



1.1 Mission

At Inquisitive Minds Montessori, we have made it our mission to create a natural indoor and outdoor learning space for children ages 18 months to 12 years old who are nurtured and supported in such a way to promote positive self-esteem and provide opportunities for optimal growth in all areas of development. Our teachers strive to implement a child-led experience that supports each child's desire to learn and explore freely.

1.2 Vision

Our vision is to provide a natural, Montessori-inspired environment for children as we focus on supporting, nurturing, and flourishing the whole child to instill a foundation of independence and lifelong practical skills.

1.3 Hours of Operation: Monday-Friday 5:30am-10:00pm

Our onsite business hours are from 7am-8:00pm with extended hour options before and after.

There is a nonrefundable registration fee of \$50 per child or \$95 per family that is due upon completion of the enrollment form. The child's slot is not locked in until both of these items have been received by the Director and you have been given approval. There is a \$30 supply fee and \$20 activity fee due each year by August 15th.

The hours of care will be contracted for each child. A late fee will be assessed in the amount of \$5.00 for every 15 minutes after the contracted pick-up time in order to continue staffing our teachers accordingly. All late fees must be paid in cash to the employee who stayed late. If the fee is not paid in cash to the staff member at the time of pick-up, a \$15 inconvenience fee will be applied to the account in addition to the late fee. Families that are habitually late may be withdrawn from the center for failure to adhere to center policy. If an emergency arises, please contact the Center Director so arrangements can be made to assist you and your child. It is critical that you communicate with the Center Director to avoid withdrawal for any reason.

1.4 Drop-off & Pick-up Procedures

It is the responsibility of the parents to walk their children into the center each day to sign in. We enforce two methods of security to access the classrooms to ensure the safety of the children and to continuously build relationships with the families. We encourage parents to quickly drop-off their child letting them know you will be back later and exiting the classroom. There is a normal adjustment period which will be an easier adjustment after we each show the child they are capable.

The same methods are used during pick-up. Please enter the building and sign your child out in our system. You may then go to your child's classroom to pick them up. We strongly discourage pick-up during our quiet/nap time hours from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. in order to avoid disrupting those that need rest from the busy day. We understand this may not be avoidable at all times so please let us know ahead of time if pick up during this time is necessary.

The names of any individual to whom we may release your child, must be provided on their Emergency Contact Form. Children will not be released to anyone not listed on the form unless written notice is given by the parent in advance. Any person under the age of 18 and/or who is unable to produce proper identification will not be allowed to sign the child in or out. Additionally, the child is not allowed to sign themselves in and/or out.

Occasionally, biological parents are not among the individuals authorized to pick up a child. If you express a desire that the other biological parent not be permitted to pick up your child, we will make every attempt to honor your request with proper court documentation. However, be aware that even with a court order, by law we cannot forcibly prevent a natural parent from picking up their child. In this event, we will contact you and the authorities immediately and delay pick up as long as possible.

1.5 Tuition Policies

AHC (funds withdrawn directly from your bank account) is our preferred payment method at no additional cost. Debit/credit will incur a 3% payment processing fee. Cash and checks are accepted in person.

- Slots are limited and enrolled on a first come first serve basis. There will be a waiting list available for each age group and the next family in line will be contacted when a slot becomes available. Families may choose 2, 3, or 5 days to be contracted and the child may only attend on these days. To add an extra day for part time, please inquire about our availability with a 24 hour notice. Our part time daily rate will apply to the weekly rate.
- Our drop-in availability may be found on our website. We utilize hoppingin.com to make it easier for families to sign up for drop-in. If you have any questions regarding drop-in and how it works, please contact us. Additionally, parents may utilize this website to "sell" any of the days that their child may be absent from in order to receive a partial credit to their account for days missed.
- Tuition may be paid weekly, biweekly, or monthly starting the first day of care at our center. We calculate tuition to account for holidays and closures and payments must be made on time regardless in order for your account to remain in good standing.
- Late payments will incur a \$30 late fee and any bounced checks will incur a \$25 fee and will not be an accepted method of payment afterwards.

