipating that children who are engaged in successful work will be more likely to develop responsible behavior.

Discipline will be implemented by staff in the following way: when inappropriate behavior occurs, the teacher redirects the child to engaging, appropriate activities. If a behavior persists, the teacher guides the child’s activities by limiting freedom to socialize, to work with partners and/or to select an activity or work area. When the child consistently shows appropriate behavior, he regains independence and freedom.

When a child does not respond cooperatively to these procedures, the child is removed from the group, activity, or peers. The child may be assigned a work area, required to stay next to the teacher or, if needed, asked to visit the office for a period of time. The teacher will call the parent to discuss supportive options.

Parent will be involved in the guidance and discipline process in the following manner. If a child does not respond cooperatively to the second stage process, the staff arranges with the parents for the child to be taken home. Parents may be called to pick-up the child immediately if:

- a) the child bites another person,
- b) the child intentionally and seriously hurts another person,
- c) the child's tantrum is uncontrollable and prolonged, and/or
- d) the child persists in using inappropriate language.

Children are involved in the guidance and discipline process in the following way: Alcuin sets behavior standards and disciplinary policies based upon the principle that a person's independence and freedom are the result of responsible and self-controlled behavior. All persons and things are to be treated respectfully and courteously, and the needs and good of the whole community are respected.

The procedure for termination of a child's enrollment in the day care center because of disciplinary issues is as follows. Our goal is for independence with responsibility, and it is the partnership between families and administration that supports these values and makes them possible. If after all of the above measures have not resulted in a resolution and positive experience for both the child and children in the classroom, the Executive Director of the school reserves the right to dismiss a child or family from the school at any time.

Parents will be notified of the termination via an in-person meeting, or phone call, with the Executive Director.

Written rules for all children shall be established and available to children, parents and staff. These rules shall set the limits of behavior required for the protection of the group and individuals.

The rules shall:

- 1) Pertain to important situations;
- 2) Be understandable to children;
- 3) Be stated in the positive form whenever possible; and
- 4) Be enforceable.

Childcare staff shall help individual children develop self-control and assume responsibility for their own actions. Imposing physical activity or withholding active play shall not be used on children as a form of discipline.

- 1) Limits and consequences shall be clear and understandable to the child, consistently enforced and explained to the child before and as part of any disciplinary action.
- 2) Discipline shall be developmentally appropriate and logically related to the child's act and shall not be out of proportion to the inappropriate behavior. The child shall be made aware of the relationship between the act and the consequences.
- 3) Firm positive statements about behaviors or redirection of behaviors shall be the accepted techniques for use with infants and toddlers.
- 4) Removal from the group to help a child gain control shall not exceed one minute per year of age. Removal from the group shall not be used for children less than 24 months of age.
- 5) Children shall not be disciplined for toilet accidents.

### ***The Teacher's Role***

At each level of the Montessori program, well-organized classrooms equipped with special materials encourage freedom of movement and choice for all children. By setting guidelines for

work and behavior, teachers show children how to function within the structure of the curriculum and the classroom community. The pattern for a lifetime of good work habits and a sense of responsibility and cooperation are established.

The teacher is the dynamic link between the child and the environment. The emphasis is on *teaching and guiding* by providing the details of procedures and information so the child can practice and internalize skills. Through observation, the teacher determines when a child needs further instruction or support and when they are ready for additional challenges. The teacher is responsible for preparing and maintaining the learning environment, and then guiding children toward developmentally appropriate and meaningful activity. The teacher evaluates the children, their work and their developmental progress in order to respond effectively. Teachers also model respect, provide support and serve as peace-makers. As a motivator, the teacher stimulates interest in learning, instilling within the child a basic interest and delight in working with the lessons.

### **Montessori Teacher Certification**

Montessori certified teachers demonstrate mastery of the Montessori curriculum and theory at the particular age level he/she will teach. Teachers learn how to use specifically designed Montessori materials for all subject areas and how to integrate all subjects to create the program for the respective age levels.

