



PARENT HANDBOOK

2017-18

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General Information

Message from the Head of School

Welcome to Aidan Montessori School. The Parent Handbook will provide you with information about our school so that you and your child can have a successful year. Please read, and keep handy, the Parent Handbook.

We look forward to a year filled with exciting educational opportunities and growth for your child. A Montessori education fosters curiosity and leads to a lifetime of learning and is the foundation for all of one's future works. We are pleased you have joined our Aidan family and hope you are excited to be a Montessori parent!

—Kevin Clark

Mission Statement

The mission of Aidan Montessori School is to create and sustain an optimum Montessori educational environment to enable each child to realize his or her richest potential for learning and to become an independent, self-motivated, and contributing member of the world community.

This mission is best accomplished by:

- Providing a curriculum adhering to rigorous Montessori standards, informed by current thinking and research on child development and learning;
- Fostering a love of learning;
- Embracing a diverse student body in which students experience and learn to respect ethnic, cultural, economic and other differences and to seek and identify common ground;
- Recognizing that personal growth involves responsibility toward others and toward the earth; and
- Facilitating the involvement of parents, teachers, students and the larger community.

Statement of Philosophy & Objectives

Aidan begins with a deep respect for children as unique individuals. We are concerned about the development of the whole child—social and emotional, intellectual, physical, and spiritual. An underlying purpose of an Aidan Montessori School education is to aid the child

in independence and self-formation by creating an environment that can unlock the inherent potentials and intelligences within each child. We:

- Embrace the Montessori pedagogy, which is based on universal principles of child development, as sound theory and practice for teaching and learning;
- Look to accepted current research to inform our evolving understanding of human development. Recognize the many differences in learning rates and styles;
- Believe in individualizing each child's school experience for the fullest development of his or her potential. Embrace the concept of a multi-age, three-year age span classroom community as optimum for academic, social, and emotional learning;
- Believe that the dynamic classroom requires a sufficient gathering of children (24-29 students) to operate effectively; and
- Value cooperation over competition and believe that each child's work and behavior should be evaluated on his or her inherent capacity rather than by comparison.

Diversity Statement

"The needs of mankind are universal. Our means of meeting them create the richness and diversity of the planet. The Montessori child should come to relish the texture of that diversity." — Maria Montessori

At Aidan Montessori School, we embrace and celebrate the diversity of our world. Our differences — including those of culture, race, ethnicity, religion, age, family structure, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, socioeconomics, learning style, and world view, among others — form and inform a rich environment that is a crucial part of educating our children on their path to maturity and global citizenship. Our interactions across our entire community are characterized by guiding principles of respect, equity, justice, humanity, peace, and personal responsibility.

We oppose discrimination and consciously recognize the value of diversity throughout our hiring practices, admission and financial aid processes, classroom composition, professional development, community and classroom activities.

Notice of Nondiscriminatory Policy as to Students

Aidan admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. Aidan does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, gender identity, or sexual orientation in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, financial aid programs, athletic programs, and other school-administered programs.

Faculty & Staff

Aidan is proud of its AMI-trained classroom faculty and accomplished specialty faculty and administrators. For a full and up-to-date list of all Aidan employees, please see our website. There, you will find names, faces, titles, and contact information, as well as a profile for each employee detailing their qualifications for their post.

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is responsible for setting the mission, establishing overall policy and ensuring the financial stability of Aidan Montessori School. Through the selection of a Head of School, the Board assures implementation of the policies it has adopted.

A full and up-to-date list of Aidan's current Board members can be found on the school's website.

Board members serve staggered three-year terms. In addition, the Head of School and a Faculty Representative are ex-officio non-voting Board members. The Committee on Trustees is responsible for developing and considering individuals for Board membership. The full Board votes annually to fill any vacancies and to elect officers for the following year.

Aidan's current Board of Trustees consists primarily of parents and friends of the school. More significantly, Board members are administrators, educators, fundraisers, lawyers, engineers, financial planners, business owners, planners, consultants and problem solvers. While the Board strives for diversity in the backgrounds and skills of trustees, all members share a common commitment to maintain the character, philosophy, and fiscal health of Aidan Montessori School.

The Board works through standing committees: Building and Grounds, Development, Finance and Trustees. The Board authorizes other committees and special task forces to study specific issues that arise. Parents who are not Board members have served on Board committees. The Board holds regular meetings during the school year and a meeting during the summer months to approve the revised budget as needed. Actions of the Board are reported to the parent body at large through letters from the President of the Board of Trustees and committee chairpersons of the Parent Association.

Parent Association

Who are we?

When you enroll your child at Aidan Montessori School, you automatically become a member of the Parent Association (PA).

You can find an up-to-date account of the Parent Association's leadership on the school website.

What do we do?

The Parent Association mobilizes and coordinates parent volunteers and resources for the support of the school. Money raised by the PA goes primarily toward community-building events.

The PA holds regular meetings open to all parents, at which school activities are discussed and planned. The PA works closely with school administrators, faculty, and staff and serves as a liaison between the parent body and the school staff.

The PA will have a presence at many events throughout the school year. Every parent is needed to help Aidan thrive. Please participate!

Aidan's Director of Development serves as liaison between the PA and the administrative staff. Aidan's Director of Communications provides support for the PA Officers, assisting them with logistics and publicity.

How can you participate?

Attend a PA meeting and/or respond to a call for volunteers sent out in School Communications. Be sure to fill out a Parent Volunteer Interest Form online and please contact one of the PA Officers if you have an idea or a suggestion.

Volunteer Policies

- We want to include as many parents as possible in volunteer activities. For this reason, we try to avoid having a volunteer serve in the same position for more than two consecutive years (for Room Parents, that means serving no more than two consecutive years in the same classroom). For Committee Chairs, the ideal arrangement is for one Co-Chair to be a veteran of the prior year, while the other Co-Chair is new. This allows the transfer of institutional knowledge while opening up opportunities for leadership. Room Parent and Committee Chair assignments are subject to approval by the Head of School.

- All parents, especially when volunteering, are expected to abide by the Aidan Code of Conduct. The Aidan community depends heavily on parent participation, and the atmosphere of trust and respect here at Aidan is maintained by the professional and courteous behavior of our volunteers.

Please see the Aidan website (www.aidanschool.org) for more information about the Parent Association—and thank you for participating!

Parent Association Activities

- Auction to Fund Students
- Book Fair
- Box Tops for Education
- Community Service
- Evening of the Arts
- Grocery and Retail Programs that Give Back
- Admissions Open Houses
- Room Parents
- Swirl
- Spring Fling
- Summer Playdates

Upcoming Year at-a-Glance

Aidan is always bustling with activity! The brief summary below will give you some information about important yearly events as well as what is generally expected from parents. Please see the school website and the print calendar you received before the start of the school year for exact dates.

August/September

NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION

All students who are new to a Toddler, Primary or Elementary class, even if they are coming from another Aidan class, will have the opportunity to visit with their new teacher prior to the start of school. The teachers will contact parents to schedule the appointments.

BACK-TO-SCHOOL NIGHT

This evening is for parents to learn about the classroom schedule, curriculum, and procedures from their child's teacher. Attendance is strongly encouraged!

October

ADMISSIONS OPEN HOUSES

Aidan holds four Open Houses in the fall and winter for prospective parents to visit the school. Parent volunteers are needed to help welcome and sign-in families. Open Houses are great opportunities to share your favorite things about Aidan with other parents.

CLASS SOCIALS

Throughout October, one Aidan family in each class hosts a social event for the other parents in the class.

SCHOOL PHOTOS

Twice a year, school pictures are taken in the Primary and Elementary classes. In the fall, individual portraits are taken, and in the spring, class pictures are taken. These are entirely voluntary although we hope you will allow your child to be in the class photograph even if you do not order a copy.

LOOKING AHEAD...

Designed for parents whose children will be moving up to Lower or Upper Elementary in a year or so, the program describes the transition and continuation of the curriculum.

BOOK FAIR

The Book Fair is held at Politics and Prose Bookstore. During a one-day event, the school receives a portion of the sales when Aidan is mentioned at the register. Funds are dedicated to the Library. In addition to purchasing books for gifts and home, parents may also buy books to donate to the Library and to families in need. Parent volunteers are needed to explain the wish lists, answer questions, and receive books purchased for the Library.

JOURNEY & DISCOVERY

This workshop, designed for parents, grandparents or other adults in your child's life, is a unique opportunity for a "hands on" experience with the Montessori materials. Adults attend one evening for a journey through Toddler, Primary and Elementary classrooms to begin to get a sense of the differences between Montessori and traditional education models. Attendees return the next morning, where, under the guidance of the teachers, they work directly with preselected materials to discover Montessori from the perspective of the child. Each session ends with a lively discussion. It is required that parents attend once in the first two years of their child's time at Aidan. Childcare is provided for this adults-only event.

November

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCE DAYS

Held twice a year for two days in the fall and spring, Parent-Teacher Conferences are important opportunities to hear about your child's life at school and to share information from home. Our teachers complete written evaluations for presentation to the parent during Parent-Teacher Conferences, and teachers are well prepared to discuss each child on these days. We fully expect every parent to make an appointment during Parent-Teacher Conferences and use this dedicated, pre-planned time to meet with the teacher. Except for Toddlers who are in session on the Thursday of conferences, school is closed for those days, as is the After School Program. Child care is not provided during Parent-Teacher Conferences.

"SWIRL" SOCIAL

This not-to-be-missed social event for parents is a kick-off event for the Annual Auction to Fund Students and a great time for everyone who attends.

UPPER ELEMENTARY FALL TRIP

The entire class goes to the Echo Hill Outdoor School on the Chesapeake Bay for three nights and four days of special classes and activities.

December

SIBLING PREFERENCE

In order to qualify for sibling preference, applications must be received by the deadline indicated in the calendar. (Siblings of students applying out are not accorded preference.)

January

REENROLLMENT

Reenrollment contracts are due back to the Office at the end of the month, along with the enrollment fee, in order to hold your child's place for the next year. Please note: your child's place will not be held without the enrollment fee.

March

AUCTION

The annual Auction to Fund Students is held each year in March. There is a variety of components to the Auction each year – all of which culminate in the Live Auction event, a festive and fun Saturday evening for the entire Aidan adult community. During bidding at the Live Auction, we also hold our traditional Fund-A-Student paddle raise in a direct appeal for 100% tax-deductible donations to financial aid. Volunteers help solicit items, promote items for bidding, organize the evening event, and much more to help raise funds for Aidan's Financial Aid program.

ELEMENTARY FAIR

Elementary students present science or other learning projects to fellow students, faculty, staff and parents. Lower Elementary students work on displays with explanations, and Upper Elementary students perform and present projects.

April

ELEMENTARY SPRING MUSICAL

After weeks of preparation, the entire Elementary student body performs a musical/dramatic production for family, friends, and the community.

