

RENAISSANCE

MONTESSORI ACADEMY

PARENT HANDBOOK



2015 ~ 2016

Renaissance Montessori Academy

Welcome to the Renaissance Montessori Academy! We are proud of our school and the work that we do with the children. Along with the licensure from Colorado Department of Social Services, we have Montessori certified teachers in each classroom and hold accreditation from North Central Association who accredits many schools, districts and colleges throughout the world. We think you will be pleased to be part of our community.

This handbook is a composite of rules and regulations, ideas and suggestions from parents and staff members that will make your experience at our school more enjoyable. We hope that you will understand the need for the rules and regulations; and that the ideas and suggestions will facilitate communication, while helping us to provide a supportive and responsive environment for all the families.

Please keep this book for future reference. Our newsletters will keep you informed of events and class progress. Feel free, at any time, to talk with your child's teacher. Communication between parents and staff is the foundation for an excellent school experience.

As you read this handbook, please remember that it is an integral part of your enrollment agreement. Please sign and return one copy of this letter to the Office as acknowledgment of your receipt and review of this handbook, and your agreement to abide by the rules and regulations contained within.

Chhaya

I/we acknowledge receipt of the Parent Handbook. I understand that by signing this form I also agree to abide by the rules and regulations contained within the Handbook.

Child's name _____

Parent Signature

Parent Signature

Date: _____

Date: _____

Director's Signature

Date Received

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Children learn what they live

If . . .

If a child lives with criticism,
He learns to condemn.

If a child lives with hostility,
He learns to fight.

If a child lives with fears,
He learns to be apprehensive.

If a child lives with pity,
He learns to feel sorry for himself.

If a child lives with jealousy,
He learns to feel guilty.

If a child lives with encouragement,
He learns to be confident.

If a child lives with tolerance,
He learns to be patient.

If a child lives with praise,
He learns to be appreciative.

If a child lives with acceptance,
He learns to love.

If a child lives with approval,
He learns to like himself.

If a child lives with recognition,
He learns to have a goal.

If a child lives with fairness,
He learns what justice is.

If a child lives with security,
He learns to have faith in himself and in those about him..

If a child lives with friendliness,
He learns that the world is a good place in which to live.

The Watchman- Examiner ©1963

WELCOME

Welcome to the Renaissance Montessori Academy! This handbook is designed to answer most of the questions you might have about the policies and procedures of our academy. Please keep it ready to refer to as needed. If you have further questions about the school, please feel free to speak with your child's teacher or the Director. Thank you for entrusting your child to us. We believe you will not be disappointed in the quality of our programs. We welcome your questions or comments at any time.

VISION STATEMENT

We envision a community of learners – parents, professionals, and children – in an environment which supports and enriches the foundations of each child's development and influences the future of early childhood education.

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission at the Renaissance Montessori Academy is to mentor the growth and education of the whole child: fostering an abiding curiosity; developing self-confidence, initiative, independence and persistence; and nurturing an inner security and sense of order.

PHILOSOPHY

We are creating a high quality preschool program incorporating what we consider to be the best of the Montessori methods and the philosophies from Reggio Emilia, Italy. Our purpose is:

- ❖ To provide a nurturing atmosphere in which children learn to have respect for others and for themselves.
- ❖ To meet each child's physical needs while encouraging independence in self care.
- ❖ To encourage curiosity within each child, giving her/him room to discover, to explore, and to grow in independent thought.
- ❖ To be supportive of parents by encouraging involvement in the school and maintaining open and honest communication with the use of tact and discretion.

We believe that each child should be encouraged to become an independent, enthusiastic, life-long learner. By having a wide variety of activities and materials in his environment, a child will develop his or her own natural desire to learn and can work within his or her own pace.

Early Childhood Education should be about learning to observe, to thoughtfully follow a process to a conclusion. It should be learning to control mental and muscular energy in order to reach the child's goal. Preschool education lays foundations for the future.

At Renaissance Montessori Academy, Early Childhood Education is the acquisition of critical thinking skills through creative exploration of worlds that intrigue a child - and a teacher. It is the exploration of ideas and abilities. It is learning the languages of clay, paint, sculpture, drama and movement that allow a person of any age to explain to another what has been observed and understood. It is revisiting old concepts and revising them with new information. It is being respected as an intelligent partner in learning. At Renaissance Montessori Academy, we are creating relationships, not only between people, but also discovering the relationships between things, within thoughts, and holistically with the environment.

At Renaissance Montessori Academy, we maintain high standards for teaching the children in a developmentally appropriate manner. We are much more than a Montessori school, or a school interpreting Reggio Emilio practices. We are Renaissance.

MONTESSORI PRINCIPLES

- ❖ Mixed age grouping
- ❖ Freedom of choice with responsibility
- ❖ Self-teaching manipulative materials
- ❖ Character and personality development
- ❖ Acknowledgment that children progress at their own rate
- ❖ Children learn to care for themselves and their environment
- ❖ Encourages left and right brain integration
- ❖ Movement necessary for neuro-muscular development
- ❖ Richly prepared environment
- ❖ Control of error built into lessons
- ❖ Teacher is a guide
- ❖ Builds positive self image
- ❖ Logical consequences for behavior
- ❖ Self-discipline through work
- ❖ Interrelated curriculum
- ❖ Individual as well as group interactions
- ❖ Sensitive periods for learning
- ❖ Lessons in grace and courtesy
- ❖ Sensory-based learning
- ❖ Appreciation of all life
- ❖ Peace through education



Montessori Philosophy

Education is a preparation for life, not a search for intellectual skills. The children have one intuitive aim in their self-development: they want to develop their inner resources and ability to cope with a strange and complex world. The child who accomplishes this, moves into harmony with this world and becomes a full person.



Dr. Montessori tells us that the only really important thing in education is to teach the child how to learn. The motivations for learning must come from within the child. Human beings are born with the desire to know, the urge to explore, and the need to master the environment – in short, to achieve. Thus, the Montessori environment is carefully prepared to train the senses, to stimulate curiosity, to satisfy the child's need to know, and to protect him from unnecessary failure.

When the children have completed the Montessori preschool program, we hope they will have developed socially and physically, have self-discipline, self-knowledge and independence, as well as an enthusiasm for learning. They should have an organized approach to problem solving and basic academic skills. These long range goals can best be achieved when a child completes three years in a Montessori program.

What Montessori Offers Your Child

Montessori is a way to grow in an environment that:

- Permits your child to find and to participate freely in activities suited to his/her individual level of capability.
- Helps your child become an orderly, integrated person with self-direction, inner discipline, and a sense of responsibility.
- Fulfills your child's need to become independent and to be able to make wise choices.
- Makes it easy for your child to learn social skills as well as basic cognitive skills.

When children enter the Montessori environment, they will be doing many things for themselves. They will want to continue to do these things at home as part of the process of becoming more independent. Help us by letting your children choose their own clothes, dress themselves, brush their teeth, pour milk or juice from a small pitcher or conduct any other easy household chores they enjoy. Do not rush your children as they perform these tasks and allow them to make mistakes. When they do make mistakes, show them how to do a task correctly rather than telling them that they are doing it wrong.

This new environment may also cause changes in your child's behavior. Becoming independent may be a new experience and you may want to discuss this with your child's teacher. We have parent forums to enhance your knowledge of Montessori and discuss the concept of independence and how it encourages self-discipline.

The Montessori Classroom

The physical environment is carefully prepared, orderly, precise and attractive. It invites learning without being over-stimulating while allowing the children to experience success that becomes truly meaningful to each child in the following areas of the classroom:

Practical Life:

These exercises aid in the child's development of order, concentration, coordination, and independence. They relate to the care of self and the environment and emphasize the development in a step-by-step approach to work activities. These are essential for establishing the good work habits that are necessary for later success in the academic areas of the classroom.

Sensorial:

These exercises aid in the child's development of perception and sensory awareness. The sensorial materials isolate all the different senses and are developmental, leading to finer and finer distinctions. These perceptual skills provide the child with the tools for all learning.

