

Alpine Montessori, Inc.

Operational Policies

Alpine Montessori School
908 N. 6th St.
Alpine, TX 79830
(432) 837-2173

Hours, Days, and Months of Operation

Alpine Montessori School is open Monday through Friday from 7:45AM to 5:30PM. See our calendar for months of operation and holidays.

Procedures for Release of Children

When you bring your child to school, the state requires you to sign them in. Every classroom has a daily sign-in/sign-out sheet. Only those individuals designated on enrollment information will be allowed to pick up your child. If someone other than the individual(s) listed will be dropping off or picking up your child, we require prior written notice and a copy of the person's driver's license on file.

Illness and Exclusion Criteria

Please notify the school in the event of any absences. Elementary students, including kindergartners will be considered truant without notification of absence. For the sake of others as well as the child, parents are asked to keep at home any child who has a fever or other symptoms of illness, such as a bad cough or green nasal discharge. The parent will be notified and is expected to make arrangements to take the child home. Please let the office know of any communicable diseases, as we are required to report these types of illnesses back to the State.

A child should be free from fever for 24 hours before returning to school. If your child has been exposed to a contagious disease, he/she should be kept home and the facts of his/her condition should be reported to the office. Strep throat, pinworms, conjunctivitis, impetigo, measles, mumps, chicken pox, scarlet fever, head lice, etc. are among those conditions categorized as "highly contagious". A letter will be sent home to the families of the children in the classroom where the illness was reported.

Alpine Montessori, Inc., strives to be an evolving Montessori teaching community, fostering the unlimited potential that lives within each of us. We celebrate the unique gifts of each member of our community and attend equally to the education of the heart as well as the mind. In promoting social justice, global awareness, and peace, we do our very best to accommodate those with disabilities. However, being privately owned does have the disadvantage of not being equipped to accommodate certain needs and we are therefore unable to provide care for some individuals.

Sunscreen and Insect Repellent

Alpine Montessori staff will apply sunscreen and/or insect repellent to any student at the parent's discretion. These items must be provided by the parent(s) and clearly labeled with the child's name and any special instructions regarding application.

Medication

If your child becomes ill and needs to have medicine administered during the school day a parent must report this to the office and fill out a Medication Authorization Form. The medicine is to be left in the office. DO NOT send medicine to school in backpacks or lunch boxes. When your child is through with their course of medication it must be picked up from the office or it will be thrown away.

Medical Emergencies

In the event that your child has a serious emergency, 911 will be called first, followed by the parent specified on your enrollment contract. If that person cannot be reached, we will begin contacting those listed as emergency contact persons in the student's file.

Discipline and Guidance Practices and Parental Notifications

As contemplated by the Montessori School environment, the families of all Montessori School children are expected to agree to foster and promote the teaching and virtues present in the curriculum. Families agree not to disrupt, interfere, or interrupt school programs, school activities or the classroom setting. Failure to abide by such provisions can result in the termination of a student's contract.

Alpine Montessori, Inc., attempts to use natural and logical consequences to support the children in maintaining the classroom ground rules. Alpine Montessori's staff does not use corporal punishment or other intimidating means of discipline. Our intention is that our children never be humiliated or ridiculed in any way. If there is a serious behavior problem, the family will be contacted for a conference. We will attempt to work in harmony with the parents to correct any serious behavior problem that exists within the school. Alpine Montessori will take the following steps to correct any discipline problems.

1. The Student receives verbal reminder of rule, appropriate behavior or consequence.
2. If behavior persists or child refuses to comply with step 1, parents are called for a telephone or scheduled conference. Parents are told that if behavior continues to persist, they may be called to retrieve the child from school. When the parent is asked to pick up their child because the behavior is persisting, the child will be removed from the classroom and wait in the office.
3. When the child returns the next day, the teacher confers with the child and parent before the child can return to the classroom. Any limitations for the child will be discussed at that time.
4. For serious infractions or if the behavior continues after step 3, suspension or expulsion are possible and the child cannot return to school until a conference with the parents, teachers and administration takes place.

Alpine Montessori, Inc., reserves the right to place a child on probation and eventually to dismiss the child from school should such an action be warranted.

No child will be disciplined through corporal punishment or verbal abuse. Please keep in mind, this policy also applies to parents. Children may not be yelled at, spanked or threaten to be spanked while at Alpine Montessori. The following behaviors are prohibited by ALL persons: corporal punishment, including hitting, spanking, swatting, beating, shaking pinching, and other measures intended to induce physical pain or fear; threatened or actual withdrawal of food, rest, or use of the bathroom; abusive or profane language; any form of public or private humiliation, including threats of physical punishment; and any form of emotional abuse, including shaming, rejecting, terrorizing or isolating a child.

