

## Ashford Montessori Policies

5906 Westcreek Drive

Austin, Texas 78749

(512) 892 – 1629

Trinh Doan – Director

### Hours of Operation

Monday – Friday 6:30 am – 6:30 pm

We open all year round

Ashford Montessori welcomes all children from birth to 12 years without discrimination of any sort.

### Program Philosophy and Goals

It is our mission to provide a safe learning environment to happy, playful and carefree children in our care. We believe that children are empowered to make good choices when they are provided with a nurturing, playful and consistent environment. Our goal is to prepare children to make good choices for themselves. At Ashford Montessori Learning Center, we believe in the whole child, therefore our number one principle and goal is to teach the fundamental emotional, social, and educational skills; beginning in the stages of infancy and continuing throughout one's adolescent years and ultimately molding your child from average to above average.

### Fees

Ashford Montessori cares for children all year round; our annual registration fee and supply fee is **\$ 150 (one hundred and fifty dollars)**, which is payable when a child enrolls and each September thereafter. This fee covers supplemental insurance, administrative cost and supplies and fee is non-refundable and non-transferable. At anytime your child withdraws for any reason, you will be responsible for the registration and supply fee upon re-enrollment.

The goal of Ashford Montessori is to ensure a consistently high quality program for each child in the center. In order to ensure consistency, it is necessary for us to enforce the following rate policies.

All tuition fees are due and payable on Monday for the current week and can be paid on a weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly basis, **IN ADVANCE**. The tuition rate for your child is \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per week. Your payment is considered late after Tuesday for weekly/bi-weekly payment and after the 2<sup>nd</sup> of each month for monthly payment. A \$10 fee will be added every day the payment is not in our office.

### Picking up your child(ren) after closing hours

6:31 pm – 6:45 pm           there will be a \$5 late fee

6:46 pm -                     it will be an additional \$1 per minute(s) plus the \$5 late fee before 6:45pm

One-half of the regular tuition will be charged for absences lasting one or more calendar weeks. Each family is allowed four weeks from their anniversary of enrollment to take advantage of the halved tuition. After the four weeks are used up for the year, then - regardless of attendance - tuition will remain the regular weekly rate with no reduction.

If a child is in attendance for 3 or more days of his/her program week, there will be no tuition reduction. Holiday(s) are counted as day(s) in attendance. There is no reduction for part time student(s). It's use it or lose it for children that are enrolled in our two, three days program or before/after school program. Parents are required to give at least two weeks notice prior to withdrawing their child(ren). There is a \$10.00/day bookkeeping fee for payment received after Tuesday. A fee of \$35.00 will be charged for checks returned by the bank for any reason. IF A CHECK IS RETURNED FOR ANY REASON THE TUITION WILL HAVE TO BE PAID IN CASH OR MONEY ORDER THEREAFTER. NO EXCEPTIONS.

### **Holiday**

We will be closed on New Year's, Good Friday, Memorial Day, July 4<sup>th</sup>, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day & Black Friday, and Christmas. We will close early the day before Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's. Any holiday that falls on a Thursday, we will also close the following Friday. Any holiday that falls on a Tuesday, we will also close Monday prior. When a holiday falls on Saturday then we will close the Friday prior and if it falls on Sunday then we will close the following Monday. Due to fixed costs averaged over a calendar year, there is no reduction in tuition for our holidays. Tuition charges for these holidays will be calculated as though the child were present (if it is the child's regularly scheduled day of attendance). We make no exceptions to this policy.

Ashford Montessori reserves the right to revise any fee and/or policies, upon written notification to the parents.

### **Bad Weather**

We follow Austin ISD schedule. Please check the news on bad weather day(s). If Austin ISD is closed due to bad weather, we will also close.

### **Requirements**

For your child's safety and to comply with state standards, all enrollment papers, including the child's health record and medical information, must be completed before attendance. Enrolled children are not required to have a TB testing. A child that will turn 4 years old by September 1 will also need to obtain a vision and hearing screening within 120 days of admission. These forms will need to be updated yearly.

### **Procedures for drop off and pick up of children**

Your child must be at the center no later than 10:00 am for drop off and must be picked up by 6:30 pm. Parents will provide Ashford Montessori with names of all person(s) authorized to pick up their child(ren). It is important that the director be notified in writing or by phone whenever there is a change in person authorized to pick up a child (required to show ID).

### **Procedure for handling medical/evacuation emergency**

We will inform parent(s) as soon as possible through phone calls or as the parent comes to pick up their child for minor incidents. For major incidents, we will go down the list of phone numbers in the enrollment form immediately to inform the parent of the incident.

In an event we have to evacuate the building, Ashford will move all children to Patton Elementary School and you can contact the director at (512) 758-9782.

**Illness**

For each child's safety and comfort, we cannot care for sick children at Ashford Montessori as we do not have the facilities or specialized staff necessary for such care. A child with 3 or more episodes of diarrhea, and fever of 99 degrees or more (a child with fever cannot return to the center within 24 hours from the last fever) will need to be picked up. A child who becomes ill will be isolated and the parent notified to promptly come for him/her. Please refer to the state minimum standards for child-care center; we follow the state rules and regulation.