Language:

These exercises provide the child with the concrete foundation for all further language work. Activities emphasizing auditory and visual perception skills are begun with children 2 ½ to 3 years old. This basis for a phonetic approach to the sounds of our language leads directly to writing and reading. Learning the usage and function of words, with an emphasis on reading for meaning, leads to greater creativity in expression and enthusiasm for both reading and writing.

Math:

These exercises introduce the child to the world of numbers in concrete form. The child not only learns numbers and counting, but is also introduced to addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, and the concept of fractions.

Cultural:

These exercises provide an introduction to the world around the child through exercises in history, geography, science, art, music, and foreign language.

A child's early years are the foundation upon which the rest of his experiences are built. The importance of providing a strong and positive base is paramount. In Montessori education, the child is respected as an individual in the environment with unique potential. This careful and appropriately planned transforming environment provides a wide range of experiences and opportunities that encourage and enhance the child's ability to fulfill his potential.



PHILOSOPHY INSPIRED BY REGGIO EMILIA

Strong words describe the child within the philosophies of both Dr. Maria Montessori and those of the educators of Reggio Emilia, Italy. "Rich, strong, powerful" (Rinaldi 1993, 102); "active, and competent" (Edwards 1993, 152); "connected to adults and other children" (Malaguzzi 1993, 10.)

Reggio Emilia is a city in northern Italy situated in a region rich in art, architecture, agriculture, industry and tourism. It is also an area with a very highly developed concern for child welfare. Following WWII strong local initiatives led to the parent-run schools that were the beginning of the Reggio Emilia preschools. The parents found inspiration and encouragement in the progressive ideas of John Dewey and Celestin Freinet. The work of Jean Piaget, and others such as Leo Vygotsky and Maria Montessori supported the teachers' observations and discoveries about children and their development.

In 1963 Loris Malaguzzi brought his energies and philosophy into a battle to get the city government to make the people's schools municipally funded. Under his direction, the educators in Reggio Emilia have come to view children, as well as teachers and parents, as collaborators in a holistic, educational process. They have not established a formal model to be emulated in every early childhood class around the world. Instead *they view their experience with the children as an evolution of relationships that benefits and expands the thoughts of the adults as well as the children.* In Reggio Emilia it is an ongoing process. It is an exciting process of attitude to be adapted to other cultures.

- ❖ **Teachers are nurturers, guides, and partners in learning.** They facilitate the children's explorations through long and short projects, and guide experiences of joint, open-ended discovery and problem solving. To know how to plan and proceed with their work, teachers listen and observe children closely. Teachers ask questions, discover children's ideas, hypotheses, and theories – and provide occasions for discovery and learning. Teachers are researchers working with children.



- ❖ **The child is a collaborator and communicator in his own growth and development.** As in Montessori philosophy, children are strong and capable, bringing potential, curiosity and interest into constructing their learning. They negotiate with everything their environment brings to them.

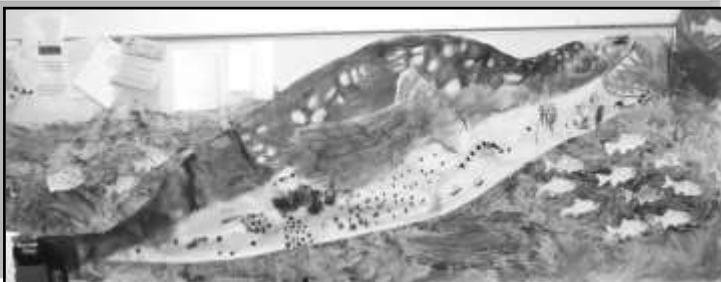
In the Reggio Emilia philosophy the child does not work in isolation. Each child is part of a relationship with other children, the family, the teachers, and the community. He begins life in a community. This approach fosters children's intellectual development through a systematic focus on symbolic representation, including words, movement, drawing, painting, building, sculpture, shadow play, and music – 100 languages of the mind and spirit.

- ❖ **Parents are partners.** Parent participation is considered essential and takes many forms. Parents play an active part in their children's learning experience and help ensure the welfare of all the children in the school. The ideas and skills that the families bring to the school – and even more importantly, the exchange of ideas between parents and teachers – favor the development of a new way of education, which helps teachers view the participation of families as an integration of different wisdoms.
- ❖ **The environment is a third teacher.** Every corner of every space is rich in potential to engage and to communicate. Within the Montessori classroom “prepared environments” focus attention on materials and encourage independence and self-discipline. Within the beauty of those materials, the child is given the opportunity to see the individual aspects of an idea and work with those small parts as he/she gains an understanding. The environment within our studio requires that the child build on the concepts gained in the rest of the classroom and reestablish a whole. Education becomes a spiraling development of learning, not linear. Ideas are revisited through encounters, exchanges, and communication.
- ❖ **Documentation is a means of communication.** It makes parents aware of their children's experiences. It allows teachers to better understand children, to evaluate their own work, and to exchange ideas with other educators. It also shows children that their work is valued.

Finally it creates an archive that traces the history of the school and the pleasure in the process of learning experienced by many children and their teachers.



“Do nothing without joy.”



In Practice:

The Montessori philosophy and pedagogy and that of Reggio Emilia go hand in hand. You will see this blending occur throughout the classrooms. Environments will bloom on the walls as we explore continents and their cultures. Children dress in the costumes of cultures around the world. All the adults observe and discuss where a subject is going to go. Teachers are aware of subjects that catch the attention of the children and expand on them in designing the curriculum.

Most specifically, the Reggio Emilia philosophy is used in the Studio. Art, and the exploration of our world through as many physical materials as we can manage, becomes one of the languages that allow these children to make their thought processes visible. As we move through the year, we try to display our pictures of the children at work along with commentaries that can be used by both the teaching staff and parents.

In the Studio, we use clay, paint, paper, found items, blocks, trains, nature, music, cardboard, and more in a structured, as well as open, method to allow the child to explore and make apparent the ideas that he/she are developing. Children frequently discuss what they are doing and help each other reach new understanding. We will often explore different aspects of the same topics that are being explored in the classrooms. At other times we will expand on the topics to include the seasons or how our bodies work, etc.



Every child is in the studio for an entire morning. This allows us to use time to our advantage rather than end an exploration prematurely. New children are given the opportunity to settle into their primary classes before they are invited to the studio.



How do I make the penguin wings?



ORGANIZATION

Our Board of Directors, consisting of parents, educators, and members of the business community, governs our preschool. The Board is seated in August of each year. The names and positions of the new Board of Directors will be posted at that time. The By-Laws, meeting agendas, and minutes of each meeting are available in the preschool office for your inspection at any time. You are also welcome to attend our Board meetings, which are held here at school once a month. Please ask in the office for the date of the next scheduled meeting.

Renaissance Montessori Academy opened in early August of 1995 after an intense six-month effort by a task force of parents whose children would be attending the new Renaissance Charter School. Our purpose at first was to provide a quality preschool for siblings of children enrolled in the elementary school, to generate extra income with which to support the elementary school, and to create a program that would provide a unique transition for children who would eventually be attending The Renaissance School.



From that foundation, we have become a special community of learners exploring the world together. Participation of the parents in the Renaissance Montessori Academy program is just as essential to the vitality of the school as the interaction of the children and the teachers. Each parent and staff member brings to the school diverse talents, experiences, and abilities that add to our strength. Together we share the responsibilities that stem from being part of a community of learners.



Parents are encouraged to be active in special events, field trips, work in the school, discussions of educational and developmental issues, and development of our vision of the future. As we learn to implement more of the Reggio Emilia philosophical practices, we are trying to bring parents into the classroom to help document the discoveries of the children and make them more visible.

We try to have at least one meeting early in the year to discuss our philosophy of child development and others to celebrate the achievements of our children. These are advertised in advance. Please help us to plan other discussions of interest to you and meet other parents. According to the bylaws of Renaissance Montessori Academy a representative of the parent community is a member of the Board of Directors.

The day-to-day operations of the preschool are handled by the Director and, in his or her absence, by the Assistant Director. Please feel free to stop by with any questions you may have, or just to visit. We enjoy our daily time with parents!