UPPER ELEMENTARY STANDARDIZED ASSESSMENTS

Families of Upper Elementary students should be sure their child is present for testing.

SIXTH GRADE EXHIBITIONS

Graduating sixth-year elementary students present their independent study project to the faculty and student body as a capstone of their education at Aidan.

May

LOWER ELEMENTARY STANDARDIZED TESTING

Families of Lower Elementary students who turned eight by September 1 should be sure their child is present for testing.

GRANDPARENTS' RECEPTION

Grandparents will have the opportunity to meet our administrative leadership team and enjoy light fare and beverages with other Aidan Grandparents. Following the reception, the group will walk over to Aidan to enjoy the Evening of the Arts.

EVENING OF THE ARTS

The annual Evening of the Arts is held in conjunction with Special Persons' Day. Throughout the school year, selected works of each student are saved and later mounted in the halls of the school for display. Volunteers are needed for matting and hanging artwork.

SPECIAL PERSONS' DAY

This is one of Aidan's most popular events. We invite the students' grandparents and other special people to visit our classrooms. Volunteers help to act as greeters and guides.

UPPER ELEMENTARY BACKPACKING

This student-planned spring trip lasts for four days and three nights at a location the students choose through their planning.

June

CLASS PHOTO BOOKS

At the end of the year, photo books for each class are available for sale.

SPRING FLING

This end-of-year event is created by our families, for our families. Volunteers are needed! Watch School Notes for more information.

END OF THE YEAR CLASS GATHERINGS

Each class holds a different year-end celebration, which is planned by the Room Parents and teachers. These are festive occasions for students and parents to celebrate the year and to thank the teachers and assistants.

COMMENCEMENT

This evening graduation ceremony for our 6th year students is always special. The entire Aidan community is invited, and the Upper and Lower Elementary students act as marshals, ushers, and chorus. We hope all Elementary families will attend and that all non-graduating Elementary students will participate in the ceremony. A reception immediately follows Commencement.

Ongoing Activities

AIDAN STORE

School apparel is available online through Lands' End (please find a link on our website). Aidan receives a small commission on each item.

AMAZON SMILE

Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchase when you shop at AmazonSmile (smile.amazon.com) and select Aidan Montessori School as your receiving charity.

ANNUAL GIVING CAMPAIGN (THE AIDAN FUND)

Our campaign officially begins on July 1. The Aidan Fund is our second largest source of income, bridging the gap between tuition and the actual cost of an Aidan education. The Aidan Fund supports everything we do at Aidan, from our Montessori classrooms to financial aid. The Aidan Fund runs from July 1 to June 30 of each year. The School's goal is to have 100% participation from our current families, faculty & staff, and the Board of Trustees.

BOX TOPS FOR EDUCATION

Have you ever seen those little purple and pink squares that say "Box Tops" on some of your household items (Ziploc, Avery Office products, Betty Crocker, etc.)? Those little squares mean cash for Aidan! Please clip them off of the package and bring them to the Front Office, where we will process them for redemption. For a complete list of products, please visit www.boxtops4education.com.

GROCERY PROGRAMS

Local Harris Teeter and Giant supermarkets give schools cash in exchange for Club Card usage. Parents simply register their Club Cards through Aidan and use them when buying groceries. Grocery programs start in early fall and continue throughout the school year.

Educational Programs

Class Size

In keeping with AMI accreditation guidelines, our Primary and Elementary classrooms have approximately 24-29 students in each class, with a balance of ages and gender to ensure social and emotional development. Each Toddler community has approximately 12 students with an AMI-trained Montessori guide and two assistants. Each Primary and Lower Elementary class is guided by an AMI-trained Montessori “guide” (teacher) with an assistant. The Upper Elementary Class is guided by an AMI-trained Montessori guide and an assistant. Primary and Elementary classes also have support from the art teacher, foreign language teachers, physical education teacher, librarian, in-house tutors, and school counselor.

Class Structure

Montessori classes are ungraded and are divided along developmental stages:

FIRST PLANE 0 – 6 YEARS

Toddler 18 months to 36 months

Primary 2 ½ years to 6 years

SECOND PLANE 6 – 12 YEARS

Lower Elementary 6 years to 9 years (first year through third year)

Upper Elementary 9 years to 12 years (fourth year through sixth year)

Each class is a social and emotional community with the responsibilities, limits, and freedoms inherent in such a group. The pedagogy includes a continuum of individual and group lessons for a multi-year period for Primary and Elementary students. Children benefit significantly from the completion of each multi-year cycle. Parents make a commitment to complete the Primary and/or Elementary cycle. During the last year of each class, the child integrates and solidifies the work of the previous years. A balance of all three age groups is important for the classroom and the larger school community to function at its best. Parents are strongly urged to plan for a complete multi-year cycle for the sake of their child and the other students in the class.

Student Placement

The Montessori curriculum is tied to the stages of child development. Dr. Montessori called them the “Planes of Development.” The school divisions mirror this continuum from

Toddler to Primary to Elementary. Each child grows at his/her own pace, reaching milestones appropriate to chronological age. Montessori teachers are keenly aware of these stages of development and watch carefully for evidence that would indicate that a child is ready to transition to a new level of work or a new division in the school. Such evidence is cognitive, physical, social, and emotional.

Placement or transition to a new division of the school requires that a child indicate readiness for a new placement in the school, as well as meet an age requirement as follows:

TODDLER TO PRIMARY

May move to Primary if in a range of 6 months before or 3 months after the child's third birthday.

HALF-DAY PRIMARY TO FULL-DAY

May move from Half-day to Full-day at approximately four and a half (4.6) years old.

FULL-DAY PRIMARY TO LOWER ELEMENTARY

May move from Full-day Primary to Lower Elementary if the child is six years old by September 1 or turning six within the next 3 months.

LOWER ELEMENTARY TO UPPER ELEMENTARY

The child must be nine years old by September 1 or turning nine within the next 3 months to move to Upper Elementary.

Note: On rare occasions children turning six by December who exhibit strong characteristics of the 2nd plane of development may be placed in the Lower Elementary in January. This decision will be made in consultation with the Administration and the Primary and Lower Elementary teachers.

When a child demonstrates readiness, and has met the chronological criteria, the child's teacher and parents discuss ways that the family can support a transition to the next level.

Parents should be aware that placement and transition to a new division of the school at Aidan might not precisely replicate a graded program in conventional education. Placement in most public schools and the great majority of private and independent schools is determined by a September 1 birth date cutoff. For example, a first-grade student must be six years old by September 1 or they must attend kindergarten.

While our students often accelerate academically through our curriculum, the school will point out to parents how placement at Aidan compares to placement at neighboring schools.

This is important upon graduation and if parents apply out to a non-Montessori school for their child. The Head of School welcomes discussion with parents regarding placement within the school, placement to another school, and standardized testing.

Student Assessment

Aidan Montessori School's curriculum fosters the development of integrative thinkers who see and make connections within and among the disciplines instead of viewing them as "subjects" in isolation. Here, powerful learning experiences are relevant, rigorous, and coherent. Aidan's program transforms learning by supporting and encouraging self-directed reflection, inquiry, and self-assessment. Teachers evaluate progress on a daily basis, keeping careful record of lessons presented and skills and concepts mastered. Aidan also employs traditional assessments.

Assessment Tools

MONTESSORI ASSESSMENTS

- Detailed Progress Reports;
- Student Portfolio, toddler through 6th year;
- Science, Math, History presentations demonstrating content comprehension;
- Research projects and papers (as part of Montessori work);
- Graduate Exhibition (6th year) demonstrates evidence of depth and breadth of understanding of content including oral presentation to faculty and peers.

TRADITIONAL ASSESSMENTS

GMADE and GRADE

GMADE (Group Mathematics Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation) is a group diagnostic mathematics test that measures individual skills in the main areas of math as identified by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) including Concepts and Communication, Operations and Computation, and Process and Application. This in-depth assessment pinpoints areas where students need instruction. This assessment is informally administered in September and used by our teachers in instructional planning. Students are reassessed in May using the GMADE to assess progress and achievement in mathematics. Reports including nationally normed stanines and percentiles based on each student's age and corresponding grade level from the May assessment are reviewed by the teacher with the parents.

GRADE (Group Reading Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation) is used in conjunction with the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment to assess and monitor student achievement in reading and language. GRADE is a diagnostic reading assessment that determines what skills students have mastered developmentally and where they need instruction or intervention. The GRADE assessment is based on scientific research and evaluates reading competencies in word skills, accuracy, and comprehension. Like the GMADE, GRADE is informally administered in September for use by our teachers in instructional planning and again, formally, in May in a nationally-normed assessment. Reports including nationally-normed stanines and percentiles based on each student's age and corresponding grade level from the May assessment are reviewed by the teacher with the parents.

Homework

The Montessori environment is rich with daily experiences in self-motivation and self-organization. Because students manage their own work every day, there is no need to "practice" such skills at home. For Montessori students, homework comes in the form of the student's desire to continue working on areas of interest that began in class. Research, reading, and special projects can be done at home as a continuation of work started in class. Students also bring home practice work on math facts and spelling. Also, Montessori students are expected to be contributing members of their families, which means taking on responsibility for some household chores, which families may use to supplement learning such as having children help with baking (measuring with fractions) or finding the square footage of the home. Thus, "homework" becomes replaced by "the work of the home."

Requesting Teachers

Aidan is fortunate to have an entire faculty of outstanding and highly accomplished educators. Your child's teacher understands the learning style and personality of each student. When it comes time for a student to join another classroom, teacher assignments are thought out very carefully. As part of the process, teachers observe each other's classrooms. Over a series of meetings, the teachers and the administrative team thoughtfully determine placements.

It is important that parents trust the judgment inherent in this process. **Therefore, please do not request specific teachers. Placements will be made at the sole discretion of Aidan Montessori School.** Enrollment Contracts entered into with the school are not contingent upon classroom placement or personnel. The school cannot honor enrollment contingent upon a requested teacher.

Classroom Observations

Parents are invited to visit the classroom in order to see first-hand what their child does during the day. This experience is designed to deepen your understanding of your child's development as well as to affirm the educational choice you have made for him/her. All

parents - Toddler, Primary and Elementary - will receive an invitation to come to school and observe and/or interact with their child(ren) as is age appropriate. Observations last approximately 30 minutes and take place in the weeks prior to or immediately following Parent-Teacher Conferences.

Parent Conferences

Parent Conferences are held twice yearly on a Thursday and Friday in the fall and spring. Regular classes for Primary and Elementary students are not held on these days in order that the faculty may be available to meet with parents. Toddler students will have class on the Thursday only. Conferences are scheduled at thirty-minute intervals. These meetings are an opportunity for parents and teachers to discuss and share information about the child's program, progress, and experience at school and home. Child care is not provided during Parent-Teacher conferences.

Special Services

COUNSELING

Aidan's School Counselor supports the work of Primary and Elementary teachers in providing the optimum learning environment for each child. At times, a teacher and administrator may request that the Counselor work with an individual child and their parent(s).