- Delinquent accounts after one week of nonpayment will result in suspension and the child(ren) will not be able to return until the account is brought current. If the account is not brought current after the second week, the child's enrollment will be terminated and their slot will be offered to the next family on the waitlist. To re-enroll after termination, the registration fee will be charged as a new slot. Again, communication with the Center Director is crucial to avoid withdrawal.
- We do not offer credits or refunds for absences, weather, illnesses, or vacation outside of our vacation policy. Although we fully sympathize with each family in these situations, tuition is paid for the child's spot rather than the amount of time spent in our care. This accounts for maintaining facility expenses and staffing our classrooms accordingly.

1.6 Absences

If your child will be absent, we would appreciate a 24 hour notice in order to plan accordingly. There will not be any credits or refunds for absences or illnesses. Tuition is paid to hold the child's spot whether they are present or not.

1.7 Vacation Days

After six months of enrollment and if the family's account is current, we offer families (1) consecutive week tuition-free to use towards vacation with a 30 day notice. We encourage families to plan vacations in line with our school calendar in order for the child to avoid missing in-school activities and lesson plans.

1.8 Curriculum

The foundation of our curriculum program is Montessori-inspired. Our teachers meet our students where they are at, guide them to be able to accomplish tasks on their own, and celebrate victories with them. Our curriculum incorporates the essential principles of knowledge; Language/Literacy, Mathematics, Science, Culture and Social Studies, and Practical Life.

We organize our curriculum in 2 ways:

Monthly- Each month a theme will be incorporated into our daily activities. The themes are determined by the season and time. The intention is to incorporate culture and practical life into our daily activities.

Daily- Daily focus areas ensure our students are introduced to all of our essential principles of knowledge. Each day a dedicated activity based on the daily focus area will be introduced through purposeful materials, how to use them, or through an activity relevant to the daily focus area. Our teachers watch for each student's strengths and interests and regularly communicate with parents. Fridays are reserved as a review day where students practice what has been introduced and further explore if they are ready.

All age groups will follow the daily focus area schedule:

Monday- Language/Literacy

Tuesday- Mathematics

Wednesday- Science

Thursday- Culture

Friday- Review/Repeat Favorite Activities

Our students will be working on the same themes to encourage conversations across age groups and develop a community of learning.

We carefully follow our students and the work they are doing to ensure we are always meeting them where they are at and never pushing them to do something they are not developmentally ready for. When our students are engaged and having fun, they thrive! Maria Montessori emphasized the value of concentration as the key to learning. We aim to give each of our students opportunities throughout each day to try something new, build on something old, and engage in their interests.

1.9 Extended Leave

An extended leave constitutes as any period of time longer than two weeks. Families that would like to take an extended leave from our center due to job, maternity leave, or other extenuating circumstances have the option to pay 50% of the full tuition rate to hold the child's spot with the appropriate documentation. The child may attend two days per week during this time. This policy is able to be used for a maximum of 12 weeks per year and parents must provide written notice to the Director prior to the start date in order to take advantage of our extended leave policy.

If the decision is made to withdraw the child from the program during this extended leave, their spot is unable to be guaranteed upon return and will be offered to the next family on our waitlist. Should a spot become available upon return from being withdrawn, the registration fee will apply as the child will be considered a new enrollment.

1.10 Holidays

Tuition is due regardless of holidays or school closures. Although you are expected to pay tuition for the day or week of these school closures, we have calculated tuition to not include these dates. The following is a list of the holidays and closures each year:

- January: New Year's Day
- April 6-10: Spring Break
- May: Memorial Day
- July: Independence Day
- August: Usually the **second** Thursday and Friday for Teacher Prep Days
- September: Labor Day

- October: Halloween: *Close early at 6pm*
- November: Thanksgiving
Black Friday
- December: Christmas Eve: *Close early at 6pm*
Christmas Day
Day after Christmas
New Year's Eve: *Close early at 6pm*

If a holiday falls on a Saturday, we will be closed on Friday. If a holiday falls on a Sunday, we will be closed on Monday.