ADMISSIONS

The Renaissance Montessori Academy is a private, non-profit educational organization, licensed by the state of Colorado to enroll children from age 2 ½ (and fully toilet trained) through age 8, and is fully accredited by the North Central Association. We accept all children without regard to race, religion, sex, or ethnic origin and comply with the *Americans with Disability Act*. All parts of our building and classrooms are accessible to all persons. Children with disabilities or physical handicaps are accepted according to the ability of our staff to meet their specific needs. A *special needs child* is one who may require special attention, programming or education beyond our normal program. *Children with special needs will be considered for enrollment on an individual basis.*

In order to insure a space for your child in our program, you must fill out a Letter of Commitment and return it to the preschool office, along with a non-refundable administration fee. Please see the current schedule for the present administration fee.

After your child has enrolled in RMA:

- * The Colorado Department of Social Services **requires** a completed enrollment form and doctor's checkup by the first day of school attendance.
- * Your tuition contract is for the full school year – or the portion of the school year that is remaining. You will need to pay a deposit – equal to one (1) full month's tuition – and the material/enrichment fee.
- * Monthly tuition is due by the fifth of each month from August through May. The deposit is applied to the June tuition only and is not refundable should you decide to withdraw your child at a time earlier than the end of the present school year.
- * You can change the program in which your child is enrolled if space is available. A \$50.00 fee will be billed to your account, and we will adjust the deposit as needed.

When all available spaces in our programs are full, we form a waiting list. Vacancies are filled from this list.

THE CALENDAR

School Year - Our school year begins during the first part of August and continues through mid-June. Please ask for a current calendar if you do not have one and refer to it throughout the year.

Summer Camp - We traditionally have summer camp for five weeks from the last of June through July. The specific dates for this year will be advertised during the early spring.

RMA is closed for these breaks. Please note the specific dates on your calendar:

Labor Day
Fall Break
Thanksgiving
December Holiday Break
MLK's Birthday
Teacher Inservice

Presidents' Day
Spring Break
Parent/Teacher spring conference
Memorial Day
Independence Day

Renaissance Montessori Academy

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Program Choices:

Kindergarten:

_____ 5 full days (8:00 -3:15)
_____ 5 full days Before/After (7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.)

Preschool:

_____ 5 full days Before/After	4 day schedule is Mon-Thur OR Tues-Fri _____ 4 full days Before/After (7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.)
_____ 5 full days (8:00-3:15)	_____ 4 full days (8:00 – 3:15)
_____ 5 half days (8:00-11:30)	_____ 4 half day (8:00 – 11:30)

School Year Hours:

Full Day	8:00 AM to 3:15 PM
Half Day	8:00 AM to 11:30 PM
Before School	7:00 AM to 8:00 AM
After School	3:15 PM to 6:00 PM

ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Our driveway opens from a shared entry street. Please be aware that other traffic will be using the initial drive during the time that children are arriving or leaving school. Stop and look as required for safety.



*As you enter the parking lot please be aware of the small children who are entering or exiting their cars. They do not always pay attention to the traffic or necessarily listen to adult voices that are cautioning them. That leaves the responsibility for their safety in your hands. **Do not drive in the parking lot or in our driveway at speeds exceeding 5 MPH.***

- Please do not park under any circumstances in the long drive area where the fire lane is posted. We are required by the Police and Fire Departments to keep the driveway clear for emergency traffic.
- If traffic is ahead of you be aware that the drivers are waiting to safely enter the parking lot; do not go around them. You simply hamper progress.
- The handicap parking area is also to be used with discretion not just for convenience. Please honor those who need to be very close to the door in order to successfully approach the school.

Sign In/Sign Out

Your full signature is required to legally place your child in our hands and give us responsibility for their safety. It is vital that you sign your child into class in the book provided for this purpose each time that you bring him/her to school.

Forgot to sign in? Social Services requires that we call you back to complete the sign-in procedure. The sign in/sign out sheet is a legal document. *We cannot sign in for you or allow the child to sign the register.*

Signing your child into class is really only the first step in letting us know that your child is present. After you have helped put everything away, please direct your child to say hello to his/her main teacher. Those teachers will ask the child to say hello to whomever is also teaching that day. Now everyone has seen your child and knows he is in class. This is especially important if you have arrived after 9:00 when the children are beginning to choose their work and attendance has already been taken.

When it is time to release the children from our care, *no child will be released to anyone who is not listed on the enrollment form or daily pick-up sheets.* Please fill out a form indicating an alternative person picking up when you need to move from the typical. If the staff person on duty is unfamiliar with the person who is picking up your child, identification and/or the family code word will be required. It would be helpful for our staff if you could bring in relatives and friends who might be picking up children at the preschool ahead of time to meet us. Please do not send siblings or children under 18 years of age to pick up a preschool child. **We are able to release children only to an authorized adult.**

The morning class ends at 11:30 a.m. Children need to be picked up no later than 11:35. This is a transition time for the classes and the teachers. If you need to speak to another parent or an office staff member, please sign your child out first, maintain control of your child, and relieve the classroom teachers of the responsibility. Please keep your children safe. Keep them beside you when you stop for a moment to speak to another parent. It only takes a moment in a busy parking lot for a tragedy to happen. *The afternoon class ends at 3:15.* A 15 minute grace period for travel time between schools is allowed in the afternoons. **At 3:30 p.m. all children in our care – those who are still on the playground and under the supervision of the teachers – are transferred to an aftercare designation and will be charged at the rates provided on the school calendar.**

Renaissance Montessori Academy

Transitional Periods

Staff notes attendance at the beginning of the session and keeps count of the children in their care throughout the day. We re-check attendance rolls at any transition times during the day.

Transitional periods are defined as any time the children are moving from the responsibility of one adult to that of another. This may be coming in from the playground, releasing to parents before lunch, or moving to another classroom. To alleviate the possibility of a child becoming separated from the remainder of the class and being unsupervised, we will always have a teacher to receive the children as well as one to send them on their way. After all the children are with the lead teacher, the assisting teacher does a scan of the area to be certain that all children are accounted for.

At lunchtime two adults are involved with serving the meal and monitoring any children who are in the book corner waiting for their parents. After lunch, when we separate the children by age, we also have staff changes, which could allow us to inadvertently miss a child. At this time we recheck the roll to let teachers know who is in their care for the afternoon.

End of the Day

May we explain the end of the day? This is another transition period. The school day ends at 3:15. Children are usually on the playground or in an activity with the others in the Great Room on days when we cannot be outside. During this grace period between 3:15 and 3:30 some children are leaving with their parents; others remain. However there is no distinction between those who are going and those who are in Aftercare. This becomes a 15 minute buffer zone for parents to help their child move into family time and the evening. Parents will frequently sign the register as soon as they arrive and then take advantage of those few minutes to help the child gather belongings and say goodbye before they leave.

However, as long as any child is playing with classmates that child remains under our supervision. It is only when a child leaves the company of the other children and our oversight that we no longer hold responsibility. Teachers must remain vigilant so we can't visit much, but please feel free to chat with other parents during these 15 minutes while your child enjoys playing with friends.

We ask that you be aware that at 3:30 p.m. all children in our care – those who are still on the playground or otherwise under the supervision of the teachers – are transferred to an aftercare designation and will be charged at the rates provided on the school calendar.

Please support our procedures. The end of the afternoon session is a very active transition period with a lot of movement into and out of the rooms by a lot of people. The front desk is manned so that we are sure who is in the building, and the children are always supervised.

- If you pick your child up from his/her class at the end of the school session, you must sign your child out at the front desk.
- *All children who have not left with a parent by 3:30 are part of Aftercare.* Whether the children are out on the playground or down in the Great Room, we scan for any strays and attendance is taken. All children in our care, including the occasional drop-in, are noted on our attendance sheet. As each child leaves, we note the time of departure. This does not take the place of your sign-out sheet. It does provide us with an additional record.
- Once we are inside, we lock all the doors and move the sign-out register to the Great Room. The building is secure. You can still enter into the alcove to get out of the weather, but no one can enter further until we release the door lock or physically open it for you. The security bell is on the wall to the left of the doors. Please push the button and stand back. Screens light up at the front desk as well as in the Great Room to let us see who is there. We will release the door when we identify you; otherwise we come up the stairs to attend to the person who is requesting entrance.
- We double check the names of the children who are physically with us against the sign-out book. If you neglected to provide your signature when you picked up your child, we will call you to assure that you do indeed have your child safely in your custody. The register will be noted with the word “phoned”. In the meantime, while one teacher is calling you, others will be double-checking the facility to be certain that the child is not in the school. Should we have to call you more than three times, we will begin asking you to return to the school to properly sign your child out of RMA. Please remember, the register is a legal document that releases us from the liability of the day and also provides us with the assurance that your child is safely with you.
- As the last child leaves, we again make a visual check of the rooms before we leave for the day.