TUTORING

If the school recommends or requires tutoring, parents may choose to hire a private tutor or work with Aidan's Tutors. It is sometimes possible to have your child work with a private tutor or therapist at school, provided you make arrangements with the school.

If you choose to work with a private tutor, Aidan requires that you submit a monthly report to the school. Aidan's Tutor will work closely with your child's teacher and the administration to monitor progress.

If you choose to work with Aidan's Tutor, he or she will create a Plan for Instruction outlining specific goals and strategies that will be addressed in the tutoring sessions. These goals and your child's progress will be evaluated regularly. An hourly fee will be charged for tutoring services at Aidan. Tutoring hours will be recorded carefully so you will be billed for the exact amount of time your child is tutored in relation to his or her Plan for Instruction. Your monthly bill will include the dates and times your child was tutored. All tutoring accommodations are handled through the Chief Operations Officer, in collaboration with the teachers and parents of the student involved.

DIAGNOSTIC EVALUATION

In order to provide appropriate classroom support, the school may request that parents seek diagnostic evaluation(s) of their child through outside professional services. This includes psycho-education evaluation, motor-sensory evaluation, language assessment, hearing or vision testing. The school expects parents to honor this request and fully disclose the results in a timely manner. Failure to do so may prevent the school from offering reenrollment to that child for the following year.

Library

The Aidan Library is for the children, faculty, staff, and parents. Books and multimedia resources support the curriculum of the Montessori classroom. The Librarian sets the policies and procedures regarding the check-out and return of books. The Aidan Library gives students a first experience in research; it is meant to supplement, not replace, family use of the public library. Parents also may use the library, especially the Parent Section. Please contact our Librarian if you would like to volunteer in the Library.

Aidan Program for Families (APF)

The Aidan Program for Families (APF) creates a forum to establish relationships that support and empower parents as they embrace the changes that come with a dynamic family life. As such, Aidan offers assistance to our families in establishing and sustaining an optimum loving and supportive home environment. All adults in the lives of the children - parents, grandparents, caregivers - are invited to participate in the exchange of information and ideas interweaving the principles of Montessori pedagogy and RULER with current research on child development.

These programs foster a harmonious and interdependent relationship between home and school, expanding our educational reach beyond the classroom and directly into your hands. The discussions and presentations place the responsibility to learn and become informed about Montessori theory and practice in your hands since you are your child's first and most influential educator. Topics are chosen so as to be relevant to today's families as they relate to the intricacies of raising children in the 21st century. Check School Notes, This Week at Aidan and the APF page on the Aidan website for details and schedules about APF events!

OPPORTUNITIES THIS YEAR

- Book Study Groups
- Caregivers' Basics
- Elementary Works

- Journey & Discovery
- Montessori Parent Nights
- Observations
- Workshops on Nurturing Your Child's Emotional Health, Siblings in Harmony, and How to Enjoy Living with a Preadolescent

Community Service

Service to others is an important part of the Montessori philosophy. As a school, we aim to serve those in our immediate neighborhood of the District of Columbia as well as members of our global community. Each of the individual classroom communities nurtures an ethic of caring. Some classes, inspired by their students, undertake projects that evolve from particular natural disasters and/or special interests. The Community Service Committee of the PA organizes charitable efforts throughout the year. For example, Aidan has an ongoing relationship with the Bright Beginnings Family Development Center serving homeless families in DC and with So Others Might Eat (S.O.M.E.), which provides food and other services for the extremely poor citizens of our city. Our Children Changing Communities effort has put us in partnership with the Office of the Clean City's Adopt-a-Block initiative, cleaning up 27th Street four times a year. Parents are encouraged to involve their children in these drives and events. We also encourage families to model generosity and to talk with and to read to their children about giving to others. Information can be found on the Community Service page of the Aidan website.

School Operations

Getting to School

Smooth arrival and dismissal is crucial to the wellbeing of the Aidan community and to our relationship with the neighborhood. We need your cooperation and understanding! Please explain the Arrival/Dismissal policies and procedures to all caregivers who drop off or pick up your child. **Your signature on the enrollment contract indicates your willingness to follow all of Aidan's policies and procedures. Refusal to comply is considered a violation of the Aidan Code of Conduct.**

School Hours

School Office: 8:00am-3:45pm

Before-School Program (BSP): 8:00am-8:25am

Toddler: 8:15am-11:15am

Half-day Primary: 8:45am-12:00pm

Full-day Primary: 8:45am-2:45pm

Lower Elementary: 8:15am-3:45pm

Upper Elementary: 8:00am-3:45pm

After School Program (ASP): 12:00pm-3:00pm & 3:00pm-6:00pm

General Arrival & Dismissal Schedule

ARRIVAL

8:00-8:25 Before School Program Arrival

8:00-8:15 Toddler Arrival

8:15 Toddler Classes Start

7:45-8:00 Upper Elementary Arrival

8:00 Upper Elementary Class Starts

8:00-8:15 Lower Elementary Arrival

8:15 Lower Elementary Classes Start

8:25-8:45 Primary Arrival

8:45 Primary Classes Start

When siblings have different arrival times, we provide “gap care” which allows you to drop all siblings off at the earliest arrival time at no extra charge.

For arrival after 8:45am, please stop by the office to sign in and so that a staff member may accompany your child to class thereby minimizing any interruptions to classes already in progress.

DISMISSAL

11:15-11:30 Toddler Dismissal

12:00-12:15 Primary Dismissal

2:45-3:00 Full-day Primary Dismissal

3:45-3:55 Lower Elementary Dismissal

3:45-3:55 Upper Elementary Dismissal

12:00pm-3:00pm **ASP Dismissal**

3:00-3:15 Students with no older siblings

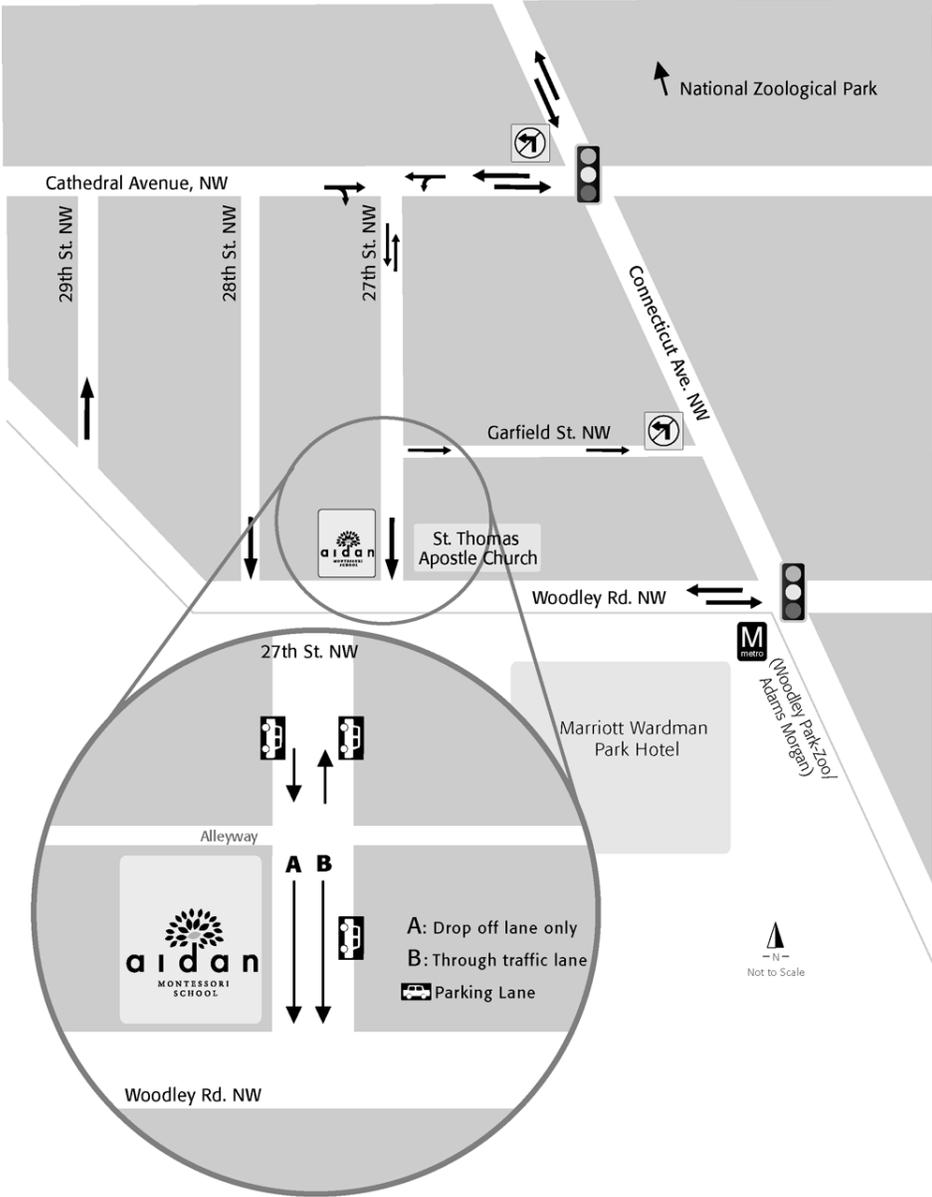
Students with older siblings (Elementary or Full-Day Primary) will join their sibling's dismissal time

ASP Dismissal (12:00pm-6:00pm or 3:00pm-6:00pm)

After 3:40 Please park legally and pick up your child from ASP.

When siblings have different Dismissal times, we provide ‘gap care’ allowing you to pick up all siblings at the later dismissal time. When one sibling is absent, you must pick up the other child at the regular time - the gap care arrangement does not apply. There is no “gap care” available for Toddlers with Full-Day Primary or Elementary siblings. Additionally, there is no “gap care” for Half-Day Primary students with Elementary siblings.

Campus Map



Locations

Please note that while all faculty and most staff at Aidan work on-campus at our main address, several of our administrators work at our Annex, located at 2627 Connecticut Avenue, NW.

Driving to School

- Heading south on Connecticut (toward Dupont Circle), turn right on Cathedral (not Garfield) and left on 27th Street.
- Heading north on Connecticut (from Dupont Circle towards the Zoo), turn left on Woodley Road at the arrow, pass Aidan, turn right on 29th, then right on Cathedral, then right again on 27th Street. You cannot turn left onto Cathedral from Connecticut heading north.
- You cannot make a turn onto 27th Street from Woodley Road, as 27th Street is one-way heading south. You may not use the alley behind the school or next to the school for arrival and/or dismissal.
- After dropping your child off, you may turn left (towards Connecticut) or right (towards Garfield) onto Woodley Road from 27th Street.

Arrival & Dismissal Procedures

Arrival and Dismissal require that safety and courtesy be in the forefront of everyone's minds. You may drop off and pick up children by car or on foot.