Montessori certification programs exist throughout the world and can usually be completed in one to two years, depending on the age level. The programs incorporate an internship or student teaching portion which may require the intern to complete a one-to-two-year practicum in a class. The certification program usually requires the Montessori intern to have completed a bachelor's degree.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**

### **Admissions Policy**

Alcuin does not discriminate in admissions, placement, or employment on the basis of sex, race, creed, ethnic origin or disability. Alcuin is committed to providing an atmosphere where children of various social, racial, religious, and cultural backgrounds may experience an optimal learning situation due in part to the diversity of the student body.

The Alcuin staff will evaluate the needs of each child prior to acceptance to the school.

*Admission priority is extended in the following order:*

- returning students and siblings of Alcuin families;
- children with previous Montessori experience;
- children from new families.

### **Adjustment Period**

Alcuin offers a 30-day adjustment period to families with a child entering the school for the first time. The adjustment period allows the family and school time to mutually confirm that our Montessori program meets your child's needs. If during the adjustment period, the Executive Director, teacher, and parents agree Alcuin Montessori School does not meet the child's needs, the parent is responsible only for the prorated tuition or a minimum of \$1000.

## **Withdrawal Policy**

If the new family of an infant or toddler age child withdraws for reasons other than those stated above or after the 30-day adjustment period, the parents are responsible for the full year's tuition. The \$1500 tuition deposit is always non-refundable and non-transferable. Upon signing the contract, each family is also responsible for the annual tuition.

## **School Hours by Program**

Infant	7:15 a.m.-6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday
Toddler	7:15 a.m.-6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday

The school is closed on major holidays such as Labor Day, Thanksgiving Break, Dr. Martin Luther King Day, Presidents' Day, and Memorial Day. The school is also closed for winter break (depending on when holidays fall on that particular year) and one week at summer break (generally the week of Fourth of July). Be sure to check the online calendar and *Weekly Memo* for closings.

## **Office Hours**

The school office is open from 8:00 a.m.-5:45 p.m., Monday through Friday. You may reach your child's teacher by leaving a phone message in the office or contacting them through Brightwheel. Teachers return calls after class hours. Staff email addresses are first initial, last name @alcuin.org. For example, Jane Smith would be jsmith@alcuin.org.

## **School Policy Regarding Transgender, Gender non-Conforming, and Non-Binary Students and Staff Members**

### **The purpose of this policy is to:**

- (1) foster an educational environment that is safe, welcoming, and free from stigma and discrimination for all students and staff members regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.
- (2) facilitate compliance with local, state and federal laws concerning bullying, harassment, privacy, and discrimination.
- (3) ensure that all students and staff members have the opportunity to safely experience and express themselves and live authentically.

### **Scope**

This policy covers conduct that takes place in the school, on school property, at school-sponsored functions and activities, including field trips. This policy also pertains to usage of electronic communication including all forms of social media that occurs in the school, on school property, at school-sponsored functions and activities, including on school computers, networks, forums, and mailing lists, as well as any electronic communication that is directed at a student or community member and which substantially interferes with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the school. This policy applies to the entire school community, including educators, school staff, students, parents, and

volunteers. To view entire policy, please refer to the Parent Handbook for ages 3-14 (a.k.a., the main campus), available [on our website](#).

## FEES AND TUITION

### Entrance/Facility Fee

Families new to Alcuin pay a one-time family entrance/facility fee of \$1200.

### Deposits and Tuition

Enrollment contracts are due in early spring with a \$1500 tuition deposit for each child who is returning to Alcuin to reserve their space. The deposit reserves a space at Alcuin only if tuition payments are current (i.e., no more than 30 days outstanding). *Tuition Deposits are non-refundable and non-transferable and are applied to the year's tuition for the child for which it is made.*

Your child's enrollment contract will be considered **a permanent legal document after you sign it and submit it to the school**. Any changes to this contract must be made in writing before May 31<sup>st</sup> for the upcoming school year. The school year runs July 1-June 30.