**Attendance/Absences**

Parents are encouraged to take your child to school on a regular basis. Students need to attend school daily to succeed. Please call us or drop a note in the drop box as soon as possible to inform us when your child will not be at the center due to illness or personal reason(s).

**Medication**

A written statement from the physician and/or parent must be provided to authorize medication given to a child at Ashford Montessori. All medication must remain in the original container, labeled with the child's name, type and date, plus amount and time of dosage. This statement must be renewed each day. **Under no circumstances will staff at Ashford Montessori administer any medication unless the medication authorization form is filled out.**

**Special Needs Children**

We are unable to include children requiring special care in our regular program without prior consultation and written approval of a qualified specialist in the field of medicine, psychology and/or special education.

**Nutrition**

Breakfast	7:00 am	-	8:00 am	
Lunch	10:00 am	-	12:00 pm	(Varies by Class)
Snack	1:30 pm	-	3:30 pm	(Varies by Class)

We will provide a comfortable chair in the baby room for any nursing mothers. We also have a refrigerator in the building to store breast milk.

Arrangements can be made with the director if you would like to provide a snack for a birthday party or special event. Food should not be brought into the center without the Director's approval.

**Program Practice:**

We have a full kitchen in the facility and all food is prepared in the building.

All liquids and food hotter than 110 degrees are kept out of children's reach.

Staff will be notified and trained on children with certain food allergies to ensure children are protected.

Anytime during the year if we bring food into the building, it will either be purchased commercially prepared or from an establishment that is inspected by the local health officials.

A healthy snack will be offered to school age children when they arrived at the center.

We do not reward good behavior or a clean plate with food of any kind.

Milk, fresh fruit, and vegetables are available for children who bring lunches from home.

### Home Lunch Practices:

Please place your child's healthy lunch bag in the fridge upon arrival and don't forget to label with your child's name.

Teachers will be sitting with children during meal time to model eating etiquette and talk about the nutritional value of the food they are eating. Parents are welcome to join us during meal time.

We are a peanut-free facility so please do not pack any peanut products into the building. Please talk with the director when bringing food into the building to make sure we don't have any other food allergies in the building.

We participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Please pack a healthy lunch if you choose to pack your child lunch. There are plenty of ideas at <http://www.squaremeals.org> or let me know and I will provide you with healthy menu ideas.

### Breastfeeding Education

Please see teacher/director regarding resources of breastfeeding education and support.

You can also go to [www.breastmilkcounts.com](http://www.breastmilkcounts.com) for more information.

### Clothing/Supply

For your child's comfort we ask you to bring a complete change of clothing (We keep them in case of spills or accidents), blanket (naptime), and bottles, sippy cup, diapers or pull-ups and wipes (if necessary). PLEASE CLEARLY MARK WITH HIS/HER NAME ON ALL THE ITEMS.

### Toys

In order to avoid a child's disappointment with broken or lost toys, we prefer that they use the toys we provide. Please leave all toys at home. The only exception will be a "Show and Tell Day".

### Discipline/Challenging Behaviors

At Ashford Montessori, every effort is made to provide an atmosphere of activity and learning. Positive reinforcement encourages appropriate behavior in children. When necessary, supervised isolation from the group (TIME OUT) may be used as a form of discipline. The use of physical punishment is never permitted. When a child becomes uncontrollable by our staff, the incident will be documented, and parents will be notified to pick up their child. After two uncontrollable incidents, the child will be suspended for one or more days from the center and a parent conference will be scheduled. If the behavior doesn't change after the parent conference, then there's a possibility of termination.

**Parent(s) are held responsible to pay for any damage to any property caused by your child due to his/her defiant behavior(s)/action(s).**

### Parent conferences

We will set up conferences as needed. Parents are welcome to set up a conference with the teacher and director anytime throughout the year.

### Complaint procedures

First, talk with the teacher and try to come up with a solution. If that cannot be resolved, please talk to the director or person in charge about the issue.

### Transportation

Transportation is provided to and from neighborhood schools. If the child is participating in a transportation program, please notify the director of any schedule changes before the bus run begins.

## **Parent Involvement/Activities**

We provide a morning and an afternoon outside playtime daily as weather permits. Our T.V. time in the building is from 5:30pm – 6:00pm. Throughout the year there will be plenty of emails with information regarding activities in the building and/or neighborhood along with any resources that might be useful to parents.

We do not provide water activities or field trips during the school year. We may have them during the summer months. Any parent that would like to volunteer on field trips or help a teacher in the Classroom, please talk with the director.

## **Staff requirements**

All staffs are required to obtain an annual of 30 clock hours of training by their anniversary and the director is required 35 clock hours of training by their anniversary.

All staffs are required to have annual training on abuse and neglect of children. Ashford will coordinate with the children's advocacy center annually to hold training on child abuse and neglect for parents and staffs. Ashford does not require immunizations for vaccine-preventable diseases for employees.

