

# Royal Palm Montessori Academy

“Educating the Leaders of Tomorrow”

To the Parents:

At Royal Palm Montessori Academy, our mission is to provide children with a safe learning environment where they are motivated to learn, encouraged to explore their surroundings, and stimulated cognitively as well as socially. As parents and professionals we have learned that our children’s education begin as soon as they are conceived. Research has shown that even during the infancy stage, children who are read to, frequently spoken to, and who receive sensory stimulation develop far many more neural connections, which facilitate cognitive abilities later on.

It is our goal to provide children with a sense of acceptance and nurturing that will prepare them for a successful academic future and above all allows them to develop lasting, positive social relationships. We strongly believe that some of the most important lessons children will learn stem from positive interactions with one another. Therefore, we strive to provide them with an environment that fosters social warmth, affection, and personal closeness.

As parents, you play the most crucial part in your child’s educational development. We encourage you to participate in all of our activities and programs and request that you contact us with any questions, concerns or comments. You are always welcomed to ask for a conference with the director to discuss how your child is doing. The director is in the center for your convenience and to address any of your concerns at all times.

Following, you will find a handbook filled with essential information about our school. We hope this information will help you decide whether our school meets your standards for your child’s education. Please, read it carefully and its entirety.

Sincerely,

Ms. Dayami

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## **I. REGISTRATION, TUITION, FEES**

### **Admissions**

We believe that a child's academic future depends on the educational foundation established during pre-school, therefore, we strongly encourage parents to visit our school and learn about our program and our teachers. The director will give the parents a tour of the school and answer all of their questions.

### **Registration**

To register your child, all forms need to be filled out completely and signed. The registration fee is \$150 and is renewed every Spring. Registration fee is non-refundable.

### **Tuition Policy**

Tuition is due regardless of absences, on the first Monday of every month. By Wednesday, a late fee will be added to your account. Bounced checks will have a \$50 penalty fee and subsequent payment must be made in cash. There will be no credits or make up days for absences. Teachers do not have the authority to clear a make up day or make change's to your child's schedule.

### **Late Pick-Ups**

Whether your child is picked up at 12 P..M. , or 3:30 P.M., please make certain that you pick-up in a timely fashion. At the end of the day, our staff needs to prepare their rooms for the next day and at 5:30 P.M. our staff needs to go home to their families. Picking up after 5:30 P.M. will consist of a \$2 per minute fee. Please, be considerate of our staff. To discourage early drop-offs or late pick-ups, there will be a charge per incident (before 8:30 A.M. or after 3:30 P.M.).

### **Hours**

School is open Monday through Friday from 7:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M.

### **Holidays**

- Jan One Week (1<sup>st</sup> of the Year)
- Feb President's Day
- Mar Good Friday
- Apr Spring Holiday
- May Memorial Day
- Jul One Week (July 4<sup>th</sup>)
- Sep Labor Day
- Oct Fall Holiday
- Nov Thanksgiving/ Day After Thanksgiving
- Dec One Weeks (Dec 25<sup>th</sup>)

### **First Day of School**

Your child's first day of school is very special. Let your child know what to expect at school. It is also a great idea to have your child visit the school. The first day of school, your child should wake up with plenty of time to have a calm breakfast. Do not rush the first day. Give your child plenty of reassurance and let him/her know that you love them and that you will pick them up later. Once at school, get your child settled in class, give them a big hug and kiss, reassure them again that you will be back. And remember, the more comfortable and confident you are, the more comfortable your child will be at school.

## **II. HEALTH, SAFETY, SECURITY**

### **Illnesses**

Any child displaying symptoms such as fever, vomiting, or diarrhea should not be brought to school. By having a sick child in contact with the other children, it only contributes to the spread of the illness. Please be considerate of the other children and working parents.

If your child becomes ill during the day, every effort will be made to contact you immediately and we will ask that you retrieve your child promptly. You will be responsible for bringing a doctor's note. In case of a communicable disease: fever, rash, vomiting, diarrhea, eye or nose secretions, the child will be isolated from the rest of the group until the parent picks up.

### **Medications**

Our school is listed with the Health Dept. as a school that does not administer medications. If your child requires medications for allergies, or other non-contagious illness, a neighbor or relative, with your written permission may come in and give the child his medication. Under no circumstances will medications be allowed in the child's lunch boxes. This is for the safety and well-being of every child in the school.

### **Injuries and Accidents**

Our entire staff is CPR and First Aid Certified. We take every precaution to assure your child's safety. In case

serious injury while at school, you will be notified immediately. In the event that you can not be reached, the person you listed as the emergency contact will be called. If we can not reach anyone, EMS will be contacted and your child will be transported to the nearest hospital. Recommendations of the attending physician will be followed.

Any bumps to the head or cuts that bleed will be treated using first aid recommendations and the parent will be contacted immediately. Any non-serious accident (superficial scratches, etc.) will be treated following first aid recommendations. In all cases, an Incident/Accident report will be written and the parent will be asked to sign.