Alpine Montessori follows positive discipline guidelines by using positive reinforcement, redirection and other forms of positive behavior management.

It is also our policy that we will handle ALL discipline situations that may arise with the children while they are on the Alpine Montessori campus, according to our stated philosophy. If a parent has concerns regarding another child's behavior, we ask that you discuss your concern with the appropriate teacher. Under NO circumstance will parents be allowed to approach a child or his/her parents in an effort to deal with a situation while at the school. We consider this method as wholly inappropriate and it will not be tolerated. Failure to abide by this policy will subject the offender to banishment from the school campus and all school related activities.

Meals and Food Service Practices

Please check with your child's teacher for exact times for the class's lunch. The parents are responsible for providing lunch for their child Monday-Friday.

Please send a nutritious lunch for your child each day. Items that require refrigeration will need to be placed in an insulated lunch bag with a Blue Ice pack. In order to develop proper nutritional habits, lunches should consist of multiple items so that your child may make choices about what to eat. These items should be healthy, representative of the five food groups, and be items that your child enjoys eating. Additionally, always send water in your child's lunch. Please adjust the quantity to be appropriate for your child's individual eating habits. Non-nutritional items including candy and soda are not allowed. If such items are brought to school, they will be sent home unopened. While we encourage students to eat what is provided for them, food is never used as a reward for good behavior or for finishing their plate. We try to teach the children to reduce, reuse, and recycle. Please pack your child's lunch in reusable containers, with reusable utensils, and a recyclable cloth napkin. We do not have the facilities to heat up any food, therefore, please use a thermos to keep food warm. Some parents like to send a special treat on their child's birthday to share with the class. This is an opportunity for parents to be creative with the emphasis on nutrition and fun. Although Alpine Montessori, Inc., does provide nutritional snacks throughout the day, the School is not responsible for the nutritional content of children's lunches.

Alpine Montessori offers nutritious snacks in the form of cheese, crackers and fruit throughout the day to all the children enrolled at the school. Hot or warm snacks are not served at the school, but items brought in by a staff member that is hotter than 110 degrees are kept out of reach of the children. All staff is alerted to food allergies of the students. Please be sure this portion of your Admissions information is clearly stated.

Hot Lunch Fridays are home meals prepared by one family and brought to school to be enjoyed by everyone in the class. Participation in Hot Lunch is voluntary.

Screen Time Policies

Alpine Montessori School engages in limited screen time in all programs and classes. Primary students are shown G-rated movies on special holidays and in the event of inclement weather when they are unable to go to recess. On Fridays the after-school care team will occasionally offer a G-rated movie to the children. Elementary children may watch educational documentaries on occasions such as holidays or inclement weather.

Outdoor Activities

Students at Alpine Montessori enjoy at least one hour of physical activity every school day, weather permitting. After-school care students have at least an additional 30 minutes of recess after 3PM.

Immunization Requirements

The Admission and Enrollment forms are the most important record that we keep on file for your child. These forms are used to contact you in case of emergency and to let us know if your child has any illnesses or allergies that we need to be aware of. Please remember to update your student's forms whenever you have a change in address or phone number. Alpine Montessori follows the requirements put forth by the Texas Department of Health and Human Services' Minimum Standards regarding immunizations for children enrolled at our school. While this policy allows for parents to obtain a waiver to exempt their child from receiving vaccines, we strongly encourage parents to consider the importance of vaccines for the overall health of our community. A child may be exempt from immunization requirements for one of the following two reasons:

1. His/her physician recommends against immunizations on medical grounds.
2. His/her parents' sign a medical release affidavit based on religious or personal beliefs.

Should the vaccination rate of our student body fall below the threshold of 95%, we reserve the right to deny enrollment to unvaccinated children until we again reach a safe level for herd immunity. In the event of an outbreak of disease at Alpine Montessori that is deemed preventable under the current TDHHS minimum standards for immunization in school-aged children, unvaccinated students will be required to stay home until 48 hours after the disease is no longer present at the school.

It is the policy of Alpine Montessori, Inc., to comply with the reporting requirements of confirmed communicable diseases as required under Texas Health and Safety Code, Section 81.042. Alpine Montessori, Inc., is not in a position to diagnose or disseminate any medical

conditions of any students. No medical information about any students will be disclosed to anyone other than that student's parents.