1.11 Sick

Our center operates a 'well child' facility. Although it is not unusual when children begin a childcare program or participate in group play to experience illnesses more frequently as they build their immune system to our environment, we ask that parents do not send their children to our school if they are experiencing any of the following symptoms:

- Fever over 101F
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Sore throat or loss of voice
- Hacking or continuous coughing
- Yellow/green drainage from nose
- Excessive drainage from eyes or pink eye
- Unknown rashes

If a child displays any of the listed symptoms or additional symptoms that may be concerning, the child will be separated and supervised while we contact the parent to arrange for pick up. The child must be picked up within one hour of being contacted. There will be a fee of \$15 per hour after the first hour in order to bring another employee on shift to supervise the child. Children must be symptom free for 24 hours before they may return to the center. Please do not mask your child's symptoms with Tylenol or other over-the-counter medications as these do wear off after a few hours and we will need to contact you to pick them up. In severe cases including contagious diseases, we require a doctor's note stating the child is no longer contagious and may return. Ultimately, it is left to the discretion of the director to re-admit children who have been ill.

It is our goal to keep all children safe and healthy. We understand that having to pick up a sick child may potentially cause undue hardship on families, however, it is the responsibility of the parents to have a back up or arrangements in place in the event of alternate care being needed. We appreciate your cooperation and understanding of our sick policy.

1.12 Immunization Policy

Those who choose to immunize their children may provide a copy of the child's current immunization record to have on file. Parents are responsible to provide an updated copy within 24 hours of the child receiving a new immunization.

Those who choose not to immunize their children may provide a copy of the child's exemption form from the health department. Additionally, Utah now requires those with an exemption form to complete the Online Immunization Educational Module. This module can be found at <http://www.immunize-utah.org/>. Feel free to contact the Director if you have any questions.

1.13 Medications

If your child requires any medication, it is recommended and preferred to have the dosing schedule outside of the hours the child will be in our care. In the event medication will need to be administered, all over-the-counter and prescription medications supplied by parents require the following:

- be labeled with the child's full name
- be kept in the original or pharmacy container
- have the original label
- have child-safety caps
- written instructions for the staff

Children who may require life-saving medications such as an Epi-pen or inhaler must have a spare kept onsite at all times. We must have a written medication permission form completed and signed by the parent before administering any medication supplied by the parent for their child. Our center does not supply any medications.

Topical products such as sunscreen and bug spray must be provided by the parents. We suggest keeping a spare at our facility in the child's cubby with their name on it.

1.14 Discipline

We are a positive discipline center where we encourage redirection, positive behavior guidance, meditation, and quiet thinking time where we will discuss different ways to handle the situation or feelings afterwards. We will not participate in any corporal punishment, abuse, restraints, shaming, etc. Please do not ask our teachers to do so in any event or for any solution to a behavior. Children are learning how to communicate effectively and how to process their feelings and emotions. We are here to teach them the best ways to do so.

1.15 Open Door Policy

Families are welcome to our center at any time with the exception of nap/quiet time from 12:00pm to 2:00pm. We ask families to keep in mind that children tend to have a hard time listening and following directions when parents and providers are sharing the same space. If family members would like to spend extended time with the child, please sign the child out of care and bring the child back when their visit has concluded.

1.16 Toys and Personal Items

Please do not allow your child to bring any toys or items from home. Personal items may create conflict or get lost/stolen. We would like to reduce any of these potential incidents from happening. Any items other than a personal blanket or nap item will be put away for the parent to pick up at the end of the day. If your child is having a hard time adjusting, a photo is a great way to provide comfort without any issues.

1.17 Birthdays

We celebrate birthday months! The first day in the center of each new month, we will celebrate everyone that may have a birthday that month during our AM and PM curriculum time. Please do not bring treats or gifts to assist us in respecting our zero sugar policy. Our birthday celebration will be a fun event to make each child feel special.