ON FOOT

You are welcome to walk your child to school from home or the Metro. If you plan to drive to Woodley Park and then park before walking your child in, park your car legally: **not in front of hydrants, in crosswalks, in no parking zones, or in back of the school and walk your child to school.**

BY CAR

Join the **car line** on 27th Street at your specified time. See the procedure outlined below.

Please follow the traffic flow diagrammed on the Campus Map above, obey the rules outlined below and comply with all requests made by Aidan staff or traffic officers:

- The Car Line forms at the curb lane in front of Aidan's entrance and continues down 27th Street. You may not join the line from the alley or Garfield Street.
- Pull over as far to the right as possible while waiting so cars coming down the street can pass.
- Do not get out of your car to chat with other drivers or help your child into or out of the car. Aidan staff will assist your child.

- If the line gets too long, additional cars in line may be asked to circle the block. Please comply.
- Cars will be called into the curb lane by an Aidan staff member or a traffic officer. If you pull up in line before your scheduled Arrival/Dismissal time you may be asked to drive around the block. Please be understanding. Kindly share these procedures with your designated pickup person(s).
- An Aidan staff member will assist your child into and out of cars and car seats. At Arrival, please have lunch boxes, backpacks, and coats ready, not in the trunk. Note: Car seats or booster seats are required by District law for all children under 8 years old. At Dismissal, Aidan staff cannot place your child in a car without proper seating, including a seat belt for older children. In such cases, parents will be instructed to legally park their car and retrieve their child on foot.
- After dropping off or picking up, cars must exit onto Woodley Road.

EARLY ARRIVAL

If you arrive by car before 8:00am you may wait in the curb lane until a staff member arrives at 8:00am to take your child. If arriving on foot, you must wait with your child outside the school until 8:00am. If your child is not joining the Before School Program (BSP), you may sit with them in the lobby, not the classroom or hallway, until his or her Arrival window. If you have not contracted for BSP, and you drop off your child after 8:00am but before your scheduled window of Arrival, he or she will be sent to BSP, and you will be invoiced \$10 for the extra care.

LATE ARRIVAL

At 8:45am, Aidan staff will leave the sidewalk and lock the front door for security purposes. If you arrive after 8:45am, please park your car legally in the neighborhood, not in the curb lane in front of the school, then walk your child into school. If your child arrives after 8:45am, please sign in with the Front Office so we can take your child off the “absent” list and so that a staff member can walk your child to class thereby minimizing disruptions to the class that is already in progress. If your child is chronically late to school, your teacher will contact you. Please be on time!

LATE PICK-UP

Families whose children have not been picked up by the end of the program dismissal time will be charged a late fee. This is \$10 for the first ten minutes, changing to \$35 for pick-ups that are more than 10 minutes late. You will be billed for late fees, so please be sure to pick up your child on time and let your caregivers know that they must do the same.

Children, except for Toddlers, who have not been picked up by the end of their Dismissal window (oldest sibling) will join the After School Program (ASP). Please call the school and leave a message if you are going to be late so we can reassure your child.

RELEASE PERMISSION

Aidan Montessori School is authorized to release a child only to his or her parents or guardian, unless we receive in writing the names of other people permitted to pick up your child. If your child is going home with someone not on our list, such as a friend after school, the School Office must have permission in writing (or fax 202-387-1777) from the parent. Last minute phone calls from a parent for emergency situations are acceptable.

Please do not make playdates at the curb or in the Car Line. If you have not made arrangements in advance, step away from the front of school or pull both vehicles into a legal parking space away from the curb lane and make your arrangements privately so as not to cause any inconvenience to the other drivers or our neighbors.

If you are part of a carpool, be sure to notify the driver who is scheduled to pick up your child in the event your child is ill, that he or she is going home with someone else, or that he or she is bringing home a guest.

Along with Health and Emergency Forms, you are required to sign permissions that allow your child to participate in field trips, neighborhood excursions off campus for classroom and ASP walks, going beyond the school grounds for recess, Physical Education and Discovery Programs, and Elementary "Going Out" programs where appropriate. The permission waiver information contains details for supervision and notification. Your child will leave campus and go beyond the school grounds only if these permissions are signed. Going off campus is applicable depending on the age of your child and is at your sole discretion to permit. Recess and physical education is primarily conducted at the St. Thomas Apostle Church and Marriott lawn along with other trips to local field locations. Various other Discovery programs include travelling to a sport field, the Zoo or library and other nearby locations, always accompanied by several adults.

CAR SEAT & STROLLER STORAGE

Cars seats and strollers left at Aidan for pick-up must be folded and stored at the bottom of the front stairs. Please label them.

Before & After School Programs (BSP/ASP)

The Before and After School Programs at Aidan (BSP and ASP) are designed to provide a safe, comfortable, and engaging environment for Primary (BSP & ASP) and Elementary (ASP only) students before and/or after their Montessori work.

In the morning, Primary children enrolled in BSP go straight away to their own rooms and are greeted by their classroom Assistant. They take down chairs, fold laundry, wet sponges, organize the food for snack and otherwise prepare their community for their soon-to-arrive classmates. They can read, socialize, and begin their work for the day.

In the afternoon, our Director of the After School Program prepares an after-school environment in the Toddler classrooms so that children can be independent and enjoy choosing age-appropriate materials, games, art media, etc. Students can take a nap, eat a snack, and enjoy each other's company in play. Parents supply snack on a rotating basis similar to the classroom. When the playground is available, children go to the outdoor environment for supervised outdoor play. Children may also go for a walk to the Zoo, the library, and parks in our area. ASP personnel are sensitive to the needs of children at all ages and stages of development in creating activities. They guide and encourage independence, positive choices, and collaborative play that fosters positive social relationships.

DISCOVERY PROGRAM

Aidan's after-school Discovery Program is a chance for students to explore interests beyond Aidan's regular curriculum. Teachers decide which activities to offer based on their talents and schedule. For a fee, parents can enroll students from Primary to 6th year in foreign languages, art workshops, music workshops, informal sport and athletic programs, and various crafts such as knitting. Discovery should not be considered "additional lessons" but rather an optional, relaxed opportunity to socialize and try something new. Space is limited, so parents are encouraged to enroll as soon as they receive the Discovery offerings in the fall, winter, and spring.

ASP/BSP CONTRACT

Parents of Primary to Elementary children who need regular before or after school care are advised to sign a BSP and/or ASP contract for the year. A contract can be obtained from the School Office. An annual contract is a considerable savings from the drop-in rate. Partial week plans (a minimum of three days required) are available and are charged on a prorated basis. Please see page 52 for Contract rates.

ASP/BSP DROP IN

Aidan offers the use of the Before School and After School Programs on an as-needed basis for currently enrolled Primary (BSP & ASP) and Elementary (ASP only) students only. Staffing requirements and regulatory restrictions limit the number of children in ASP, so reservations are required. Please contact the Office Manager at least one day in advance or as soon as you know you need BSP or ASP care.

There are two ASP sessions: 12:00-3:00pm and 3:00-6:00pm. The fee for use of part or all of each ASP session is \$35 per child. BSP opens at 8:00am; the fee for the use of BSP service is \$10.

LATE ASP PICK-UP

If a Primary child is picked up from ASP after 3:00pm the family will be billed \$10 for the first ten minutes and \$35 should the family be more than ten minutes late. For each child picked up from ASP after 6:00pm, there is an immediate charge of \$35. In addition to the \$35 charge, for each child picked up after 6:00pm, parents will incur charges of \$1/minute. Therefore, the charge for one child will be \$36 at 6:01pm, \$37 at 6:02pm, etc. Please call 202-906-0903 if you know you will be late so we can reassure your child. A phone call does not absolve you from the fee.

Attendance, Tardiness, & Vacations Absenteeism

Regular attendance is an important part of the Montessori experience and promotes better school performance. Attendance records are kept as part of each child's file. Excessive absenteeism will be discussed with parents and is required to be reported to the DC Child Licensing authorities for children subject to compulsory education. Every effort should be made to avoid scheduling vacations when classes are in session.

TARDINESS

Chronic tardiness has an enormous impact on children. At the Elementary level, a lesson might be given to the whole class at the beginning of the day, and any child who arrives late may miss part of or the entire lesson. In the Toddler and Primary classes, the teacher takes time with each arriving child to welcome, connect, and assist the child in becoming engaged. A child arriving late finds the teacher already giving individual lessons and unable to free herself to make that vital connection. It is important to note that children themselves are uncomfortable when they arrive after the start of the school day. Children who are consistently tardy are reported to the Head of School.

FAMILY VACATIONS

It is difficult for a child to miss school for an extended time for any reason. Obviously, a child must stay home when sick. However, a family vacation while school is in session should be avoided. In the third year of Primary and at the Elementary level, many Montessori lessons are given in small groups, even if a child is absent. Lessons can be long and complex, and it is not possible to present the new concept or skill with the same level of detail to a child who has missed the initial presentation. And, since Aidan does not rely on workbooks, it is difficult to send students off with a week of work. Please plan vacations to coordinate with the school calendar (located in the back of this Handbook).

Snow Days & Inclement Weather

Because many of our faculty and staff live outside the District, we make our own decisions about whether to close or delay school rather than following the District of Columbia School System. Please opt into emergency text messages from the school (see the Communication section of this document for instructions), go to Aidan's website (www.aidanschool.org), or call the school to listen to the outgoing message on our machine. **In the event that Aidan opens on a delayed schedule, Toddler classes will not be held.**

Health & Safety

RECORDS

All records listed below must be submitted to Aidan in order for your child to begin school. If we do not have this information, we will not allow your child to attend class.

1. **Emergency contact information.** This should include emergency phone numbers and emails for parents, who is allowed to pick up your child, and any allergy or other important medical conditions. A request for this information will be emailed to you in the summer.
2. **Current DC Medical Forms for Child.** This includes immunization records and must have your doctor's original signature, not a stamped signature. DC also requires Aidan to have the following three forms on file for each student: DC Emergency Medical Authorization Form, Registration for Child Receiving Care Away from Home Form, and Travel and Activity Authorization Form. Our Office Manager distributes these forms, and they can also be found on the Parent section of our website. Please contact the office with questions.
3. **Current DC Dental Assessment Form.** This is required for all children 3 years and older. This form is available from Aidan's Office Manager and can also be found on the Parent Section of the website.
4. Aidan's Consent and Waiver Forms.
5. **Guardianship, as appropriate.** If necessary for your family situation, please make sure the school knows who has guardianship for your child. Forms are available from the Office Manager.

ABSENCES & ILLNESS

Parents should notify the School Office when their child is absent and inform us if your child has a contagious disease.