Grace periods are provided at the end of each regular class schedules to allow you time to safely gather your child. Beyond the five minute grace period for the morning, any child still in the teacher's care will be charged at a \$2.00/minute rate until the parent has removed him/her from our responsibility. **Any child remaining after 6:00 p.m. will be charged a \$2.00 per minute late fee while attempts are made to contact parents or guardians.** If the child has not been picked up by 6:30 p.m., and parent or guardian has not been reached, the emergency contacts will be called. If the child has not been picked up by 7:00 p.m. and parent or guardian has not been reached, the police will be called.

Before and After Care Policy

Renaissance Pre-school provides “Before and After” care *only* for children who are enrolled in one of our 3, 4, or 5 day – half or full day – programs. This is an additional service for the convenience of our parents at an extra cost above tuition. We cannot accept other children into this service. Use of material and care of environment is a very essential part of the Montessori program. Even when a child is in “aftercare”, it is important that the child has attended presentations of materials and knows our ground rules.



“Before and After” school care is available on a pre-planned basis. It is also available for an emergency. Before school care is from 7:00 to 8:00 a.m.

“After School Care” is available from 3:15 – 6:00 p.m. every school day for working parents and for the unexpected situations that can occur for the parents of those children who have attended RMA during that day. In order to provide a meaningful and safe program for these children, Renaissance Montessori Academy retains a minimum of two adults on its After School staff until closing. Please check with the office to determine the additional charge for these services.

We allow a 15 minute grace period at the end of the regular class schedule for parents to sign out their child. Beyond 3:30, we bill the additional after school care fee for any child still in our care. If your child does not regularly stay with us, a slip indicating the extra charge will be put into your file and the charge will be added to your next statement.

Some of our suggestions to help you at the end of the day:

- **Communicate with your spouse or other authorized person to establish pick up.**
- **Be aware of the weather**
- **Plan for slow traffic (commute may take 2 hours during bad weather)**
- **If you know you will not be here on time, please call your back-up person.**
- **Notify the preschool of your plans for the situation.**



Late Pick-Up

We understand that there may be times that you are unavoidably detained beyond the 6:00 deadline. Please call as soon as possible to notify the staff of your expected arrival. **(Please be aware that a late fee of \$2.00 per minute will apply under all circumstances after 6:00.)** Phone calls are not always answered – we may be outside on the playground – but we monitor the answering machine frequently during the afternoon. Leave a message with your phone number if you need to have a return phone call.

If we are not expecting you to be late, and a child has not been picked up by 6:00, the teacher on duty will attempt to contact you or other emergency adults listed on the enrollment form. RMA staff will

notify authorities if a child has still not been picked up by 7:00, and all attempts to call parents or guardians have failed.

Our teachers do not receive compensation from RMA after the school closes at 6:00 p.m. Late fees of \$2.00 per minute will apply under all circumstances after 6:00. Our clocks are set to the National Institute of Standards in Boulder. We understand that you may not be prepared to pay for the extra after-6:00 charges when you pick up your child. We will hand you a slip indicating the time of pick-up and the additional charges that you owe the aftercare staff. The charges will be billed from our office the following day. If there are any concerns, please wait until the following morning to confer with Ms. Chhaya. The evening staff does not have authority to alter policy.

Drop-In Care

Drop-in care *during the school day* will be available only when staffing permits. Please call the Center Director when considering drop-in care to insure that we will have a space available on that particular day. We do not accept children as drop-in after 3:30 p.m. when they have not attended class during that day.

Renaissance Montessori Academy

SUMMER PROGRAM

Our school term extends from the first part of August to the mid part of June. But we recognize that families and children, and even teachers, need to have a different pace during the hot days of summer. From the end of June and during the month of July we explore science and arts on a weekly basis. Each week one of our certified teachers takes the children through enrichment experiences that expand the curriculum that we offer during the year. New children begin to learn the basics of the Montessori program in a relaxed manner. This is a separate program and is not a childcare service or part of the annual tuition. The before and after care services that we offer during the school term are also part of the services that we offer during the RMA summer program.

Renaissance Montessori Academy

RECORDS

All enrollment forms should be completed and turned in to the preschool office at least 3 days before your child's first day of preschool. Medical forms must be signed by a physician and returned before your child's first day of preschool. **We are required by the State of Colorado to have the immunization card, physical form, and over-the-counter medication forms updated annually.** If these records become seriously overdue, the preschool may disenroll your child until such time as the updated forms are provided. Please also be aware of any changes in work or home phone numbers and addresses. Remember to keep these updated in our files, as well.

DAILY SCHEDULE

This schedule varies a little in each classroom.

Please check with our classroom teacher to determine the exact schedule.

7:00 – 8:00 Before care

8:00 a.m.

Children arrive, put away lunches, coats, etc. and choose a quiet work until the beginning of the class.

8:15 a.m.

Music calls the children to the beginning of the day in their respective classrooms. Early morning line works with the sciences and cultural studies, greets the day by counting the calendar in both English and Spanish, and the teacher may present new materials for the day. Children are free to share news and items of significant interest.

8:45 - 10:30 a.m.

Children are free to choose individual activities in the various areas of the classroom. New lessons are presented and children learn to work independently as well as in small groups. During this period the children may also be working in the studio area in small groups, or adding music and Spanish to their repertoire of languages. Snack is available if the individual child desires it.

10:30 - 11:00 a.m.

Second line time of the day offers the children the opportunity to participate in singing, listening skills, and gross motor activities. Show-and-tell items, an integral part of attaching meaning to the “sound of the week”, are brought only on Monday and Tuesday of each week.

11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

The children have time on the playground to visit with their friends and play games.

11:30 a.m.

Dismissal time for AM session children.

12:00 – 12:30 p.m.

The full day children prepare for lunch. During lunch, children sit at small tables decorated with flowers and/or candles and enjoy conversation with their friends. Adults eat with the children to provide an example of grace and courtesy at a mealtime.

12:30 – 3:00 p.m.

All the children who are younger than four on October 1 are considered to be “resters” and are given the opportunity to rest on cots for a short time during the afternoons. If they do fall asleep we will awaken them around 2:00. At 1:30 p.m., those children who are not asleep will begin an enrichment program in the studio area. Snack is provided as the children awaken.

Pre-kindergarten and kindergarten children between the ages of four and seven will focus on more advanced work in the core areas of the classroom as well as

enrichment in other areas. While we continue to work at the child's individual pace, the emphasis will be shifted to building a strong sense of community through teamwork and group projects that will further enhance their social skills and moral development.

It is our intention to guide these children to their greatest potential both academically and personally. Teachers will spend time sharing their special abilities, unique talents, and teaching styles with the class throughout the week. In addition, each teacher will share lessons with the children that involve concentrated studies in the following areas: creative writing, literature, science exploration and projects, cooking, art, music and movement. Snack is available if the individual child desires it.

3:15 p.m.

Full day session ends and full day children are picked up.

3:30 to 6:00 p.m.

Children enjoy time on the playground or in the Great Room. They will have an opportunity to participate in activities of art, movement, creative play, and reading with staff.



Details on birthdays, holiday celebrations, show and tell, and daily class schedules will vary by classroom, so please be sure to check with your child's teachers for specifics on how these policies will be implemented in your child's class.

Renaissance Montessori Academy

COMMUNICATIONS

Communication between parents and the school is vital to the success of your child's preschool and kindergarten experience. Please contact us immediately if you have any concerns about your child. Let us know when there are changes or problems at home that could affect your child's behavior so that we can best meet his or her needs.

Please speak with your child's teacher directly, or feel free to call the office or leave a message for your child's teacher with any suggestions, questions or concerns about the general operation of the school.