### Billing Tuition

We recognize the need to provide options to meet tuition obligations. Tuition is paid for the academic year and is not tied in any way to the number of days of school in any given month, nor is it reduced due to sickness or vacations. Parents agree to pay the full year's tuition when they sign the Enrollment Contract. However, you may also choose from three payment plans listed below according to your individual budgeting needs.

- Two Payment Plan - Due August 1st and January 1st.
- Four-Payment Plan - Due the 1st of August, November, February, and April.
- Nine Payment Plan - Due the 1st of August through May excluding March.
- Twelve Payment Plan – Due the 1<sup>st</sup> of July through June.

Tuition is paid via the FACTS tuition management web site. *Families must enroll in FACTS tuition management prior to the first day of school or they will not be able to attend.*

### Late Tuition Policy

The financial stability of the school depends on timely payment of tuition. Payments over 75 days late are reviewed by the Finance Committee and referred to collection and the child(ren) will be dismissed from school effective on the 90<sup>th</sup> day after the original payment was due.

If you are having temporary financial difficulties, please contact the Executive Director or the Business Manager to make special payment arrangements. You are expected to pay your tuition account for the current year in full by May 15. Lack of communication from parents to the Executive Director could jeopardize your child's enrollment.

### **Late Pick-Up Fees**

Prompt dismissal is important for the children, as they become anxious when they are not picked up on time. The staff has responsibilities after dismissal and are not available to stay with children who do not leave on time.

Parents are charged a *Late Pick-Up Fee* of \$1.00 per minute when the child is not picked up at his/her scheduled dismissal time.

### **Administration Fee**

Changes made to a payment plan after May 31<sup>st</sup> will result in a \$50.00 administration fee.

## **ATTENDANCE and ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL PROCEDURES**

### **Carpool (Drop-off and Pick-Up)**

We want to work with parents to make your child secure in the transition from home to school. Be sure to review all carpool information listed here and follow all procedures for the safety of the students and community members. Carpool numbers will be emailed to parents prior to a child's first day of school.

During drop-off, an Alcuin staff member will greet you and take the child to the classroom. Older toddlers may have some difficulty separating. When this happens, remember to smile, stay calm, and give your child every indication that you are thrilled about him/her being here at Alcuin. Say goodbye with a smile and try not to react to your child's crying or separation anxiety. Parents may park either behind the school and ring the doorbell, or on Roosevelt Road and ring the doorbell.

If you are dropping off **7:15 to 8:00 a.m.**, please drop off your child at the outside classroom door accessible through that room's outdoor/garden space. Open the gate, knock on the door, and your child's teacher will open.

Parents may pick up their children at either the front door or back door. Be sure your carpool number is displayed on your phone when you ring the doorbell and show it to the camera.

If your child exhibits any of the following symptoms, please keep them at home until they are symptom-free for 24 hours:

- Fever/chills;
  - Difficulty breathing;
  - Cough;
  - Headache;
  - Sore throat;
  - Vomiting;
  - Diarrhea.
- Please note, mask usage is optional at the Roosevelt Campus.

If you are picking up your child earlier than usual, be sure to send a message to your child's teacher to let them know.

### **Absenteeism and Late Arrivals**

If your child will be absent, please email your child's teacher or leave a voicemail by 7:00 a.m. Please include your child's name, reason for the absence and whether it will be all or part of the day. All illnesses, especially contagious ones, must be reported as soon as possible. We send *Health Alerts* to families when a contagious illness (i.e., pink eye, hand food mouth, etc.) has been reported in a class.

### **Change of Pick-Up Notes**

If your child needs to go home with someone other than his/her designated pick-up, please send a note to your child's teacher and the office. These release messages help ensure the safety of your child.

### **Severe Weather & Safety**

In the case of a severe weather situation, Alcuin will be closed if the Oak Park School District 97 schools are closed. Check the Alcuin web site and Facebook for any school closing information. In case of severe storm or tornado warnings during school hours, all students will be taken to a sheltered area. Fire, tornado and lock-down drills are conducted regularly in compliance with Village and State ordinances. The school will use the contact information that you provided for Connect5 in the event that we need to reach our families quickly with any emergency information.