In case of an absence due to a contagious disease or an illness of more than five days' duration, a note from your child's physician is required before the child can be readmitted to the classroom. **A child must be free of fever (over 100 degrees Fahrenheit), vomiting, and/or diarrhea for 24 hours before he or she can return to school.**

Please be considerate of others in your child's class. Do not send your child to school if he or she has a fever or "is coming down with something." Toddler and Primary children with a colored discharge from the nose should stay home until the discharge is clear in color. If your child becomes ill at school, we will call you to come and take your child home as soon as possible.

If your child goes home because of illness, they may not return to school that same day for afternoon activities such as the Discovery Program or ASP.

LICE

If head lice are discovered on a student, we will send that student home and notify all parents in the class that a child with lice has been in the class. We will carefully check all students in the class where lice were found, as well as the classes of that student's siblings. Upon the student's return to school, he or she will be carefully checked to be certain there are no live or hatching eggs remaining. Aidan has a "no nits policy;" a child who has nits may not return to the classroom.

MEDICATION POLICY

Sometimes it is necessary for a child to take medication during the school day.

Prescription medication must be brought to the school office by an adult in the original container (medications may not be sent in a lunch box). A pharmacist will fill the prescription in two containers if requested. The prescription medication must be accompanied by a Medication Authorization Form stating the current date, dosage, and time the medication should be given, dates of administering the medication, and whether the medication should be returned at the end of each day. The Medication Authorization Form must be signed by the physician and parent. Medication Authorization Forms are available from Aidan's Front Office Manager.

Non-prescription ("over-the-counter") medication of any kind cannot be taken at school unless accompanied by a Medication Authorization Form signed by the child's physician. The medication (in the original container), and the Medication Authorization Form, as described above, should be given to the School Office by an adult.

If your child has a medical condition, e.g. allergies or routine medications, please contact the School Office to arrange a specific medical treatment plan for your child.

When parents disclose an allergy or food sensitivity to the school, we inform the teacher and indicate the allergy on the snack guidelines. We also include this information on the Snack Reminder notices for parents.

Aidan School requires that families not send in food/snacks containing peanuts or peanut by-products for the safety of children who are severely allergic. These children may experience life-threatening anaphylactic reactions to peanuts or peanut by-products. While focusing on making the School as safe as possible for children, the School cannot guarantee the total absence of peanuts or peanut products in foods that are brought to campus by every child. We strongly encourage the family of any child with known peanut allergies to contact us regarding health care plans and practices to promote food safety.

Taking any food allergies into account when providing snacks or celebration foods is extremely important. Some allergies, particularly to nuts, are life threatening. Sending items in their original packaging (containing ingredient lists) or a handwritten ingredient list for homemade items is very useful. If an item containing an allergen is sent in, the allergen needs to be indicated to the teacher so a substitute snack can be provided to an allergic child. So as not to exclude any students, food that all children can enjoy should be the first choice. When in doubt, please contact your child's teacher.

For a student who is severely allergic and requires an Epi-pen, please provide two Epi-pens and a Medication Authorization Form to Aidan. One Epi-pen will be stored in the child's classroom, and the second Epi-pen will be stored in Aidan's Front Office. If the Epi-pen is administered, the parent will be notified, and we will call 911.

Security

The front door is locked all day and monitored (via camera) by the Office Manager. In order to enter the school, parents, volunteers and visitors must ring the doorbell and be buzzed in after being viewed on a television monitor. Visitors must check in with the Front Office. If your child arrives after 8:45am, you must sign in with the Front Office so we can take your child off the "absent" list and so that a staff member can walk your child to class to minimize interruptions to classes already in progress. The playground gates are kept closed except during Arrival and Dismissal, when teachers and staff are accepting or releasing students.

As stated in the Arrival/Dismissal Section, Aidan Montessori School is authorized to release a child only to his or her parents, unless we receive in writing the names of those people permitted to pick up your child. If your child is going home with a friend after school, the School Office must have permission in writing from the parent—last minute phone calls from a parent for emergency situations are acceptable.

Emergency Preparedness

GUIDELINES TO FOLLOW IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY OR CRISIS

1. **FIRST RESPONSE** – A notice and procedures will be posted on the school's website (www.aidanschool.org) and emailed if possible. Follow instructions carefully.
2. We have a text notification system that will be used in emergencies. Make sure you are registered as a recipient.
3. In some emergencies (a fire, for example) the children may be walked to a safe location where you can pick them up. Information will be posted on the website and disseminated by way of our text notification system.
4. We have several safe locations. The St. Thomas Apostle Church basement is our primary location. The basement was built in the 1950's as a bomb shelter. We have complete provisions stored there for three days. The Marriott and the Visitors Center at the National Zoo are our secondary locations.
5. If we are required to "shelter in place" at Aidan, we have provisions and are completely prepared to do so.
6. In some cases, FEMA may tell you not to leave your building or location, or we may be told to allow no one to enter our building. Please know that your child's well-being and safety are our only priority.
7. Your child will never be left without an adult. If you are unable to pick up your child during a crisis or emergency, they will be safely cared for until you can be reunited.
8. **You keeping all records up to date in our office is critical**—including cell phone numbers, email, and those individuals you allow to pick up your child. Consider carefully your list of those to whom we can release your child in a crisis/emergency.
9. Respond immediately to any requests for items or information related to our emergency plan.
10. Keep the school's telephone number and website handy at home, at work, and in your car.
11. The school has a supply of emergency clothing and food for all the children in the school attic and at the church. If your child has dietary restrictions or medication requirements, you should supply the school with two bags containing a 3-day supply of special foods or medications.

If you have further questions or concerns, please contact the School Office to discuss them.

Classroom Procedures

SNACKS

Each family is asked to contribute snacks and bottled water for their child's class; usually you will be asked once in the fall and once in the spring. Toddler families are usually asked to provide snack three times a year. If you are unable to participate or have any last-minute difficulties, please contact the Front Office Manager.

Please use the following guidelines in conjunction with the Snack Schedule provided for your child's Primary or Elementary class. The Elementary classes have snack only on Fridays. The guidelines below will apply but for a one-day's supply only. Toddler and ASP families will receive separate guidelines directly from the teacher.

Quantity

Enough food and water should be provided to feed all the children in your child's class for five days. Please ask your child's teacher for approximate numbers.

Ideas for Snacks

Fresh fruit and vegetables (apples, melon, carrot sticks, etc.), cheese, crackers, muffins, bagels, breads, cream cheese, or other spreads are some suggestions. Please do not send cookies, cupcakes, individual snack cups, juice boxes, nuts, grapes, hot dogs, popcorn, soda, or candy of any kind.

Each class has a small refrigerator with only enough storage for 2-3 days' worth at a time.

Allergies

Aidan School requires that families not send in food/snacks containing peanuts or peanut by-products for the safety of children who are severely allergic. These children may experience life-threatening anaphylactic reactions to peanuts or peanut by-products. While focusing on making the School as safe as possible for children, the School cannot guarantee the total absence of peanuts or peanut products in foods that are brought to campus by every child. We strongly encourage the family of any child with known peanut allergies to contact us regarding health care plans and practices to promote food safety.

Lists of allergies and food sensitivities will be distributed by class if warranted. Please respect these sensitivities when supplying snacks.

Getting Snack to the Classroom

You can leave your box/bag of snacks and water with a staff member at drop-off or bring it in to the classroom. The Primary teachers suggest that you bring snacks on a daily basis (to

allow for fresh items) or for a few days at a time. Please label the box/bag with your teacher's name.

LUNCHES

Lunch is a relaxing and informal time, a chance to learn, practice grace and courtesy, and socialize with friends. Finding appropriate lunch foods for children who do not enjoy sandwiches can be challenging. Cheese and crackers, cold cuts, even cold pizza are good options. Fresh vegetables and fresh fruits are great "side dishes." Dessert (no candy, please) may be included; however, we will ask the children not to eat dessert first. We will also return the uneaten portion of lunch to you so that you know what an appropriate size lunch is for your child. (Sometimes eating a sandwich cut into quarters instead of halves is easier for your child, or perhaps half a sandwich is enough.) When including a drink, please choose 100% juice, milk, or water. Lunches should not include items that need to be microwaved or refrigerated. Please include the utensils your child will need in order to eat his or her lunch, and a napkin. In an effort to be a responsible community we ask that parents try to employ reusable containers, washable utensils, and cloth napkins rather than disposables.

CELEBRATION FOOD

Candy, gum, and soda are prohibited, even during holidays such as Christmas, Halloween, Valentine's Day, etc. Please do not send in overly sweet snacks for birthdays or other holiday celebrations. Homemade treats, muffins and pizza bagels are examples of festive and nutritious celebration foods. Please discuss birthday snack plans with your teacher ahead of time. Celebration snacks generally are not needed in the Toddler classroom. Please inform your child's teacher several days in advance of the day you intend to bring special food for a holiday or birthday. Advance notice provides time for planning so that your child's teacher can create a positive and enjoyable celebration, and allows her to make recommendations if necessary. Please call, email or send your child's teacher a note, saying what you would like to bring and when you'd like to bring it. Please respect allergies when providing food for a celebration. In some cases, food allergies are life threatening.

PARTY INVITATIONS

Please do not send invitations to school to be distributed. In a small school, being inclusive is so important. Being left out can be devastating to a child. Here are some suggested guidelines:

While you may be inclined to invite the whole class, doing so may be impractical, and most children do better with a smaller group. A good rule of thumb is to invite the number of children which corresponds to the age of your child - 3 guests for a three year old; 8, for an eight year old, in addition to family, of course. Allowing the child to choose his or her guests, while Montessori in principle, requires parental guidance and has the potential of hurting a child who is not invited.

It is best if children do discuss a party that is coming up or a party that they have been to because other children may feel excluded. Please, ask your child to refrain from discussing social events during the school day.

In order to keep the guest list manageable while ensuring that no one child feels left out, consider inviting all of one (or two) ages. If you are unsure of the ages, please ask your teacher.

Be sure to check the class lists and confirm with the teacher to prevent omissions such as a child who has joined the class mid-year.

Note: Toddlers are different. For them a small party with one or two children is preferable, and they do not share information with each other in the same way as the older children.

CELEBRATING HOLIDAYS

Aidan is non-sectarian and non-denominational, including the observance of holidays. Though most holidays are part of the culture and heritage of the majority of our students, we recognize that all do not observe each holiday or do not observe them in the same way. Our students do not exchange Valentines in school nor do they wear costumes on Halloween. We recognize, however, that understanding a variety of holidays enriches the classroom and cultural awareness of the students so please contact your child's teacher if you would like to share elements of your culture with the class.

CLOTHING & SHOES

Please label all outer garments your child wears to school. This includes coats, sweaters, hats, gloves, boots, etc. Should an item be misplaced, please check the Lost & Found basket in the first floor stairwell. All Toddler and Primary students need a change of labeled clothing to be kept in their classroom. If your Primary student is enrolled in the After School Program (ASP), please provide an additional change of labeled clothes to be kept in ASP.

The school has a limited supply of "extra clothes." If your child comes home wearing unfamiliar clothes, please wash these clothes and return them to school promptly.