This is a cell phone-free campus. We ask that you honor your child's need for your undivided attention at the end of the day. Please finish your phone conversation before you enter the school. When you greet your child you will be able to listen to the tales of the day and share that day with your son or daughter, truly listening.

Renaissance Montessori Academy

RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

We offer a program designed to help develop the child's potential to its fullest. This includes the opportunity to grow socially and emotionally through the mistakes each one makes as he/she matures. Children can be rough with each other as they learn how to play together cooperatively. It takes time, thoughtful guidance through many situations, and growing maturity within all the children for each to learn how to handle an aggressive situation or how to ask to play in an appropriate manner. *Please do not use your observation to criticize any child whom you see in that growth period to any other parent.* This is a right we all have - to make a mistake, to practice, and to grow.

RMA continues to respect those rights of confidentiality if it becomes apparent that the center's philosophies simply do not match those of the family. In those situations, the center reserves the right to disenroll a child. If such a situation should occur, we will be cognizant of the best interests of the child and will keep the procedure confidential

Renaissance Montessori Academy

VOLUNTEERS, VISITATION, OBSERVATIONS

As a parent of a child enrolled in our preschool, you are always welcome to visit us at any time. We often need volunteers to help in the classrooms, or drive on field trips. If you have any special talents or hobbies that you would like to share with the children, please do let us know. When you visit, we will ask you to log in your presence as a security measure for our children.



Again, we ask that you respect the rights of the child to act and learn as a child does. Please be circumspect about judging and reporting what you have seen while you were immersed in the daily life of our classrooms. If you have a particular concern, please speak only to the teacher in charge or the director. Thank you.

Ambitious parents who wanted to more directly help RMA grow and to meet the school's needs have worked toward the formal development of a PTO (Parent/Teacher Organization). Parents have helped with parties, given teacher appreciation luncheons, and supported fund raising activities. This is a supportive organization for the teachers and the parent community. It will continue to evolve into an organization that adds to the positive image of this wonderful academy as more parents become actively involved.

Renaissance Montessori Academy

PAYMENT and TUITION

- Tuition is due on the 1st of each month
- If tuition is not paid by the 5th day of the month, a \$35 late fee is charged.
Please notify the office and make special arrangements if needed. Otherwise the school reserves the right to refuse to allow the child to attend until you have fulfilled your financial obligations to that point.
- A Material/Enrichment Fee is due upon enrollment. Please see the fee schedule for amount.

You have signed a contract with Renaissance Montessori Academy for your child's care and education for a full school year. Your annual tuition covers this academic year. It is not due as a single payment at the beginning of the school term. To help you with your budget and us with ours, we have divided the total tuition into eleven equal payments. We hope that you will find it easier to budget your expenses this way.

We do not include the days we are closed for holidays or break in the amount you are charged for tuition. Tuition will not be adjusted for illnesses, vacations or holidays. So even though it may appear that the school is closed for several days, please remember that you are not paying by the day but for 1/11th of your *total* contracted amount. While we understand that absences will occur, trading scheduled days or receiving financial credit is not possible. We urge you to take advantage of the times we are normally closed during the year to schedule your family vacations. And remember that holiday closures have never been included in the tuition fees so it is NOT possible to exchange a holiday for another day during the week.

During the year parents occasionally decide to alter a program to one that is of greater benefit to their child. If we have the space available in the classroom, that is always an acceptable change. However, you will be charged a \$50.00 administrative fee. If the change alters the amount of your deposit, your next invoice will be adjusted to show the change.

You made an 11 month financial commitment when you enrolled your child at RMA. If you are moving from this area, we require a 45 days' notice to release you from your contract. This does not alter your obligation under other circumstances. You will be asked to cover the last month of the school year's (June) tuition.

Please note again that the monthly payments will be the same even if the month is broken by a vacation period or the end of school. You are paying for an eleventh of the totality of the program, not for a specific number of days in a month.



SCHOLARSHIPS

Occasionally, the preschool may have some limited money available for scholarship purposes. Please contact the Director or Assistant Director for the application form, and for further information about our tuition assistance policy. This is on a year-to-year basis. This scholarship will not apply to the last month's tuition or material/enrichment fees.

Renaissance Montessori Academy

WEATHER/EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Fire Drills:

Fire Drills are held several times throughout the year. Usually they are scheduled, but not always. Occasionally a child will experiment with the red lever on the wall and the entire school gets to practice fire safety. The teachers in each class discuss the sounds and actions to expect before any scheduled drill: during a fire drill a loud horn sounds in the classroom. The children immediately gather at the back door and are led to a safe area. Administrators check the bathrooms and any place a child might hide in fear. The teachers call the roll before the children are walked safely back to their classes. Frequently there will be further discussion to alleviate any apprehensions. Logs are posted in the teachers' workroom.

Tornadoes:

Tornado drills will be held during the spring of each year to ensure that children and staff are familiar with safety precautions. The children are kept in the basement away from all windows until the alert is over. The school does have a severe weather alert radio to notify us of any dangerous weather watches or warnings appropriate to our portion of Douglas County. Logs are posted in the teachers' workroom.

Snow Days – School Closure:

We are part of Douglas County School District / Chaparral (High School) Feeder and will follow their protocol. Any "school closure due to snowfall" for the Douglas County School system will also be a closure for RMA.

Television announcements will specify *Douglas County* or *Chaparral* if the storm is isolated to this area. *Renaissance Montessori Academy, Parker*, will show in the isolated chance that we feel that the general conditions are dangerous for our children and our staff, but the school district has not yet called for a snow day.

There will be no school or before/after care on a "snow day". You can also check the following:

- ❖ Call the Parker Area hotline 303-805-6767 or
- ❖ Use the District's web site (www.dcsd.k12.co.us) for easy access to updated schedule information on our area. The district posts any weather-related schedule changes by 5:00 a.m.

Early Dismissal:

Occasionally a day is called because of deteriorating weather and parents are informed that school, including after care, will be dismissed early. While we realize that this is always inconvenient, we ask your cooperation in picking up your children as quickly as possible. We will call you, but if you hear a report on the radio about this area being closed early, please don't wait for a phone call. Roads into the Parker area may be slow and treacherous by that point. Help us get you and your child home safely before the worst hits.

Late Start Days.

If Douglas County or the Chaparral District is on a 1 hour delayed start, ***all*** our classes including before care will begin at 8:00.

Please watch your local news channels ahead of every storm for updates!

Renaissance Montessori Academy

Cold Weather Experiences at RMA

We go outside every day during the year to experience the uniqueness of the day and enjoy the fresh air. This developmental guideline is true during all the seasons. At times this may mean we are outside only a few moments; at other times we stay out for the full recess. The only exceptions are during the most frigid weather, when there are gale winds, or during electrical storms.



All the children go outside. **Mittens, warm hats, warm coats, and boots are essential every day** to allow for the vagaries of our winter weather. *Please* send adequate clothing for your child. We do dress the children appropriately with coats buttoned and hats on during particularly cold, windy or snowy weather. If a child comes without boots, he or she must stay on the

concrete areas. If there are no mittens to even borrow, we teach the child to keep his hands in his pockets (or ours) but everyone still goes outside for a few moments. The length of time the children stay outside is not determined by the clock, but by the weather at that moment.

Occasionally a parent will call at 7:00 a.m. to ask if we will be going outside. We truly cannot answer that early. The weather changes quickly in our microcosm. If icy wind whips out of the northwest at recess time, we will use the Great Room inside. If the day has developed from below freezing to a warm sun and calm winds, we will go outside. Developmentally, the children need the exercise and experience. Those decisions are made moments before recess. We might also go outside near noon, but decide later in the day that conditions have changed, and we need to stay indoors. Again, we judge by the weather at that moment at this school, not by what the weatherman predicted last night.

Sweat suits that can stay at school are great for a change of clothing in case something gets dirty or wet. Hard soled slippers or tennis shoes, labeled with the child's name, in case of wet or snowy feet are essential. **Please label everything with your child's name.** The children don't always properly hang their things in their cubbies when they come in. Coats fall out of their cubbies. Mittens are

scattered and may inadvertently go home with the wrong child. Without your help, we are at a loss to know where an item belongs when we pick it up.