### **Biting Policy**

Because of the danger of transmitted disease, biting will not be tolerated. Both the child biting and the child that is bitten are in danger of infection. Once a child is bitten, he/she often becomes a biter. Therefore, any child that is a chronic biter will be dismissed from school.

### **Authorization for Pick-Up**

When registering, make certain that you have filled out the Pick-Up Permission Form. To provide your child with the best possible means of security, we ask that you do not tell the person picking up what class your child is in. The person will be asked to come to the front office and provide a picture ID. If the person is not on your list (even if they say they are the grandparent) your child will not be released. We are extremely strict with our pick-up policy and will even ID a parent that we have never met before. We will not release your child to someone who appears intoxicated/impaired. Anyone picking up/dropping off will be responsible for signing in and out the children in the attendance books at the front desk.

### **Child Abuse/ Neglect**

In case of any suspected case of abuse or neglect, it is our responsibility to report it to the correct authorities for them to follow up with an appropriate investigation. In the event we find ourselves needing to make a report, we will contact the child's parent or guardian and inform them that we are making the report and the reason for it.

### **III. PROGRAMS**

#### **Science Week**

The third week of every month, children will be involved in putting together a science experiment. These experiments are age appropriate and are designed to teach children a basic love for science. The main purpose of the science experiments is to stimulate children to think, be creative, and explore. Children take great pride in the different projects they complete.

#### **Gardening**

At RPMA, it is very important that children learn about their environment. Children in Preschool and Kindergarten have the opportunity to learn about nature hands-on. Every Fall, they are responsible for planting and caring for different vegetable gardens located on one side of the school. About once a week, your child's class, along with their teacher, will tend to their garden for about 20 minutes. Gardening teaches children responsibility for living things, and becomes great botany discussion in class.

#### **Spanish Class**

Young children possess an amazing ability to absorb information. They have an ability to hear sounds that we eventually lose. For this reason, young children never have a difficulty learning a new language. They can become fluent in a second language almost effortlessly. At RPMA, our language program is fun, hands on, and it encourages children to develop language skills that are useful whether they already read or are just learning phonics. Our language program consists of teaching children basic vocabulary words using stories which they are already familiar with to introduce the new words. Children will act in plays, sing, and dance using the new words they are learning.

#### **Computers**

Our daily lives, that it is already necessary to have our children familiar with computers at an early age. Our computers are equipped with the latest of Montessori Software and different academic programs. Children visit the Computer Room 2 to 3

times per week. During computer classes, they learn how to use the mouse, the keyboard, and the basic functions of the computer. They also use software that reinforces what they are learning in the classroom.

#### **Karate/Dance**

Extracurricular activities are available for an additional charge. Once a week a karate and a dance instructor come to our school. Karate and Dance classes are available to all children but do have space limitations. Please, visit our front office if you would like to inquire about these classes.

#### **Personal Items**

The RPMA staff and administration can not be responsible for special items that the children bring to school. Please, do not let your child bring items from home that can not be replaced. Expensive jewelry or articles of clothing should stay home. Toys can also cause great distractions in the classroom and often, the toys can be the cause of an argument among friends. For this reason we ask that toys be kept at home or in the car. Children are welcome to bring books or other items of educational interest to share with the rest of the class.

When your child goes home at the end of the day, you may find beads, cubes, puzzle pieces or other items that belong to class lessons. Please, be so kind to return them to the school. Many of these little pieces may seem insignificant but are an integral part of a lesson your child uses everyday and without it, the lesson is incomplete and must be removed from the class.

Please, also remember to label all of your child's belongings, including, lunch boxes, bags, blankets, etc.

#### **Dress Code**

Uniforms are mandatory and must be worn to school everyday. Please, make certain that your child is dressed appropriately. The school colors are White and Royal Blue for the tops and Khaki and Navy Blue for the bottoms. Uniforms can be purchased from our current Uniform Co. Jeans, sandals, and open-toe shoes are not allowed. During Summer Camp there is no uniform dress code. Children should wear clothes comfortable for Summer weather and sneakers or closed-toe shoes.

#### **IV. DAILY SCHEDULE**

##### **Montessori Lessons**

All of the classrooms are equipped with learning centers that contain different Montessori lessons. The different centers are: Language, Mathematics, Sensorial, Practical Life, Science/Geography. Depending on their age level children will spend from 15 minutes to half an hour at a time doing lessons in the mornings. The children can choose what center they will be working in while the teacher works individually with each of them. In a Montessori class not every child is learning the same thing at the same time. It is very common to see children that are different academic levels within the same class. Children are expected to work at their own pace and to focus on the material that interests them. Some children will excel in phonics while others will like geography much better. Learning is fun and stimulating and at no point is a child forced to learn a material that they are not ready for. The teacher's greatest challenge is to keep the atmosphere in her class light hearted, fun and conducive to learning.

##### **Arts and Crafts**

Everyday children will be making different art projects which can go home at the end of the day. The youngest children will create projects that have to do with letters, numbers, shapes, etc. The art of the older children might be more involved and sometimes could take several days to complete. Children will be expected to learn how to cut, paste, color, paint, etc. Arts and Crafts provides children with time to exercise their creativity while practicing fine motor skills which will be essential for the strengthening of the primary finger getting them ready for holding a pencil and writing.