Children should wear clothes they can manage themselves when going to the bathroom. Suspenders, sweaters outside of overalls, tights or small buttons are difficult for children to manage themselves. Pants with elastic at the waist are often easier than pants with snaps or belts. We are willing to assist your child, but he or she is very pleased when he or she can say, "I did it myself!"

All clothing should be weather appropriate for being active outside comfortably.

Aidan strongly recommends sending children to school in athletic shoes (sneakers).

Sandals, flip-flops and clogs are not permitted at Aidan. Full-day and Elementary

children can participate in Outdoor/Physical Education only if they are wearing athletic shoes with laces or Velcro fasteners.

TOYS

Toys are a distraction from classroom work and should not be brought to school. Also, please check pockets for unfamiliar items. These may be important parts of Montessori materials and need to be returned to school.

Field Trip Policies

Field trips are planned for Elementary students and a limited number are planned for Full-Day Primary students. Room Parents help in the planning and coordination of trips in conjunction with the teachers to support and complement the curriculum. Aidan's Consent and Waiver forms for leaving campus are completed by the parents as part of the emergency contact information request during the summer. Permission from the parents is required for participation in the trips. Families should be notified in advance of each trip. Field Trip Coordinators should send the schedule of field trips for his or her class to the Director of Communication.

Transportation is by foot, Metro, or parent drivers. Rules for car seat and seatbelt safety are followed. Children must be properly seated in a child safety seat until they turn 8. Parents sending in car seats in order to enable their child to participate in a field trip is imperative. Children eight and over must wear seatbelts at all times. No child will be allowed to sit in the front seat.

Aidan will provide Room Parents with guidelines regarding the number of chaperones required for each field trip. The school may cancel a trip if there are not enough adult chaperones.

Parents who drive on field trips are required to have a copy of their driver's license and auto insurance on file with the Front Office.

Parent chaperones must keep their cell phones on and within reach during field trips. In the event of an emergency, chaperones must call the School and follow instructions from Aidan staff.

Going Outside in Cold Weather

All children enrolled at Aidan Montessori School shall go outdoors for recess, walks, PE class, and ASP unless the air temperature and/or the wind-chill factor is below 25° as reported by the National Weather Service for Washington, DC, at the time of said outdoor activity. Plans will be made for age-appropriate indoor movement and play.

Teacher & Staff Gifts

Teachers and staff at Aidan are not permitted to accept cash “tips” or gifts, except for small, personal tokens of appreciation. Even these tokens are unnecessary. If you feel the desire to give a small gift, something made by your child is a particularly charming way to say thank you.

Code of Conduct

Aidan Code of Conduct, Grievance, & Disciplinary Protocols for Parents & Students

Parent Conduct

Families with a child enrolled at Aidan become part of our Aidan Community. This community thrives because we all agree to treat each other with grace, courtesy, and respect. Your signature on the Aidan Contract indicates your willingness to abide by the following guidelines:

PRIVACY

Please help us maintain the mutual trust and respect we all need to keep our community healthy by safeguarding the privacy of children, parents, and staff. Passing on confidential, damaging, or hurtful information is not acceptable.

CONFLICTS

Conflicts between parents, or parents and staff, should be addressed in a calm and private manner, preferably in person or with a respectful note. Phone calls and emails should not be used to express anger, frustration, or criticism. Meetings are to be held by appointment at a mutually convenient time.

ETIQUETTE

Aidan teachers, staff, and parents are all expected to strive for high standards of etiquette and behavior. Commitments should be honored, criticism should be constructive and genial, and “thank you” should be frequent. Parking and traffic laws must be followed, and Aidan’s neighbors should be treated with the utmost respect. Using proper etiquette is good for our community and for our children—we should model the very best behavior for them.

COMMUNICATION

When a parent has a question, concern, or grievance, he or she should make every effort to bring their issue to the appropriate person, as outlined below:

Contacts for Different Issues

PROGRAM, STUDENT, & CLASSROOM ISSUES

First

- Child’s teacher

Second

- Chief of Operations (for parents of Elementary students) or,
- Director of Education for parents of Toddler & Primary students

Third

- Head of School

General School Operations & Policy

EMAIL

The use of broadcast emails to contact fellow parents about sensitive issues involving Aidan policy, teachers, staff, or students is inappropriate and may be grounds for probation.

Note: Aidan’s Board of Trustees is NOT charged with the oversight of day-to-day school management. When faced with questions regarding such issues, Board members will simply pass those concerns on to the Head of School, as is “best practice” for Trustees of independent schools.

ZERO TOLERANCE

Some behavior is grounds for immediate withdrawal from the Aidan community, including:

Sexual Abuse/Assault

Sexual abuse/assault is illegal and will not be tolerated. Allegations of abuse or assault will be thoroughly investigated and offenders will be dealt with appropriately. This applies to all employees, parents, students, volunteers, and subcontractors.

Discrimination

Discrimination or harassment of any person in the Aidan community on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, disability, source of income, and place of residence or business is counter to our values and will not be tolerated. Allegations of discrimination will be thoroughly investigated and violators of Aidan’s Non-Discrimination Policy, found on page 3 in the Parent Handbook, will be dealt with appropriately. This applies to all employees, parents, volunteers, and subcontractors.

Consequences

Parents who stray from the above guidelines are subject to possible probation after a review by the School’s administrative team. Parents on probation will be barred from participating

in school volunteer activities for a specified period of time. Parents placed on probation more than three times during a school year will be asked to withdraw their child from Aidan beginning the following year. However, the School is not required to allow for three probationary periods before terminating an enrollment contract. Parental behavior determined by the School to be particularly egregious may result in immediate termination of the enrollment contract(s), or non-renewal of enrollment(s) at the sole discretion of the School.

Student Conduct

Our community expects students to:

- Respect themselves and others.
- Respect the property of the school and of others.

At Aidan we teach grace and courtesy beginning at the earliest ages. This is a continuing process, and children demonstrate respect in different ways depending on their age and social development.

Occasional aggression is normal throughout early and middle childhood (the span of ages of Aidan's student population). Some children have a more difficult time self-regulating. In these situations, the School and parents should avoid labeling children. Part of the job of the teacher and of the Aidan community is to support the child as he or she learns self-control.

The Zero Tolerance Policy stated in the Code of Conduct for Parents also applies to students as developmentally appropriate.

There are times when a student may exhibit repeated behavior that is troubling or harmful to him- or herself, other students, the school's physical environment, or other members of the Aidan community. Although the school must retain the right to address issues in accordance with professional discretion and on the particular facts of a matter, below is the general course of action the school will follow in working with a child and his/her parents:

- Immediate verbal correction and/or redirection of behavior in a developmentally appropriate* manner
- Call to parents
- Student visit to administrator with teacher
- Conferences with parents between teacher(s), parents, and administrator
- Individual Behavior Plan developed with the School

- May include requirement of seeking counseling, specific diagnostic testing, or full evaluation at the parents' expense.
- Timeline for assessing the success of the Individual Behavior Plan
- Student Contract (Elementary age only)
- Probation —A student's continued enrollment will be contingent upon his or her adherence to the Individual Behavior Plan and the Aidan Code of Conduct for Students
- Suspension —A student will be temporarily removed from the classroom either within the school building or at home.
- Expulsion —A student will leave the Aidan community permanently.

Allowing the process to take place in private without interference by other parties is vital. Parents who are concerned about the impact of another student's behavior on their child should follow the procedure outlined under "Communication" above, and speak first with the teacher. The School (teachers, administrators, staff) will address the concerns brought forward, but in most cases will not share the personal situation of the child with other parties including the parent expressing the concern.

Volunteering at Aidan

Aidan volunteers are vital to the success of our programs and to the children. Each year, Aidan is fortunate to receive many gifts of time, talent, and treasure, which are essential to our success. Volunteers help to make special activities happen - field trips need chaperones and the Auction needs a chair. When you agree to perform a service for the school, the entire community is counting on you to fulfill your promise. If you cannot, please contact a member of the PA Leadership and arrange for a replacement right away.

Being present at the school and on field trips requires confidentiality regarding what is observed or heard. Any concerns you may have should be made known to the teacher who will indicate if you need to speak to an administrator.

RESPECT FOR THE CHILD

A positive, optimistic attitude about children, a cooperative spirit, a nurturing of independence, a recognition of unique individuality, trust in the child's work, providing the right activity, and listening to and observing in order to follow the child. One should avoid pride and anger, touching the child unless invited, speaking ill of the child, sarcasm, teasing, overreacting to misbehavior, and implied reward and punishment. Phrasing of instructions should be direct and to the point. When communicating with the child, speak to the child at his/her eye level.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Includes personal information about children and families, organizational problems, and individual staff matters. All records, files, conversations, and conferences are held for the benefit of the child and are strictly confidential. Being present in the classroom requires confidentiality regarding what is observed or heard. Problems or concerns should be addressed to the teacher present.

GOOD STAFF RELATION

Includes working cooperatively and non-judgmentally with our staff in a trusting manner. Direct communication with teachers and staff is important. Negative comments, gossip, and other harmful behaviors are violations of the School's Code.

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Includes keeping private matters outside of the school, maintaining agreements at all levels regarding performance of duties, and meeting the needs of individual children and staff.

Guidelines from The Association of Independent Maryland Schools (AIMS)

PARENTS & INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

To be successful, every independent school needs and expects the cooperation of parents, who must understand and embrace the school's mission, share the school's core values, and fully support the school's curriculum, faculty, and staff. When joined by a common set of beliefs and purposes, the independent school and its parents form a powerful team with far-reaching positive effects on children and the entire community.

Working together, parents and school professionals exert a strong influence on children to become better educated; they also help them to mature by modeling adult working relationships based upon civility, honesty, and respect.

In practice, the greater impediment to effective teamwork between independent schools and parents grows out of misunderstandings about school decision-making processes: Who makes decisions in independent schools? How are those decisions made? Independent schools must communicate their procedures to parents, who, in turn, share the important responsibility to become informed members of the school community.

PARENTS & THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

In most independent schools, decision-making authority at the highest level resides in a volunteer Board of Trustees whose membership often includes current parents. The Board

of Trustees does not intervene in the daily affairs of the school, such as curriculum development and hiring, evaluating or firing of faculty and staff. Instead, the Board focuses on three areas critical to the success of any independent school: it selects, evaluates, and supports the Head of School, to whom the Board delegates authority to manage the school; the Board develops broad institutional policies that guide the Head in running the school; and it is accountable for the financial well-being of the school. In the conduct of official business, the Board acts only as a whole; individual Trustees, including the Board Chair, have no authority to act unless specifically authorized to do so by the Board acting as a whole:

- AIMS encourages parents who are interested in high-level decision making to stay informed about the work of the Board of Trustees by reading school publications, talking to the Head of School, and attending appropriate meetings.
- Parents with concerns about the school or with decisions made by the administration or faculty are encouraged to inquire about and follow the school's review process, but they should not expect the Board of Trustees to act as an appeals board. In a day school, trustees often interact with others within the school community and hear concerns about the daily operation of the school. As a matter of good practice, the trustee reports those concerns to the Head of School.