Renaissance Montessori Academy

Hot Weather Experiences

We are blessed with a mild climate in Parker. During the spring and fall, the days are always delightful. However, during the summer the sun can be very intense. We still use our outdoor environment to the fullest extent possible, but we plan our days to use the cooler early mornings for



outside play. A drinking fountain is available to the children outside to allow them to get a drink whenever they feel the need and to avoid dehydration. Sunshades are used to shelter the children in the sand and on the cement work area.

Please apply a sunscreen to your child's exposed skin every morning before school. We will reapply it again at noon and at afternoon recess. The school uses a commonly available hypoallergenic sunscreen with UVA/UVB

protection such as Coppertone® Water Babies SPF 45 for all the children. If your child has a sensitivity to the sunscreen that we would apply in the afternoon, please supply us with an acceptable substitute.

Renaissance Montessori Academy

CLOTHING

To assist your child in his/her growing independence, please be sure to keep a complete change of clothes, including underwear, in their cubbies at all times. A pair of rubber soled shoes to wear indoors is needed to keep feet dry and comfortable when the weather is wet. Please remember to change the clothing at school as the seasons change and your child grows. Shorts in the wintertime just don't work!

Comfortable play clothes work the best. If your daughter is determined to wear a dress or skirt, we require shorts or leggings underneath for modesty while running and playing outside. We also require shoes that will allow your child to run, climb and play safely. Please do not allow backless sandals, flipflops or other shoes to cause an accident while your child is climbing the slide or playing tag.

Unless it is raining or snowing hard, or the temperature drops to the frigid level, the children go outside every day. Adequate insulation is essential. Please send hats, mittens, snow pants if appropriate, and dress your child in clothing that will keep them comfortable. Label everything, please. We will do our best to keep track of it if we know to whom it belongs.

During the summer months, please remember to apply sunscreen each day before pre-school, and send a hat for extra protection.

Renaissance Montessori Academy



CUBBIES, PETS, & PERSONAL ITEMS

Each child will have a cubby to store boots, coats, etc. Please limit the number of personal items to the wearing apparel that your child brings from home. This must all fit in the upper or lower assigned portion of his/her cubby. Please do not bring backpacks. We do not have sufficient room once children start wearing winter apparel.

“Show & Tell” items may be brought on Monday and Tuesday mornings only. They need to demonstrate the sound of the week that the class is studying.

Pets may not be brought into the school without special prior permission as a show & tell item. They are very distracting in the classroom and can potentially cause allergic reactions to some of our children. Thank you.

Children who rest after lunch may bring one soft snuggly animal which will be left in their bedding or taken home each evening.

We will send all money and toys back home with you or hold it until you arrive to pick up your child. They can be extremely distracting and toys often get lost or broken.

Renaissance Montessori Academy

TOILET SUFFICIENCY

One of the central goals of our program is to build independence and self-sufficiency in young children. In order to best benefit from our program, we encourage parents to take some time at home to support their child's natural interest in self-care. Children who have a desire to use the bathroom and to get out of diapers will be most successful in our program. We highly recommend that children not enroll in our program until such time as they are beginning to demonstrate success at this all-important task.

Renaissance Montessori Academy

TELEVISION/VIDEOS

Because our program provides a richly diverse and stimulating environment with a developmentally appropriate academic focus, we have little need of videos in the classroom. Occasionally an educational tape may be used to enrich a topic of study or interest or as a brief diversion during a prolonged period where weather prevents outdoor play. For these occasions, materials pre-approved by the Director will be used for those children who have written consent from their parent or guardian. Full-length feature films will not be viewed at the center without specific prior notification and signed consent from parent or guardian.

Renaissance Montessori Academy

NAPS

Social Services for the State of Colorado requires that all children have a 30 minute rest period during the afternoon. Each child has a cot to keep him/her off the floor. Following an opportunity to play outside, the older children lay quietly while listening to a chapter story. They may sleep as long as they desire if they are tired, but it is not required.

Younger children who are not going to be four years old by October 1 are classified as “nappers”. Those children are given a quiet place with a simple short story during rest time. They are not required to sleep, but they are required to rest quietly for 45 minutes before getting up to work quietly in the room while others may be asleep. The school will provide a pillow that will fit our storage space, a blanket, and a sheet. Please feel free to send a small stuffed animal or blanket for naptime. However, please do **not** bring those very special items that your child cannot live without. Sometimes, despite our best efforts, things get lost or torn, and we know what disruption that can bring with the loss of a most special blanket or animal!

Renaissance Montessori Academy

CONFERENCES

Parent/teacher conferences are held twice each year, in October/November and April/May. At this time, parents will have the opportunity to sit down with their child’s teacher or teachers to discuss progress, concerns, and look over the developmental reports prepared by the teachers. The conferences will last about 20 minutes, and parents will have the opportunity to sign up for a time that will be most convenient for them. Please make every effort to schedule your conference during the times available, and do not ask teachers to make special times to meet with you. Also, be sure to call the teacher well in advance if you will not be able to make your scheduled time.

School is not in session during spring conferences. No children are in attendance. We want to be able to devote time to you and your child’s development throughout the year. Please find alternative care for your child for those two days. Watch for reminders as the dates approach for signing up.

CLASSROOM GUIDELINES

The children have six simple statements for behavior:

- ❖ **Be kind to others**
- ❖ **Speak quietly**
- ❖ **Be responsible for yourself**
- ❖ **Do your best**
- ❖ **Listen**
- ❖ **Walk**

For many children, preschool is their first opportunity to interact with groups of other children and adults. We constantly strive for a calm, productive atmosphere, where children and adults respect each other and our classroom materials. The children are not allowed to do anything that will hurt another child, himself or herself or our environment.



Classroom rules center on respect for others and for our environment. The children are not permitted to do anything that will disturb someone's work. A disruption usually happens by accident. The child who was disturbed will tell the other child what he or she has done to disturb the work. This is usually sufficient. If the behavior continues, the child is to enlist the teacher's assistance and together they will take it to the child involved. If the problem persists, the teacher may isolate the child for a "time away" from working or being part of the group. There is no special place for this in the room. Any chair, mat, or floor space serves the purpose.

Establishing an atmosphere of respect continues on the playground. The definition of acceptable play is discussed with the children. They are also encouraged to handle any problem by first discussing it with the other child. If the children are unable to solve the problem, guidance from the teacher may be sought. If a decision is made that a child needs to be removed from the playground, he/she will be required to come inside for a determined amount of time. Consistency is the golden rule of any disciplinary action and the emotional ability of each child to solve the problem is always considered.

If the behavior continues, parents will be asked to explore, with the assistance of the teacher, the reason for the child's behavior. A decision will be reached on how to handle any further disturbance or harmful activity. In rare cases, it will be suggested that the family, seek professional guidance. If this does not prove successful, the child may be requested to withdraw from the School.

MEALS

Snacks

Young children fare best in school when their bodies are provided with a balanced breakfast before coming to school and a series of smaller nutritiously balanced meals during the day. We try to make each small snack/meal center on one protein and one carbohydrate.

Montessori philosophy is evident in food preparation and taking care of your own body. It begins with bringing the snack to school. Two families a week are responsible for the daily morning or afternoon snack for their child's class. (For example, morning snack MTWTh or afternoon snack TWTHF.) This necessity invites you to participate in the shared environment between school and home. Have your child help decide what snacks to offer to classmates when you go shopping. Emphasize the good nutritional choices you make for family meals throughout the day; help him/her learn to make those same good choices.



In the classroom, snack time is a social expression, not just a nutritional need. Early in the school year, we give the children lessons in preparing their own snacks and cleaning up the table when finished. The children learn to measure their own portions and to determine what they enjoy eating. Every child has the opportunity to determine his/her food intake. On occasion a child will be so involved with an activity that stopping for snack is of the lowest priority, or a child may determine that he is simply not hungry during the working class period in which choosing a snack is one of the options open to the children. This is his/her responsibility, privilege, and learning experience.

During the after-hours program, snack is offered to children at approximately 4:30 We will offer food suggestions along with the monthly calendar in your parent folder during the second week of school.