## **CLASSROOM INFORMATION**

### **Birthday Celebrations**

We do not host birthday parties, but rather we celebrate a child's birthday by honoring their place in history, such as making a timeline of his/her life with a picture for each year. We try to celebrate as close to the child's birthday as possible. It is our policy not to serve cake, cookies, cupcakes or party favors. Please save these goodies for the at-home party. However, a gift to the class may be made in your child's name. Please discuss the selection with your child's teacher.

If you are having a birthday party for your child, please do not distribute the invitations at school; even if you are inviting the entire class. Please let the office know if you need a copy of the classroom roster.

### **Clothing**

To assist in your child's growing independence, purchase clothing with large buttons, big zippers, oversized slip-on boots and attachable mittens. All clothing must be labeled. Please provide the school with five extra sets of clothing in a labeled *Ziploc* bag. Please do not send clothes to school daily or in backpacks. Please purchase comfortable clothing that will support your child's growth with independence. Loose-fitting pull on pants with an elastic waist are best. Save buttons and zippers for coats and sweaters only. Overalls and tight leggings can be very frustrating for a toddler to manipulate.

Your child's teacher will provide a more detailed list of what is needed.

### **Breakfast**

Alcuin's policy is to promote grace and courtesy and healthy nutrition through education. Breakfast tables are prepared with tablecloths or place mats, napkins, dishes and glasses.

Breakfast will be served by Alcuin staff and prepared at Alcuin. It will consist of hot and cold choices and a monthly menu provided.

Due to severe allergies, our campus is completely nut free. Do not send nuts, nut oils, nut milks or nut products of any kind to school.

### **Lunch**

Alcuin's policy is to promote grace and courtesy and healthy nutrition through education. Lunch tables are prepared with tablecloths or place mats, napkins, dishes and glasses. Lunch will be provided by Gourmet Gorilla catering company with a monthly menu provided.

Due to severe allergies, our campus is completely nut free. Do not send nuts, nut oils, nut milks or nut products of any kind to school.

### **Clothing and Rest/Nap Needs**

DO NOT SEND pillows due to limited storage and sanitation. Items that do not fit in the child's container will be sent home.

Alcuin provides cribs for infants, as well as and cots with cot sheets for toddlers.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

Alcuin adheres to the Illinois Department of Public Health's immunization requirements. Proof of required immunizations must be provided before your child enters Alcuin for the first time and throughout their enrollment in the school, unless you have a religious exemption letter on file. Medical and Dental Examination forms sent with enrollment confirmation letters must be on file prior to your child's starting date. Copies are available in the office if needed.

### **When Your Child Is Ill**

Should your child contract a contagious disease, please notify the office immediately. Children with colds should recuperate at home. Children must be free of fever for at least 24 hours before returning to class.

Children shall be screened upon arrival daily for any obvious signs of illness. If symptoms of illness are present, the childcare staff shall determine whether they are able to care for the child safely, based on the apparent degree of illness, other children present and facilities available to care for the ill child:

1) Children with diarrhea and those with a rash combined with fever (oral temperature of 101° F or higher or under the arm temperature of 100.4° F or higher) shall not be admitted to the day care center while those symptoms persist, and shall be removed as soon as possible should these symptoms develop while the child is in care.

2) Children need not be excluded for a minor illness unless any of the following exists, in which case exclusion from the day care center is required:

A) Illness that prevents the child from participating comfortably in program activities;