PARENTS & THE FACULTY & ADMINISTRATION

Parents play an essential and positive role in the life of an independent school. Not only are parents advocates for their children, they also support the faculty and administration through extensive volunteer activities and events.

The relationship between parents and the faculty and administration is formally governed by the school's written enrollment contract and handbook, in which the school's procedures are spelled out. When parents choose to enroll their child in an independent school, they agree to subscribe to the school's mission, follow the school's rules, and abide by the school's decisions. However, most teachers and administrators would agree that trust and mutual respect are the most essential underpinnings of effective working relationships with parents.

- AIMS encourages parents to work productively with teachers and administrators by staying informed about their child and important events in the life of the school. Thoughtful questions and suggestions should be welcomed by the school. Incumbent upon the school, is providing parents with timely and pertinent information.
- Parents best support a school climate of trust and respect by communicating concerns openly and constructively to the teacher or administrator closest to the problem. Efforts by parents to lobby other parents will be viewed by the school as counterproductive.

- While parents may not agree with every decision by the school, in most cases the parent and school will find enough common ground to continue a mutually respectful relationship. In the extreme case, however, an impasse may be so severe that the parent cannot remain a constructive member of the community. In such cases, both the parent and the school should consider whether another school would be a better match for the family.

THE PARENT ASSOCIATION & THE SCHOOL

The Parent Association in an independent school provides a vital and much-appreciated service to school leadership and the entire school community. Because the Parent Association is so important, and its volunteer activities are potentially so wide-ranging, AIMS recommends the following steps to structure and clarify the Association's role:

- The Board of Trustees, in consultation with the administration, should develop a set of written by-laws for the Association that make clear its procedures and role as a service organization.
- The by-laws should clearly state the Association's mission to support the decisions and policies of the Board and administration. The Parent Association neither participates in policy-making by the school, nor functions as a lobbying group.
- The finances of the Parent Association should be supervised and regularly monitored by the school and should be part of the school's annual audit process.
- The Head of School should be closely involved in the Association nominating process. Cooperation and teamwork between the Head of School and the officers of the Parent Association are crucial to the health of the school community.
- Advertising activities and events is an appropriate function of the Parent Association. The PA, however, is not a public relations arm of the school and should play no role in the school's efforts to communicate about itself.

Communication

Emails

REGULAR COMMUNICATIONS

Our policy is to communicate with families via email whenever possible. The following is a list of emails that families can expect from Aidan:

- **This Week at Aidan:** Sent every Sunday evening with a schedule for the upcoming week
- **School Notes:** Our monthly newsletter that is sent on the first Wednesday of every month. This newsletter will include such content as notes on events, photos from around Aidan, and notes from the head of school, school counselor, and divisions heads.

You can expect to receive personalized emails about your child's progress both during the first and second semesters. In addition to communication about events affecting your child, you can expect to receive periodic classroom updates with photos throughout the year. Parent-Conferences in November and April and Progress reports, in June for Toddler and Primary, and in January and June for Elementary, are also useful tools for discussion between you and your child's teacher about your child's progress.

We will also send home important medical/health notices and emails about certain events. Having correct email addresses for each family is very important. Please make every effort to read all Aidan emails for important information. Items that cannot go home via email are mailed or occasionally placed in children's backpacks.

EMAIL DEADLINES

In order to be sure that we do not send out conflicting information, and that our activities reflect Aidan cohesively and correctly, submissions for the School Notes newsletter must be approved (and edited, if necessary) by the Director of Communications and Marketing, the Head of School, and other stakeholders within the school as appropriate. As such, please consult with the Director of Communications and Marketing about any content you would like to submit to School Notes at least one week before it is scheduled to go out.

Emergency Text Messaging System

Aidan Montessori School has developed a comprehensive Crisis Plan to safeguard Aidan students and employees in the event of a range of crisis contingencies. If circumstances permit, parents will be notified in the event of an emergency or unanticipated event via text

messaging from SMS provider Remind101. **Parents MUST opt-in to receive text messages sent from Aidan.** To do so, please click here and follow the prompts, or to subscribe manually, **text @fa940 to the number 81010.** You will be asked to enter your first and last name to complete your subscription. Standard text messaging rates apply.

Aidan Website

Parents are encouraged to visit Aidan's website, www.aidanschool.org, for general information, calendar details, emergency updates, and more. The school also hosts more sensitive information for families in Aidan's Parent Portal. Families should receive login information for the portal by email shortly after enrolling at the school. For any problems accessing the portal, please email aidan@aidanschool.org for assistance.

Consistency and Honoring Privacy Preferences

Aidan is fortunate to have a community that is rich in events and talented volunteers, and it benefits tremendously from having such energy and creativity in our corner. All communications created on the behalf of the school by any member of the community must be checked by the Director of Communications and Marketing before being distributed to the Aidan community. This helps us to ensure that family privacy preferences are being respected and that the school is being represented consistently and accurately.

General Communication

COMMUNICATION WITH SECOND FAMILIES

The school will make every effort to send school communications to second families as requested when supplied with names, emails, and addresses.

COMMUNICATION WITH FACULTY/STAFF

Teachers and staff will be in touch with you via phone or email when needed. In addition to the twice-yearly Parent-Teacher Conferences, feel free to discuss your child's school progress, behavior or overall well-being with the child's teacher when you feel it is necessary or appropriate. Please call (202-387-2700) or email them on their Aidan school email address (first initial.last name@aidanschool.org). Your child's teacher will return your call or email within 24 hours. Please do not use Arrival or Dismissal for these conversations, as the teacher has other responsibilities at this time that will prevent him or her from giving you his or her full attention.

Please contact members of the administrative staff using their school phone number, email address, or by leaving them a note in the front office. (See the section on Code of Conduct for communication of concerns or grievances.)

COMMUNICATION WITH FELLOW PARENTS

Room parents set up group email lists at the beginning of the year and communicate with parents in their class regarding school and class activities. Room Parents should let the Director of Communications and Marketing and the Director of Advancement know prior to asking parents for monetary donations of any kind. Primary and Elementary Field Trip Coordinators should send the field trip schedule for the class to the Director of Communications and Marketing.

COMMUNICATION WITH THE BOARD

Aidan's Board of Trustees works on strategic, long-term issues facing the school. The Board welcomes comments and insight regarding site acquisition, current facilities, neighbor relations, institutional finances, trustee development, school diversity and financial aid. The Board does not work on day-to-day matters such as hiring/firing of employees (other than the Head of School) or the educational programs. Parents may contact individual members of the Board using the school directory or by sending a letter to the President addressing the entire Board. Concerns or questions raised by parents to the Board related to school operations or school programs will be passed on to the Head of School as is "best practice" for independent school trustees.

Social & Digital Media

Aidan Montessori School is officially represented on various social networks. These sites are managed by the Director of Communications and Marketing. Links are available on the homepage of the Aidan website.

Class Portal Groups

Each teacher, in conjunction with the Director of Communications and Marketing, maintains a class group on the Aidan Portal. Each page has complete information for contacting your child's teacher, including the best method and times to reach them. Snack schedules, class event and trip information, and class updates are also posted here. Photos can be viewed on this page.

To view your child's Class Page on the website, please visit the parent portal and login with your email address and password.

Please also check for monthly additions of blog entries and photos from each classroom.

Admission & Transition

Sibling Policy

Siblings of reenrolled students who have not applied out are given priority in the admissions process if the application is submitted on or before the December deadline. If a student has applied out, their sibling is not accorded preference. If the original reenrolled sibling does not ultimately reenter in September, then the sibling for whom preferential admission was granted may not be offered reenrollment the following year.

Applying Out

As a member of the Association of Independent Schools of Greater Washington, we maintain common deadlines with other area independent schools. Contact your schools of interest for specific application information. For assistance from Aidan for applying out, please email registrar@aidanschool.org.

Application Timeline for Admission into the Following Year

FALL

- Open Houses/School Tours
- Parents must schedule a placement counseling meeting with the Director of Admissions.

DECEMBER

- Deadline to submit teacher recommendation forms to Aidan.

MARCH

- Notifications sent.
- **It is important that Aidan receive all recommendation forms prior to Winter Break** to allow faculty the opportunity to use the break to complete the forms thoroughly.
- Aidan cannot guarantee that schools will receive our recommendations in a timely fashion if we do not receive the forms by the deadline before Winter Break.

Special Procedures for Graduating Students

- Aidan recommends applying to no fewer than six schools.
- Aidan requests that parents work through the application process closely with the administration, allowing Aidan to advocate on behalf of the student to first choice schools.
- Parents of graduating students should meet with the Head of School at the beginning of September to discuss the process ahead.

Transitioning from Primary to Elementary

During the third year of Primary, parents should do the following:

OCTOBER

- Attend “Journey and Discovery.”

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER

- Schedule a meeting to discuss Aidan’s Elementary program with the Chief Operations Officer.

JANUARY

- Reenroll for Elementary.

Business & Finances

The Business Office is responsible for preparing and sending out invoices as well as posting payments to parents' accounts. Here are some guidelines for interacting with the Business Office:

- If you have a question about an invoice, you can either write a note and leave it in the school office, call the Business office (202-332-5892), or email the Chief Financial Officer. In your message, please include your child's name, your question/request, and the best way to reach you.
- In order to post payments correctly, all checks that are made payable to the school need to include a description in the Memo portion of the check (example: Tuition – Plan A – Nicholas – Full-Day Primary).

Tuition Payment Plans

Tuition for any given school year is due in the June preceding the school year.

In order to accommodate the myriad needs of families, Aidan has established alternative payment plans that spread the payments out over the school year. The payment plan options are listed below:

- **Plan A** – This is a one-time payment and is due in June.
- **Plan B** – 60% of the payment is due on June 1st, with the balance due on the first day back after Winter Break. There is a 2.0% fee added to the tuition for this Plan.
- **Plan C** – These are 10 monthly payments, with the first payment due in June and the 10th payment due in March. The interim payments are due on the first of the month. There is a 2.5% fee added to the tuition for this Plan.

Each family must select a payment plan on the enrollment contract. If no preference is noted, then the family will be billed under Plan A. If a family would like to change payment plans, the request must be submitted in writing to the Business Office and, if at all possible, such requests should be made before the first tuition payment has been made.

SMART TUITION

All families, regardless of payment plan selected and payment history, must enroll in the Smart Tuition system. Reenrollment materials include Smart Tuition forms and details about the system.

PAYMENT METHODS

Aidan does not accept cash or credit card payments. Plan A families may pay by check, cashier's check, money order, or certified check. Plan A families may arrange for an automatic withdrawal from their bank account. Plan B and Plan C families must pay via automatic withdrawal from their bank account.