Lunch

Lunch is at 11:35 every school day. The children bring sack lunches from home; we provide milk or the children may have water during their lunch. (Please do not send juices or soft drinks. If your child is lactose intolerant, you may bring soy milk, other dairy replacement drinks to keep in the refrigerator for their use.)

We know that you want a noon meal that will nutritionally fuel your child's mind and body. But please remember that this is not the only meal your child will have during the day at school. After their stomachs are full, the children throw the rest in the trash. We will return uneaten portions to help you discern the foods your child is eating.

We have observed that a balanced diet of very small servings of finger foods is the most nutritious and least wasteful for most children. *Quarter-cup measurements are sufficient for this age.* Try half a sandwich with half an apple cut in slices; add a small yogurt cup with a quarter cup of cubed fruit and two or three baby carrots to dip in peanut butter or dressing. Please keep in mind what you know your

child eats. Your child can even help you choose his/her meal the night before. The children are most apt to eat foods that they have had a choice in choosing when they are eating at school.

You can also consider a meal of favorite foods left from a meal at home. We can reheat at school. Finish the meal off with one cookie or piece of chocolate if you wish. We serve milk, and we will always substitute milk for any soft drink or boxed sugared drink. Please remember, we will be eating another small meal again in two hours.

Did you forget lunch? We will prepare a lunch for you so that you do not have to return home or run to the store. The charge is \$7.00. Please do not send a meal that has to be prepared. The “quick” meals such as “mac n cheese” or soup require a lot of teacher prep time and cool down time; By the time your child gets to eat, his/her friends have finished and are ready to move to another activity. Please consider a lunch with nutritional finger foods

Renaissance Montessori Academy

FIELD TRIPS & TRANSPORTATION

Renaissance Montessori Academy attempts to schedule field trips that are appropriate to the development of the children and to the subjects the classes are exploring. Parent participation in these field trips is necessary since we rely on your help for driving to and from our destination, and for helping to supervise the children during the activity. Our greatest concern is the safety of the children in our care when we are away from the campus. **To help us meet our obligations to you, we wish to assure you of the safety procedures that we have in place:**

- 1. Whenever we are away from the campus, we alter the ratio of students: adults. While we are allowed a 10:1 ratio at school, we strive for 2:1 when we are away from the campus.**
- 2. We do our best to assure that each child is with a safe driver no matter where he/she is riding. Your Colorado driver's license must be current and on file before you may volunteer for a field trip. Our insurance company has the further requirement that the RMA office have on file a current copy of the declaration page of your insurance indicating that insured coverage is set at \$100,000/\$300,000 rather than the minimum state limits. Of course you may transport your own child with the lower state limits.**

All children must have an appropriate car seat or booster seat to attend any RMA field trip. You must supply the car seat to fit your individual child. Please place a tag with the child's name on the visible back of the car seat so that our staff will be able to identify it.

Renaissance Montessori Academy fully supports the Colorado State laws regarding safety for children being transported in motorized vehicles. Children between one and four years of age, 20 – 40 pounds, and 26 – 40 inches tall are required to be restrained in a forward-facing car seat. Children between four and eight year of age and less than 80 pounds require a booster seat. All children being transported on a field trip must have their car seats or booster seats installed in the back seat of the vehicle.”

We wear purple RMA tee-shirts on field trips. These brightly colored shirts help us to see our children more readily in crowds and help the children and parent volunteers to identify their group

easily. Please be sure to wash and return the shirt if your child wears it home after the field trip. We will need it for the next day out.

All trips will be announced in a timely fashion, and field trip permission slips will be sent home several days before any scheduled excursions. We will give you the time, address, any charges for adult attendance, and any special needs (coat, sack lunch, etc.) on the form. If you need any further information, please ask. Forms must be signed and returned to your child's teacher two days before the day of the field trip to allow us time to plan the transportation aspect. No child may attend a trip without a signed permission slip specific to that trip. In the event that a child arrives late on the day of a trip, the parent or guardian dropping off the child will be given directions to take their child to join the group.

Traditionally, our field trips have included the entire school. If you do not wish to have him/her attend, please make other arrangements for that day.

Are siblings invited? We would prefer not. You need to have your attention focused on the children in your charge. In the event that you must bring another child who is not enrolled in the RMA program, they are not covered by our liability insurance. Their care is strictly your responsibility.

Renaissance Montessori Academy

BIRTHDAYS

We think that celebrating the day of your child's birth is very special and important. Our birthday celebration allows every child the joy of sharing some of the more exciting and meaningful moments in his/her life. We also use it to help the child understand the passage of time in relationship to the movement of the earth around the sun.

Suggestions:

Please tell us the derivation of your child's name: the nationality, what it means, why you chose it, etc. Please send one picture for each year of his/her life if possible in which the birthday child is featured prominently. If you do not have a photo for each year, please write something about your child that happened during each year of his/her life. The photos and biography will be kept by the class for one week and displayed with other birthday celebrants for that week.

If you would like to include a special snack for the birthday celebration, please let the school know in advance what you plan to send. Please keep the treats simple, and the portions small. Some suggestions: cleverly shaped fruit or melon, small muffins, frozen yogurt bars, small ice cream cups, etc. Please avoid cakes, cupcakes and foods with high sugar content.

Please send private birthday invitations by mail rather than distributing them at school.

Renaissance Montessori Academy

MISSING CHILD PROCEDURES

Children are closely supervised at all times, both inside and on the playground. No child will leave the center rooms without some form of pass, which acknowledges that the supervising staff is aware the child has gone. When all staff and children are outdoors, no child will enter the building unless accompanied by an adult. All visiting and volunteering adults will check in at the Director's office before entering the center classrooms.

Despite all security measures, if staff finds a child unaccounted for, he/she will immediately notify all of the adults in the center. All staff will visually scan the environment, and together with the Director, plan a search of the bathrooms, hallways, playground and surrounding areas. If the child remains undetected for more than 30 minutes, the parents, guardians or emergency contacts will be notified. If the child is missing for more than one hour, the police will be contacted, and all search procedures will be documented.

Renaissance Montessori Academy

CHILDREN'S SAFETY

When your child is in our care, each one belongs to us. Not just our responsibility, but ours. We care about them: how they are dressed for the weather and what they have for nourishment. Every time that you sign that book as your child enters the school, you have shared your child with us. We understand the responsibility and trust you have placed in our hands. This is the first step of watching your child move through the day.

The person at the front desk during the morning is not only ready to open the door for you, but watches the movement of the children through the lobby. Then as your child enters the classroom, he/she is logged in a second time by the teacher. When children change position in the school (i.e. studio, yoga, or aftercare) a teacher walks the children downstairs and attendance is taken again to be certain who is present and who isn't. We take attendance at every transition point throughout the day to know that we have everyone in the place that they are supposed to be. To leave the building, a child is required to have a parent present and is called back in whenever he/she runs out ahead of the parent.

Doors into our building are locked. Visitors or parents are required to ring the bell for admittance. Anyone trying to pick up a child has to be known by us and provide identification. When you pick up your child later in the day, you sign the attendance book again to finalize the day's movement for your child.

During activities that are out of the routine such as Pajama Day or Teddy Bear Picnic, we keep a person at the front desk *at all times*. A second person is assigned to monitor the flow of children. We require that *anyone* who volunteering for *any* occasion sign in and out at the front desk, and a badge is issued for all volunteers.

Communication with the children is constant. We frequently speak to the children about being safe as they leave the school or return to the classroom from the bathroom. Our practice is that they may not

leave the room or the playground without speaking to the teacher. No child may leave the building without a parent's presence.

Please help us. Speak to your child. Emphasize that he/she should never leave the premises anywhere you have left them without speaking to the adult in charge or being with you. At the end of the day when you arrive, please, wave or speak with one of us before you let your child leave. Know that we have seen you.

Renaissance Montessori Academy

ABUSE & NEGLECT PROCEDURES

Renaissance Montessori Academy is licensed by the State of Colorado Department of Social Services and is required to report all suspected abuse or neglect.

No staff member at RMA will be permitted to use physical force or verbal abuse in dealing with a child. We do take special care to hire respectful and skilled staff members. Even so, if an incident occurs which concerns you, please bring it to the Director's attention. Any confirmed abusive activity is grounds for immediate dismissal.