- B) Illness that calls for greater care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children;
- C) Fever with behavior change or symptoms of illness;
- D) Unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing or other signs of possible severe illness;
- E) Diarrhea;
- F) Vomiting 2 or more times in the previous 24 hours, unless the vomiting is determined to be due to a noncommunicable condition and the child is not in danger of dehydration;
- G) Mouth sores associated with the child's inability to control his or her saliva, until the child's physician or the local health department states that the child is noninfectious;
- H) Rash with fever or behavior change, unless a physician has determined the illness to be noncommunicable;
- I) Purulent conjunctivitis, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated;
- J) Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated;
- K) Strep throat (streptococcal pharyngitis), until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated and until the child has been without fever for 24 hours;
- L) Head lice, until the morning after the first treatment;
- M) Scabies, until the morning after the first treatment;
- N) Chicken pox (varicella), until at least 6 days after onset of rash;
- O) Whooping cough (pertussis), until 5 days of antibiotic treatment have been completed;
- P) Mumps, until 9 days after onset of parotid gland swelling;
- Q) Measles, until 4 days after disappearance of the rash; or
- R) Symptoms that may be indicative of one of the serious, communicable diseases identified in the Illinois Department of Public Health Control of Communicable Diseases Code (77 Ill. Adm. Code 690).

## **COVID-19**

The Roosevelt campus (Infant and Toddlers) is mask optional. All adults, faculty, staff, parents, caregivers, and visitors will no longer be required to mask. Children who are two years old and older will no longer be required to wear a mask when entering or exiting the campus. As an Alcuin staff, we will continue to mask at any time when there is a COVID case or known exposure in the classroom. We would ask that all parents continue this same practice.

The details below continue to remain in place:

- We will report positive cases to the classrooms/close contacts that are affected only. We will no longer report cases to the entire school.
- A 5-day isolation is necessary if positive for COVID-19. If symptoms are improving and they have been fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicine, they may return to school on day 6. Days 6-10 a well-fitted mask should be worn, if possible.
- We are no longer requiring close contacts to quarantine, regardless of vaccination status, unless they become symptomatic. If symptoms occur, follow the protocol for positive COVID cases. If possible, close contacts should wear a well-fitting mask for ten days.
- For those not able to mask due to age, other mitigations (such ventilation, teacher will wear a well-fitting mask, spacing, etc.) will be put into place.
- Symptomatic children should not come to school until a negative COVID test is presented, symptoms have mostly resolved, and they must be fever-free without medication for 24 hours or have obtained a differential diagnosis.

Symptoms:

- Fever 100.4 or higher
- Cough
- Runny Nose
- Extreme fatigue
- Sore throat
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea

As a reminder, we will notify each classroom individually of any COVID updates but will not be making these announcements as whole school updates any longer. Please refer to the *Weekly Memo* for additional updates.

### **Emergency Procedures**

In case of a medical emergency, every effort will be made to reach you or your child's doctor. If our attempts to contact you fail, we will use emergency facilities at Rush Oak Park or Loyola Maywood. The signed medical release, which is part of the Emergency Information Form, will insure your child receives prompt attention at the hospital. **It is imperative you notify the office of changes in home address and phone number, parent work numbers, and other emergency information.**

### **Medication Policy**

Occasionally children need to take medicine at school. Alcuin's medication policies are described, as follows, so that we can ensure the safety of all children.

- Medicine must be prescribed by your doctor (including non-prescription drugs). The doctor's written order must accompany the non-prescription medicine and include your child's name and birth date;
- All prescription medication must be brought to school in the original package or an appropriately labeled container with your child's name, prescription number, name of medication, dosage and how it should be administered on the package;
- Over-the-counter medications or home remedies should be brought in with the manufacturer's original label and the ingredients listed, and the child's name on the container.

Parents are responsible for notifying the school of their child's illness. If the child is ill with anything other than the common cold or flu, the school should be notified. The following list delineates diseases for which the affected staff and families must be notified:

- Strep throat
- Chicken pox
- Non-allergy-related conjunctivitis
- Fifth's disease
- Foot, hand, and mouth disease
- Head Lice

If a child must take medicine at school, Alcuin's medication policies are described, as follows, so that we can ensure the safety of all children.

- Medicine must be prescribed by your doctor (including non-prescription drugs). The doctor's written order must accompany the non-prescription medicine and include your child's name and birth date;
- All prescription medication must be brought to school in the original package or an appropriately labeled container with your child's name, prescription number, name of medication, dosage and how it should be administered on the package;
- Over-the-counter medications or home remedies should be brought in with the manufacturer's original label and the ingredients listed, and the child's name on the container.