Tuberculin Testing Requirements

Alpine Montessori does not require the staff of this establishment to undergo yearly testing for tuberculosis.

Hearing and Vision Screening Requirements

As per State requirements, all four and five year children must have vision and hearing screening, which Alpine Montessori provides. However, we encourage all parents to have their child of this age screened for vision and hearing during their annual doctor's exam and submit the results to the office for the child's file.

Gang-Free Zone

A gang-free zone is designated within 1000 feet of Alpine Montessori School. The purpose of this zone is to deter certain types of criminal activity in areas where children gather by enforcing tougher penalties.

Enrollment Procedures and Policy Change Notifications

Alpine Montessori, Inc., provides equal employment opportunities and equal participation opportunities to all its employees and/or students without regard to ethnicity, national origin, creed, gender, physical disability, age, proficiency in the English language, or athletic ability. Employment and enrollment are granted to those who submit a timely application and is based on space or position available.

The yearly enrollment process begins in April when enrollment contracts are offered to students who are currently enrolled at the school. Returned contracts will be accepted in the following order: seated students, employee's children, siblings of current students, and children on the waiting list.

The following paperwork is included in a student packet and must be returned in order for the contract to be accepted: Admissions Form, Enrollment Form, Parent Commitment Policy form, Volunteer Commitment Form, and the Enrollment Checklist.

The Alpine Montessori, Inc., Parent Handbook, the Alpine Montessori School Enrollment Contract, and the Alpine Montessori, Inc., Operational Policies are to be construed together and incorporated with one another. By agreeing to the Terms and Conditions of the Enrollment Contract, you are also agreeing to the Terms and Conditions of the Parent Handbook and the Operational Policies stated herein.

The Operational Policies and the Parent Handbook are reviewed on an annual basis. Parents are notified in writing immediately of policy changes via email or their family box in the office.

Families needing to make changes in their contact information are asked to contact the school immediately with amendments. You may also email the administration at

admin@alpinemontessori.org or leave this information in the “Suggestions or Comments” box located on the desk in the office.

Right to refuse

Alpine Montessori School reserves the right to refuse a contract, or to terminate a contract, of any student that the School feels it is incapable of serving or if due cause has been determined after careful consideration. Due cause is defined as a violation by the student or parent of any of the policies stated in the Operational Policies and in the Parent Handbook, severe behavioral concerns, or failure to comply with the enrollment and financial policies herein. Incoming elementary students with no previous Montessori experience are subject to a one-semester probationary period. The probationary period is put into place in order to ensure that the child is capable of functioning in a productive manner in a classroom that stresses autonomy and practices positive discipline.

Transportation, Water Activities and Field Trips

These activities are listed in the Admissions Forms and require release by a parent. Parents indicate permission by checking all that apply in the appropriate box. Parents are informed of such activities in advance and may opt out by keeping their child home on the day the activity takes place.

Animals

All animals kept at the school are maintained at the highest levels of cleanliness. As per state requirements, any necessary paperwork for the animals owned by the school is on file in the main office.

Questions or Concerns

A parent orientation is held at the beginning of every academic school year to discuss our policies and procedures as well as going over any questions or concerns. Parent-teacher conferences are held twice annually. The Director is available via appointment (usually made at least one day in advance if possible) for any questions or concerns that may arise.

Concerns involving classroom policy and procedures should first be addressed to the child’s teacher. If this communication proves unsatisfactory, concerns should be brought to the Administrator. Issues that need further attention may then be given to the Executive Director. It is our sincere hope and ultimate goal that all issues and concerns will be dealt with promptly and appropriately by the school faculty or administration, but if a parent or family member is further dissatisfied with the administrative response, we encourage the matter to be brought before the board of directors.

Observations

Parents are welcome to visit the school at any time during our operational hours to observe. We also offer a week of designated observations twice a year, held just before the parent/teacher conferences.

Volunteering and Participation

Parents at Alpine Montessori School Inc. are required to volunteer eight hours of time per semester to the school. This can be done in a number of ways. Please check the office for details.

Minimum Standards, Licensing Reports, and Important Contacts

Parents may review a copy of the minimum standards and the most recent Licensing inspection report as well as information on how to contact the local Licensing office, the PRS child abuse hotline and the PRS website at any time during our operational hours. This is all on file and available in a binder for review in the office.