Renaissance Montessori Academy

INJURY PROCEDURES

Children are closely supervised at all times, and every possible precaution is taken to ensure safety. Children are trained in the appropriate use of any materials that may inflict unintentional injury to themselves or others. Despite all efforts to caution and care for children, accidents do occasionally occur. In the event of such an incident, the staff will use appropriate methods of care and file an Accident Form. A copy of this form will be sent home with the child.

In the unlikely event of a more major injury, the teacher, together with the director, will assess the extent of the injury. If it is determined that the injury requires further attention, the parents or guardians will be contacted, the child's doctor will be contacted, and if necessary, an ambulance will be called to transport the child to an immediate care facility. Staff will document all procedures and contacts attempted, complete with times, and copies will be provided to the parent, guardian and/or doctors.

Renaissance Montessori Academy

HEALTH & MEDICATION

The state of Colorado *requires* that all children enrolled in a preschool program be seen by a physician upon enrollment and once per year thereafter. A current Certificate of Immunization is required annually for his/her records. Please have these forms completed **before** your child's first day of preschool.

We have a responsibility to the entire community of children in our care. We take special care to clean all equipment and hard surfaces throughout the day to reduce the possibility of infections spreading among the children and their families. Please do not send your child to preschool if he has had any of the following symptoms **within the last 24 hours:**

- Fever
- Diarrhea or abdominal cramps
- Eye infection (24 hours after medication starts)
- Strep throat (24 hours after medication starts)
- Vomiting
- Bad cold and/or greenish nasal discharge
- Unexplained rash or skin condition
- Sore throat or swollen glands
- Severe cough

Even though a child who is 85% well may seem to be climbing the walls at home, allow time in a quiet environment for complete recovery. If your child is ill and will not be attending on a particular day, we appreciate your call.

Children occasionally get ill at school. In that case, we will notify you and request that the child be picked up ***within an hour***. Isolation breaks the pathway for illness and protects the health of the children and the teachers who attend this school. Your child will be kept as comfortable as possible during this time, but will also be isolated from the rest of the children.

Our policies will not allow us to administer or apply any short term medication, including over-the-counter medications, to your child during the school day. **Chronic, life-threatening conditions are excepted.** According to state regulations only a registered nurse or an agent of a registered nurse acting under that person's license may administer any type of medication to a child in a daycare facility or preschool. **Our nurse teaches and approves the personnel who will administer specific medications to any child as required.**

In the event that you need to send medications to school for any reason, please give those directly to a teacher. Never place meds or vitamins in a lunch box or in the child's cubby. All medications are kept under lock and key out of children's reach. All medications must be in the original pharmacy container with the child's name, the name of the medication, the directions concerning when and how to administer the medication, and the doctor's name fully visible.

In case you have medicine that is nearing expiration for a **chronic condition**, our school nurse will call to let you know about the situation and ask for a new supply. Please pick up the expired medication within the week and replace with a new supply. We cannot keep expired medication on the campus longer than that one week period.

If your child is no longer contagious under all other circumstances but still needs additional medication, please ask your child's physician for medications that would only need to be given before

and after school. If you find that administering the medication yourself is the only alternative, you are welcome in the classroom at any time.

Accidents also fall under this category of health and safety. As much as we try to prevent them, accidents may happen. In case of severe injury, we will immediately attempt to contact you. If we are unable to reach you, we will call the other names listed on the enrollment form, and if unsuccessful, we will call the physician listed on your child's enrollment form and call an ambulance, if necessary. Please keep the preschool informed with accurate, up-to-date emergency contact information.

Reporting of Communicable Illness to the Health Department:

When children have been diagnosed with a communicable illness, such as hepatitis, measles, mumps, meningitis, diphtheria, rubella, salmonella, tuberculosis, giardia, or shigella, the School must immediately notify the local health department of the State Department of Public Health and Environment, all staff members, and all parents and guardians of children in care. Children's confidentiality will be maintained.

Renaissance Montessori Academy

INCIDENT PROCEDURES

Within this age group it is bound to happen that a child will soil him/herself or get clothing dirty. This can occur through sloppy conditions outside or because the child has become ill. We always make sure that the child is properly changed to comfortable, clean clothing. Our philosophy is to support the independence of the children in changing their own clothing. This is done especially if the children are simply wet or dirty from snow or wet weather outside. The child takes clothing from his/her cubby, changes in the bathroom, and places the soiled clothing in a plastic bag to be taken home.

However, there are occasions in which the child needs assistance. If a child has become ill and vomits or has an incidence of diarrhea, we will provide him with as much help as he requires to be clean and comfortable.



Renaissance Montessori Academy is a smoke-free campus.

Renaissance Montessori Academy

TAX EXEMPT DONATIONS

The Renaissance Montessori Academy is a non-profit corporation and any donations to the school are tax-deductible. In the past, we have had parents and members of the community at large donate time



and labor on special projects, money, equipment and furniture. Any extra support that furthers our goals for the children is very much appreciated.

Do you work for a company or corporation that provides grants or matching funds to educational institutions? We would appreciate any information you can give us about these to provide better and better materials for our programs.

Renaissance Montessori Academy

FUND-RAISERS

Renaissance Montessori Academy is a non-profit organization. That makes you part of the school, not just a customer. Your entire tuition funds our programs. Tuition provides the basics. To provide the additional resources for the experiences that we want for the children or for continuing teacher education, we occasionally organize fund-raisers.

Our major fund raiser is our annual silent auction. We ask each family to make a donation of a service or appealing item that can be bid on by others to support the auction tables. We also ask merchants where we all do business to support the school through a donation of their product.

At times, we will offer a product such as cookie dough or frozen breads that will benefit the school from the profit made while potentially relieving stress on you during holiday seasons. At another time, each child may create a unique art work especially for purpose of a fundraiser. During those activities we may intentionally use the children's handprints or footprints for a project such as a plaque or note cards. If you do not wish to have your child participate in such a project, please check the appropriate box on the registration papers.

Your support is appreciated. Our intention is never to pressure you to participate. However, we ask you to remember that the great success of the school is built on the participation of the parents of this community.



Thank you for choosing the Renaissance Montessori Academy. We are proud of our school, our programs, and our staff. We feel sure that you will be very happy with your decision to enroll your child in any of our programs. Please do take the time to get to know your child's teacher, as well as the Director, Assistant Director, and other staff members. If you ever have any questions or concerns about anything that happens during the course of a day, first talk with your child's teacher. If, after talking with the teacher, you still have questions, please come to the Director or Assistant Director. We are here to provide a quality preschool experience for your child, and we welcome the opportunity to discuss our policies with you and listen to your suggestions.

Dear Parents:

Your child was recently enrolled in a childcare program that is licensed by the Colorado Department of Human Services. The license indicates that the program has met the required standards for the operation of a child care facility. If you have not done so, please ask to see the license and the last facility inspection.

Most licensed facilities make every effort to provide a safe and healthy environment for children. Unfortunately, on rare occasion, an incident for physical or sexual abuse may occur. If you believe that your child has been abused, you should seek immediate assistance from your county department of social services. The telephone number to report child abuse in your county is listed below.

Adams County Department of Social Service	303-421-8121	15045
7190 Colorado Blvd.		
Commerce City 80022		
Arapahoe County Department of Social Service	303-795-8473	
14980 E. Alameda Drive		
Aurora, CO 80012		
Douglas County Department of Social Service	303-688-4825	
4400 Castleton Court		
Castle Rock 80109-7804		
Jefferson County Department of Social Service	303-271-4357	14131
900 Jefferson County Parkway		
Golden 80401-6010		

Colorado law requires that childcare providers report all known or suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

Childcare services play an important role in supporting families, and strong families are the basis of a thriving community. Your child's education, physical, emotional, and social development will be nurtured in a well-planned and run program. Remember to observe the program regularly, especially with regard to children's health and safety, equipment and play materials, and staff. For additional information regarding licensing, or if you have concerns about a child care facility, or if you would like to review a licensed facilities file, please consult the Colorado Division of Child Care at 1575 Sherman Street, Denver, Colorado 80203-1714 or at 303-866-5958.

Sincerely,
Colorado Department of Social Services