A signed **Medication Release Form** for any medication to be administered to a child during school hours must be on file in the office. **The school staff will not administer any medication without this signed authorization.** Forms are available in the office.

### **Outdoor Activities**

On bitterly cold days, we check with the weather bureau and make a decision about indoor versus outdoor recess. If your child is well enough to come to school, expect that outdoor activity will be a part of the child's day. We cannot accommodate requests to keep children inside during recess time, as there are no adults available to supervise them. Please be sure that your child is dressed appropriately for the weather outdoors. We will go out on cold days unless the wind-chill temperature reaches zero degrees. For outings, the staff/child ratio is 4:1 (infants) and 5:1 (toddlers and two to threes). Additionally, a first-aid travel bag will accompany any group. The kit contains:

- Disposable latex gloves;
- Scissors;
- Tweezers;
- Thermometer;
- Bandage tape;
- Sterile gauze pads;
- Flexible roller gauze;
- Triangular bandage;
- Safety pins;
- Eye dressing;
- Pen/pencil and notepad;
- Cold pack;
- Adhesive bandages; and
- Current American Academy of Pediatrics or American Red Cross standard first-aid text or an equivalent first-aid guide
- Water;
- Soap;
- Antiseptic cream or solution;
- Telephone number of the childcare center (preferably on a laminated card);
- Coins for use in a pay phone.

The children will be utilizing either one of three onsite gardens, with access from each classroom, Carroll Park (located at 1125 S Kenilworth Ave in Oak Park, IL 60304), or Maple Park (located at 1105 S Maple Avenue in Oak Park, IL 60304). Carroll Park is two and half blocks from the daycare, or a five-minute walk. Maple Park is located four blocks from the daycare, or a nine-minute walk.

The route to Carroll Park is as follows:

- Head east on 12th St/Roosevelt Rd toward Kenilworth Ave
- Turn left onto S Kenilworth Ave
- Destination will be on the left.

Features:

- AED (Automated External Defibrillator)
- Baseball/Softball Field
- Center/Field House
- Multipurpose Field
- Playground
- Restrooms
- Walking Path

The route to Maple Park is as follows:

- Head west on 12th St/Roosevelt Rd toward Home Ave
- Turn right onto Home Ave
- Turn left onto Fillmore St
- Turn right onto S Maple Ave
- Destination will be on the left.

Features:

Maple Park is the Park District's 3rd largest park featuring an abundance of recreational opportunities including baseball, soccer, tennis, pickleball, walking paths and a dog park (permits required). Open meadows in this park provide an ideal location for kite flying and tossing a frisbee or just sitting quietly to enjoy nature.

### **Park Features**

- AED (Automated External Defibrillator)
- Baseball/Softball Field
- Dog Park (Permit Required)
- Multipurpose Field
- Pickleball
- Playground
- Restrooms
- Tennis Courts (with Lights)
- Walking Path

### **Security**

All parents, guests, and visitors are required to report to the school office when entering the building. To maintain safety and security, the school staff must know who is in the building at all times. To enter the building, ring the buzzer at the Roosevelt or Home Ave. alley entrance and identify yourself. When the door is buzzed open, please come directly to the office to check in. Please do not hold the door open for people that you do not know well to enter the building.

## **PARENT COMMUNICATION**

### **Observing**

Observing your child at work is an excellent way to learn about the Montessori method and about your child's social, emotional and academic (when appropriate) development. Parents are welcome to observe classes from October through May by scheduling an appointment in the office. The observation calendar is available at the front counter. Observations take place in the morning, and you are encouraged to observe often during the school year to gain a broader picture of your child's progress. Before you leave, complete the observation form and return it to the office. Your child's teacher will call you after your visit to discuss your observations. Observations are limited to one adult per class per morning.

### **Communication with the Teacher**

A line of communication between you and your child's teacher is always open either via phone, Brightwheel or email.