## **SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT POLICY**

State law requires all staff members to report suspected child physical, emotional and sexual abuse and neglect.

Staff members who suspect any case of child abuse or neglect must immediately report it directly to Childcare Licensing and also to our Director. Once the case has been reported, the Department of Family and Protective Services will investigate and notify the school. The DFPS Statewide hotline is 1-800-252-5400.

## **Procedures:**

### **Director**

1. The Director must report all suspected child abuse cases to the Child Abuse Hotline. A person may not make the independent determination of whether a report is necessary or not.
2. The Director must send a written report of suspected child abuse to the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) of the alleged abuse within 48 hours.
3. The Director must immediately report all suspected cases to the Owner.

### **Employees**

1. You must immediately report a suspected case of child abuse to the Child Abuse Hotline and to the Director.
2. When reporting suspected cases of child abuse, you must include the following information:
  - a. Name of child
  - b. Age of child
  - c. Child's present location
  - d. Type and extent of abuse
  - e. Name of individual making the report
  - f. Individual's title
3. Due to the confidential nature of such reports, no information concerning the incident can be shared with other staff members or parents.

Preventing and responding to abuse and neglect of children requires:

### **STAFF TRAINING**

Ashford Montessori will provide training for all staff on the identification and reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect each program year. The director will provide this training for new staff at an orientation within 7 days of their hire date. Any new staff hired during the school year will document such orientation in the employee's file. All employees must complete at least one clock hour of annual training from the Department of Family and Protective Services Website: <http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Training/Reporting>; or another source including, but not limited to, face to face and online training.

### **PARENT EDUCATION**

The Child Abuse and Neglect Policy will be given to all parents at Parent Orientation in the operational policies handbook. The policy will be discussed with parents at the time they receive it. Parents will be offered training on the prevention of abuse and neglect and will be informed of available community resources from the National Association for the Education of Young Children and the Department of Family and Protective Services Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention Program (CBCAP Program).

The CBCAP program makes parents aware of prevention services in their communities and encourages them to use them. It also strengthens community and parental involvement in child abuse prevention efforts. CBCAP funds a variety of contracts with community-based organizations to provide child abuse and neglect prevention services. These include Respite and Parent Education, Fatherhood and Leadership for Effective Parenting, Multidisciplinary Approach to Prevention Services, Family Support programs, as well as various special initiatives. These include the Help for Parents, Hope for Kids campaign, which reaches out to parents with advertising and inspirational testimonials, and gives them a website: <http://www.helpandhope.org> to connect them with prevention and support services statewide.

### **HOW DO I KNOW IF IT'S ABUSE OR NEGLECT?**

DFPS uses definitions of abuse and neglect found in the Texas Family Code (TFC):

<http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/FA/htm/FA.261.htm>

DFPS defines abuse and neglect as the following acts or omissions by a person:

Physical injury that results in substantial harm to the child, or the genuine threat of substantial harm from physical injury to the child, including any injury that is at variance with the history or explanation given. This does not include an accident or reasonable discipline by a parent/guardian or managing possessory conservator that does not expose the child to a substantial risk of harm.

Sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental emotional, or physical welfare, including conduct that constitutes the offense of continuous sexual abuse of young child or children under Section 21.02, Penal Code, indecency with a child under Section 21.11, Penal Code, sexual assault under Section 22.011, Penal Code or aggravated sexual assault under 22.021, Penal Code.

Mental or emotional injury to a child that results in observable and material impairment in the child's growth, development, or psychological functioning.

Neglect includes the following acts or omissions by a person:

Placing a child in or failing to remove a child from a situation in which a reasonable person would realize requires judgment or actions beyond the child's level of maturity, physical condition, or mental abilities and that result in bodily injury or a substantial risk of immediate harm to the child.

Failing to seek, obtain, or follow through with medical care for a child with the failure resulting in or presenting a substantial risk of death, disfigurement, or bodily injury or with the failure resulting in an observable and material impairment to the growth, development, or functioning of a child.

The failure to provide a child with food, clothing, or shelter necessary to sustain the life or health of the child, excluding failure caused primarily by financial inability unless relief services have been offered and refused.

What if I'm not sure it's neglect?

While it would be ideal to have a clear-cut guide that would determine whether any given situation constitutes as abuse or neglect, there are many factors that determine whether a situation warrants an investigation. When in doubt, always err on the side of the child's safety by making a phone call or Internet report to the Texas Abuse Hotline.

**WE HAVE AN OPEN DOOR POLICY.** We welcome all comments, suggestions, and questions. You can contact local licensing office at (512) 834 – 3195 and/or view minimum standard and inspection report at [www.dfps.state.tx.us](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us)  
The child abuse hotline number is 1-800-252-5400. Parents can contact the hotline for assistance and intervention regarding abuse and neglect.  
A complete Emergency Preparedness Plan is available at the center for review.  
There is a water fountain and fish tank on the premises.  
Ashford Montessori is in a Gang-Free Zone.  
I have read Ashford Montessori Policies and agree to its provisions.

Parent	Date	Parent	Date
_____	_____	_____	_____
Director	Date		
_____	_____		