##### **Lunch**

During the school year, parents can bring a lunch box. We ask that you send a well balanced lunch that will provide your child with the energy he/she will need for an entire day at school. A morning and an afternoon snack consisting of Goldfish, Graham Crackers, Animal Crackers, or Pretzels will be provided to all children regardless of your lunch option. During special events (Pizza

Day, Birthday party, etc.) parents will be informed of what their children will be eating in advance. If you do not want your child to participate, please, let us know as soon as possible. Any food allergies must be listed on the Registration Form and parents should also make the teacher aware even though, we take extra precautions to make certain that all of the children's allergies are posted in the classrooms in a visible place.

##### **Nap**

Two and three year old children will be napping at school. All children that nap will need a mat and parents will be asked to bring a sheet, blanket, and a small pillow. Almost all two and three year olds will need a rest time after a busy morning. If your child never naps, please inform us upon registering so that we can make special arrangements for them. Nap time gives children the opportunity to recover their energy. During nap time, teachers will have soft music playing in the class or Sounds of Nature. If a parent needs to pick up their child during this time, we ask that disruptions be kept to a minimum in the classroom.

Four and five year olds do not lay down for nap. Instead, these children have a 10 to 15 minute rest period where they can lay their heads down on the table or rest quietly.

##### **Playground**

There are three different playground areas for the different age groups and all are separated by 6 ft gates. Children go outside twice a day for half an hour each time. All of the playground equipment is safe and meets all of the state requirements. Special care was taken during installation to make the "fall zone" even wider than required to make certain that children will be safe at all times. There is no access to any of the playgrounds from the outside. Any person needing to enter the playground would have to pass the front office first.

##### **Free Time**

At the end of the day, children have free time. During this time, children can choose to read books, do puzzles, or color. This is also a time when children work in groups and enjoy having conversations that are self initiated with their friends. Activities taking place during this time are supervised by the teacher but are not initiated by her.

## **V. PARENT INFORMATION**

### **Visiting the Classroom**

During your initial visit to the school, you will be given a tour by the Director. During this time you are welcome to ask questions and you will be shown some of our classes. We ask that while in the classroom every effort is made not to be disruptive. If visiting our two year old class, we ask for extra sensitivity to the needs of our little ones. These children are very young and can be easily upset by the presence of strangers. During the time that your child is enrolled at RPMA, you are more than welcome to sit in the class to observe. This is not advised during the adjustment period though, since having the parent in the class will inhibit the child from becoming acclimated to the teacher and the group.

### **Drop-Off and Pick-Up**

Classes begin promptly at 8:30 A.M. All children should be in school no later than 8:45 A.M. Remember that when you come to school after classes have begun, the entire class will be disrupted. When bringing your child to school between 8:30 and 8:45 A.M., there will be someone at the main building that will bring your child into the school. You are also welcome to park and come into the building yourself. When picking up at 3:30 P.M., there will also be one of our staff in front of the main building and she will bring your child to your car. Please, never send a minor child to pick-up their sibling. We will not release any of the children in the school to a minor child even if you are in the car outside. For the safety of all the children, we will ask that you come in the building to pick-up the children.

### **Conferences**

The entire staff at RPMA is always More than happy to speak to families About our program. In the beginning of the year, every teacher will hold an Open house to which all parents are invited. This is a time to ask questions

directly to your child's teacher. Parents will be given information about the child's day, activities they have completed, and upcoming projects. Also, at any time during the school year, parents are welcome to schedule an appointment to have a Parent-Teacher conference or a meeting with the Director. Please, do not hold a conference with your child's teacher in the classroom. Teachers main responsibility is to the children. Holding a conference in the classroom will distract her from her responsibilities putting the safety of all children at risk. As a concerned parent, you deserve her undivided attention, and while she is with her class, a teacher will not be able to give you that attention. Someone will always be available to the front desk to answer questions about our program or the school or to schedule appointments for conferences.

### **Volunteering**

The relationship between the school, the staff, and the parents is integral for the success of the children. We always welcome parents to volunteer, participate in school and class activities, or do special projects with the class. There are many different opportunities available for parents that wish to volunteer some of their time. Please, let the Director know that you would like to become a classroom parent or that you are available to help during special events.

### **Discipline**

One of the most important , life long lessons your child will learn in pre-school is how to interact with others. We help foster in our children a healthy sense of self, and help them build their independence and confidence in their social abilities. Our school's discipline policy aims at teaching children how to interact socially in a positive manner. Our teachers believe in praising appropriate and positive behavior. Negative or inappropriate behavior will be addressed by redirecting the child to a different activity or ignoring the behavior if it is minor. If the misbehavior continues a "time out" will be instituted. Time out consists of removing the child from the current activity for a time equivalent to their age (2 years=2 minutes) and always under supervision. In such a case the child will be explained why they are in time out and alternative behavior will be discussed in positive, loving manner. If the misbehavior is unmanageable, RPMA reserves the right to terminate the child's enrollment. This step will be taken only after careful evaluation.