### **Weekly Memo**

The *Weekly Memo* is sent to all families electronically every Thursday or Friday. Please look for this important communication and check with the office if you do not receive one

### **Parent Conferences**

Parent/Teacher conferences are scheduled twice a year during November and March. Parents are required to attend these two conferences. Prior to the conferences, you will receive an

appointment schedule to indicate your preferred conference date and time. We try to schedule appointments to accommodate parents' preferences and so that parents with multiple children enrolled have adjacent appointment times. You are notified in advance of your conference schedule. Conferences are for parents and teachers only; please make other arrangements for your child during the conference. In addition to the November and March conferences, you may request for a conference at any time by calling the office or sending a message to the teacher.

### **Montessori Education Meetings**

Please check the calendar for Parent Ed dates and other important school meetings. These meetings are the first step in forming a partnership between the family and school. We request parents attend Parent Education functions throughout the year, not only to support and understand the Montessori method and the work of the faculty, but also to build community. Check the calendar and Weekly Memo for scheduled events. Parenting classes may also be available on select years.

### **Student Records**

Alcuin Montessori School maintains student records based upon current DCFS, federal and state laws, including attendance records, health records, and academic documentation.

### **Religion**

The environment and curriculum are consistent with the spiritual needs of all children. Alcuin is not affiliated with any particular religion.

### **Alcuin Parent Communication Policy**

For general communication, room parent emails: Please note that the Executive Director must see and approve any materials (hard copy or electronic) before it is distributed.

The purpose of this communication policy is to identify how the school can answer questions or address concerns that occur over the course of the school year. The most effective way to address them is to handle them at the level at which they occur. If the issue or question involves your child, contact your child's teacher. The teacher will either address your concern, or if necessary, refer you to other resources. If this effort proves unsuccessful, please contact the Executive Director or Daycare Director.

If you have questions or concerns regarding billing or tuition payments, please contact the Business Manager who will either address your concerns or refer you to other resources. If this effort proves unsuccessful, please contact the Executive Director.

If you have questions or concerns regarding volunteer opportunities or work on a specific committee, please contact the chairperson of the Parent Volunteer Program or the chairperson of a specific committee. Call the front office for relevant contact information.

If, after you have gone through this process, you believe you have a legitimate grievance that has not been addressed satisfactorily, please contact the chair of the Director's Evaluation and Support Committee (DESC), Leslie Katch Dobos (lesliekatch@gmail.com). The Board has charged DESC with handling all matters involving the guidance, direction and performance of the Executive Director.

Alcuin's procedure for contacting DESC is as follows:

- Submit a signed, written summary of the problem to the chairperson of DESC. The statement should include specific facts, names, dates and a statement explaining your position.
- The DESC chairperson will investigate and study the problem and speak with the parent. At a meeting of the committee the members will determine the action, if any, should be taken.

Once the matter has been reviewed, the DESC chairperson will contact you to advise how the matter is being handled. The matter will be handled confidentially and will not be discussed with others not directly involved in the issue. The DESC committee's decision stands, as there is no appeal process beyond this.

## SUGGESTED READINGS

Suggestions for reading books by Dr. Maria Montessori

*The Absorbent Mind*

The Formation of Man

The Discovery of the Child

The Secret of Childhood

Education and Peace

Education for a New World

To Educate the Human Potential

The Child in the Family

The Child and The Church (Ed. E. M. Standing)

The Montessori Method (Intro. J. McV. Hunt)

The Advanced Montessori Method

Spontaneous Activity in Education

From Childhood to Adolescence

Books about Montessori

Maria Montessori, Her Life & Work - E. M. Standing

Montessori - A Modern Approach - Paula Polk-Lillard

More Than Sandpaper Letters: Montessori in the Home - Doma Petrutis

Other Recommended Books

*Montessori Talks to Parents* series - published by NAMTA

Between Parent & Child - Dr. Haim Ginott

Children the Challenge - Rudolf Dreikurs

The Endangered Mind - Dr. Jane Healy

How To Really Love Your Child - Dr. R. Campbell

How To Really Love Your Teenager - Dr. R. Campbell

How to Talk So Kids Will Listen - Faber & Mazlish

Positive Discipline - Jane Nelson

## Parent Handbook Acknowledgement of Receipt, Understanding and Waiver

I hereby certify that I have read and fully understand the contents of the Parent Handbook, including the guidance and behavior/discipline policies. Furthermore, I have been given the opportunity to discuss and information contained herein or any concerns that I may have. My signature below certifies my knowledge, acceptance and adherence to Alcuin Montessori School's policies, rules, regulations, and procedures.