Enrollment Contracts

The enrollment contract that the parent signs is a legal agreement between parents/guardians and Aidan Montessori School. The school requires predictable tuition revenue in order to effectively provide the services contracted. Reenrollment contracts for current parents are distributed in early January, are due with the reenrollment fee in January, and become binding in June. Contracts offered to new families also become binding in June. Some important points:

- **Tuition is nonrefundable. After the June binding date parents/guardians are responsible in full for this obligation.** To defray this cost, Aidan uses Dewar's Tuition Refund Plan. This plan is automatically included for students selecting plans B or C. For Plan A families desiring the coverage, the cost is 1.7% of tuition and must be paid in full by June 1st (or within 10 days of signing an enrollment agreement for post June enrollees). The school offers this for the Montessori program only, not ASP, BSP, or Discovery. More detailed information about this plan is provided with reenrollment materials.
- **Grace period.** The school provides a grace period of four calendar days after the stated due date. Checks are logged in and dated as soon as they are received (whether by hand or mail).
- **Late fee.** A late fee of 1.0% per month will be applied on all balances due over 30 days. In addition, you may incur a \$35 late fee and bank fees from Smart Tuition.
- **NSF checks.** A \$50 charge will be assessed for a non-sufficient funds check. If a family presents a 2nd NSF check in the school year, then all future payments plus fees must be paid by money order, certified check, or cashier's check.
- **Good financial standing.** All tuition and fees must be paid in full by the June binding date prior to the start of the school year to be considered in good financial standing. Good financial standing is required for a child to start a new school year or for school records to be released to other schools.
- **Reenrollment.** The reenrollment fee must accompany the reenrollment contract. A contract will not be accepted until payment is made.

Receipts/Statements

Many families participate in tuition reimbursement plans and therefore request receipts. Please submit your request in writing—specifying exactly what information should be included. The Business Office will prepare these statements once a month so please consider this when timing your request.

Financial Aid

Aidan Montessori School recognizes the importance of a strong financial aid program. Each year, the Board of Trustees designates a portion of the school's budget to assist families whose resources would not otherwise allow them to enroll their children in the School. The Board has authorized the proceeds from our annual Auction to be used for this purpose.

The goals of the program are twofold: (1) to attract a diverse socioeconomic student body, and (2) to provide tuition payment assistance to families within the school who require financial assistance and meet the established criteria. Priority in financial assistance goes to families already within the School.

Children are accepted to the School without regard to financial need. The School makes an effort to offer tuition payment assistance in all cases of demonstrated need as determined by the Financial Aid Committee.

Currently, Aidan uses the School and Student Services (SSS) in Princeton, New Jersey. SSS analyzes financial data provided by the applicant family and provides a need-based financial aid report to the School. Final review of tuition assistance requests is made by the Financial Aid Committee, and funds are awarded through the Head of School. Aidan holds all financial information regarding Aidan families, including financial aid awards strictly in confidence; Aidan appreciates families treating financial aid awards in confidence also.

The deadline for Financial Aid forms to be submitted to SSS is December 15 for current families and early February for first-time applying families. Applications for Financial Aid are processed in early January for current families and mid-February for applying families for the following academic year; decisions are announced by the end of March. Applications must be submitted to SSS each year Financial Aid is requested.

Employing Aidan Staff Outside of School

Any financial arrangement between and Aidan employee and an Aidan family must be requested by the employee to the Head of School, who will approve such arrangements on a case-by-case basis. If the arrangement is approved, the employee must have the family sign a waiver and return it to the School. This employment is between the individual faculty/staff and the family. Any and all such services shall be provided outside the school premises. Aidan Montessori School is not a party to such arrangements and, therefore, is not responsible for the actions of any of the parties. Aidan Montessori School will not be

liable or responsible for any damages, injury or loss, consequential or otherwise, resulting from such employment. The faculty/staff and the employer shall hold Aidan Montessori School harmless with regard to any and all damages, injuries and liability arising therefrom or related thereto. Financial arrangements between school employees and school families that are not initially approved by the Head of School are considered serious breaches of employment.

Tuition & Fee Schedule and Financial Disclosure

You can always find a link to our complete Tuition & Fee Schedule and Financial Disclosure, as well as an overview of the current year's tuition, at this web address:

<http://www.aidanschool.org/admissions/tuition-and-fees>

Please take time to review this information, which is important to all Aidan families.

Giving at Aidan

Giving at Aidan falls into three categories:

- The Aidan Fund (Annual Giving)
- The Auction to Fund Students
- Capital Campaigns

For more than 50 years, donors and philanthropy have played a significant role in Aidan's success. In the next 50 years, your support will shape the school as a place where students can achieve the highest standard for educational learning.

Throughout the year, you will be asked to participate in various school fundraising efforts listed in this section. Please know that each and every gift received positively impacts the quality of Aidan Montessori School. Only you can determine how much to give, but we ask each family to be as generous as possible and to participate in as many ways as they can.

The Aidan Fund

After tuition, the Aidan Fund, Aidan's Annual Giving is Aidan's largest source of income. It helps to fill the gap between tuition income and the actual cost of an Aidan education. We ask that you make the Aidan Fund one of your families philanthropic priorities. Generous contributions help us to provide our students with the best educational experience possible by supporting classroom materials, faculty and staff salaries and benefits, professional development, maintenance for building and grounds, and much more.

Independent schools, like Aidan, rely on voluntary support of current parents, alumni, faculty, staff, alumni families, grandparents, and friends of the school to support The Aidan Fund. Our goal is always to reach 100% participation from our current families as well as our faculty and staff and for significant participation from our other constituent groups.

All members of the Aidan community are contacted in the fall with information about the year's Annual Giving effort. Then, volunteers follow up to answer any questions you may have or to help you make your gift. Contributions to The Aidan Fund must be received by June 30 to include your participation in that year's efforts.

Auction to Fund Students

Aidan's Auction is held annually in March with all proceeds benefiting our Financial Aid Program. At Aidan, between 15% and 20% of our families receive some form of tuition assistance. We hope that your family will choose to participate in this effort – whether you donate an item, help as a volunteer, bid during the auction, attend the live auction, raise your paddle during our Fund-A-Student appeal, or all of the above. The Auction provides a

fun, social atmosphere for the Aidan community to provide philanthropic support for the school.

Capital Campaigns

From time to time, independent schools like Aidan also engage in capital campaigns to raise funds for improvements to our building, to our programs, and to plans for our future. During these periodic campaigns, we will ask you to support these long-term efforts in addition to Annual Giving.

Additional information about how to make a gift to Aidan Montessori School can be found on our website (www.aidanschool.org) under “Support.”

Background Information

A History of Aidan Montessori School

Aidan began life as St. Aidan School on the campus of Dunbarton School for Girls, a Catholic college for women on what is now the Howard University Law School campus on Upton Street NW.

The school was founded in 1961 by Catholic parents who wanted a Montessori school for their children. They incorporated as the first Montessori school in Washington as a 50-c(3) not-for-profit corporation and formed the first Board of Trustees. Soon after, St. Aidan moved to Military Road where it leased space for 33 years from Temple Sinai. St. Aidan School changed names in 1985 to Aidan Montessori School to reflect the school's secular nature.

Aidan purchased the St. Thomas Apostle Church School in 1995 and moved to the school's present location in historic Woodley Park.

Over the years, Aidan joined with other independent schools in the greater Washington area and embraced the practices which guide independent schools nationwide.

Corporation, Accreditation, & Associations

Aidan Montessori School is a non-profit entity incorporated in the District of Columbia and governed by a Board of Trustees. Admissions and staffing at Aidan Montessori School is open to all regardless of race, creed, color, sexual orientation, religion, or national origin. The rules of governance are set forth in the organization's by-laws. Copies are available from the School Office upon request. Aidan Montessori School is licensed in the District of Columbia by the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs.

Aidan is recognized by the prestigious Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) as an accredited Montessori school. Aidan is also accredited by the Association of Independent Maryland Schools (AIMS). Aidan Montessori School and its teachers are members of the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI). In addition, Aidan holds a membership in the North American Montessori Teacher's Association (NAMTA).

Aidan is a member of the Association of Independent Schools of Greater Washington (AISGW), the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS), and the Washington Small Schools Association (WSSA).

A Brief Guide to Aidan's Accrediting & Collegial Organizations

AMI

Association Montessori Internationale is at the heart of Aidan in that Aidan has always been guided by AMI pedagogy. (Pedagogy includes the ways that educational theory is put into practice or implemented.) All of our lead classroom teachers are AMI-trained, providing our educational program with great consistency and congruence. Dr. Maria Montessori founded AMI in 1929 in order to maintain the integrity of her life's work. AMI sets standards on a straightforward interpretation of Dr. Montessori's writings, teachings, and universal principles. AMI's standards include:

- 3-hour morning work period
- Classes representing three-year age ranges: 3-6, 6-9, 9-12
- 1 teaching professional (AMI) per classroom only
- 1 non-teaching assistant per classroom
- Only two adults in the classroom at one time
- 28-35 students per class
- No specialists in the morning: OE/PE, Music, Art, Foreign Language, etc.
- Only AMI-approved materials in the classroom
- 2 to 3 hours of uninterrupted Montessori work in the afternoon for full-day Primary students, and for Elementary students 4 days per week.

AIMS

Association of Independent Maryland Schools. Many of our Greater Washington area independent schools are accredited by AIMS (Washington, DC does not have a DC-specific accrediting body). Aidan is a member of AIMS and received full accreditation in 2004. AIMS accreditation allows Aidan to be a serious colleague when seeking placement for our graduates in our fellow independent schools. Independent school evaluation systems are an assessment of whether a school is, in fact, doing what it says it is doing. AIMS evaluates the educational program, general operations, finance, governance, health and safety, admissions, library, parent relations, and more.

AISGW

Association of Independent Schools of Greater Washington. Aidan is a longstanding member. AISGW is a collegial organization, not an accrediting body, and AISGW serves as a cooperative hub of communication, professional development, and statistics gathering. AISGW schools agree to comply with a professional code of ethics with respect to admissions and other policies.

NAMTA

North American Montessori Teachers Association. All Aidan faculty are members. NAMTA is inclusive of all Montessori accrediting bodies and organizations and provides professional and parent educational materials and programs.

WSSA

Washington Small Schools Association is a professional association of very small schools for the purpose of articulating the virtues of a small school and for networking and supporting each other. Aidan has been a member since WSSA began.

NAIS

National Association of Independent Schools. Aidan is a member of this national umbrella organization for independent schools throughout the country. NAIS provides many services to member schools and is a voice representing our schools in national policy initiatives.

On the Handbook

Revision Policy

Aidan Montessori School reserves the right at its sole discretion to amend its policies, programs and/or guidelines, including the contents of this Handbook, at any time with or without prior notice.

Revision Date

This document was last revised on February 12, 2018.