CHILD'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

PARENT SIGNATURE(S):

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIGNATURE:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*Please return and form to Alcuin prior to the first day of school.*

**ASSUMPTION OF RISK AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY RELATING TO ILLNESS**

In conformity with all applicable laws and regulations, Alcuin Montessori School (“AMS”) has elected to resume operations to the extent possible in advance of the containment of SARS-CoV-2 (hereafter referred to as “COVID-19”). Although AMS has taken extensive precautionary measures and preventative steps to reduce the spread of COVID-19, the fact that COVID-19 is a microscopic pathogen means that AMS cannot guarantee that you (or subsequently those with whom you associate or interact) will not become infected with the virus.

By signing this waiver, you acknowledge the highly contagious nature of COVID-19 and voluntarily assume any and all risks associated with exposure to or infection by COVID-19 upon visiting or patronizing the services of AMS in any manner. You further acknowledge that exposure to or infection by COVID-19 may result in injury, illness, disability, or death to you or anyone with whom you subsequently associate. You also understand that the risk of becoming exposed to or infected by COVID-19 at AMS may arise from the actions, omissions, or negligence of yourself or others, including, but not limited to, AMS employees, other AMS patrons, independent contractors, third parties, or the friends, family members, or associates of any of these groups.

Notwithstanding these warnings, you voluntarily agree to assume any and all of the foregoing risks associated with exposure to or infection by COVID-19, and you hereby accept sole responsibility for any injury to yourself or to your successors and assigns for any illness, death, injury, disability, damage, loss, claim, liability, action, or expense of any kind that you or others experience or incur, directly or indirectly, in connection with visiting or patronizing AMS in any manner.

By signing this waiver, you hereby agree – knowingly, voluntarily, and without reservation of any kind – to forever release, discharge, covenant not to sue, and hold harmless AMS and its officers, directors, employees, shareholders, agents, representatives, predecessors, successors, parents, subsidiaries, or affiliates from any legal claim or cause of action of any kind – whether known or unknown – which may arise as the result of actions, omissions, or negligence on the part of AMS that leads to exposure to or infection by COVID-19. Your release of such claims applies to all matters that are in any way related to exposure to or infection by COVID-19, whether sounding in contract, statute, tort, or any other legal theory. Your release also applies whether COVID-19 exposure or infection occurs before, during, or after visiting or patronizing AMS, and regardless of whether a COVID-19 infection can be traced back to an exposure on AMS premises or through contact with an AMS employee or agent.

I HAVE READ THE ABOVE WAIVER CAREFULLY, AND I HAVE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO SEEK GUIDANCE REGARDING ITS CONTENT FROM ANY OUTSIDE SOURCE OF MY CHOOSING. AFTER CAREFUL CONSIDERATION, I HAVE DECIDED TO ACCEPT THE TERMS PROPOSED BY AMS, AND TO KNOWINGLY, VOLUNTARILY, AND WITHOUT RESERVATION RELEASE AND HOLD HARMLESS AMS FROM ANY AND ALL LEGAL CLAIMS OR CAUSES OF ACTION AS DESCRIBED ABOVE. I ALSO AFFIRM THAT MY EXPRESS DESIRE TO VISIT AMS OR PATRONIZE AMS SERVICES WILL OPERATE AS ANY NECESSARY AND LEGALLY SUFFICIENT CONSIDERATION FOR THE RELEASES PROVIDED HEREIN.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Child's Name