1.18 Diaper Policy

Diapers are included in tuition and we primarily use Kirkland brand. If you have a preference otherwise, we are happy to accommodate. Additionally, our staff are trained in cloth diapering if you do not use disposables. For all children in diapers, we have a daily toddler log to track all diaper changes. Our policy is for staff to check the toddlers every hour and to change diapers every two hours or immediately if necessary.

1.19 Toilet Training

We are more than happy to assist in encouraging toilet training as long as the child displays signs of readiness and families have been working on it at home for at least two weeks. We will need (3) changes of clothing with the child until they have been accident-free for a full week. Communication between families and our staff is imperative for a successful transition from diapers outside of the home.

1.20 Nursing Mothers

We highly encourage mothers who are nursing their children and will provide a space for you to do so if you would like to visit throughout the day.

1.21 Barefoot Environment

The soles of our feet are sensory organs and each foot contains up to 200,000 nerve endings. We encourage teachers and children to go barefoot mostly indoors (which helps keep a clean indoor environment) but outdoors as well. Going barefoot provides several physical health benefits as well as additional health benefits when connecting with the earth such as improving sleep, normalizing levels of stress hormones, reduces pain, reduces stress, increases heart rate variability, decreases inflammation, and speeds wound healing. Researchers theorize the reason may be because we absorb free electrons, which act as antioxidants, from the ground; these substances may prevent or stop cell damage in the body as summarized by a dozen peer-reviewed studies in the *Journal of Environmental and Public Health*.

1. <https://www.dovepress.com/aims-and-scope-journal-of-inflammation-research-d27-j35>
2. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3265077/>

We design our outdoor play space to be barefoot friendly. If any of the children are not comfortable with being barefoot outdoors, they are free to wear shoes.

1.22 Communication

When dropping off or picking up your child, please keep in mind that the teachers are present with their class and other students. Any communications longer than a brief message or update must be communicated via email. Our teachers will send updates and pictures throughout the day via our Sandbox Teacher app. Please download the Sandbox Parent app to receive them.

1.23 Food and Meal Policy

Inquisitive Minds Montessori will provide breakfast from 7:30am to 8:30am. Additionally, we will provide morning, afternoon, and evening snacks where children will have the opportunity to help prepare and serve themselves. We do not provide lunch or dinner so please pack these meals according to the hours your child will be in our care. Lunch will be held from 11:15am to 11:45 am and dinner will be held from 5:00pm to 5:30pm. If a parent forgets to send their child with lunch or dinner, there will be a \$5.00 charge for each meal for us to provide a meal for them.

We encourage intuitive eating within our center where children are able to listen to their bodies and their own hunger/fullness cues. If they are not hungry during the scheduled meal and snack times, they are not forced or coerced to eat. We will have fresh fruits and vegetables available to the children throughout the day in between meal and snack times. We want to instill healthy eating habits and teaching children to have a healthy relationship with food.

We strictly enforce a zero sugar and “fun” food policy. Please do not send sugary foods, juice boxes, or “fun” food. The following is a general list of acceptable foods:

- Pastas or zoodles
- Sandwiches, wraps, quesadillas, or pitas
- Cut up cheeses and meats with crackers
- Any fruits and veggies
- Pizza
- Chicken tenders
- Dinner leftovers
- Rice
- Salads
- Mini bagels with toppings
- Yogurt in a cup (please no Go-Gurt)
- Hard Boiled eggs
- Cottage cheese

The following link is a great resource for healthy lunch and dinner ideas:

https://cdn.shopify.com/s/files/1/0553/4185/files/Bentgo_Kids_eBook.pdf?4334

If you are unsure if any foods may or may not be approved, feel free to contact us to ask. We appreciate your cooperation in creating healthy eating habits and choices!

1.24 Allergies

Inquisitive Minds Montessori does not restrict families from providing their child certain foods. If a child in our care has food allergies, please list these on the registration paperwork so we may prepare ahead of time and accommodate the snacks. Additionally, we need to be aware to keep a closer eye on them during meal times to ensure there is no food sharing.

1.25 Parent/Teacher Conferences

We are happy to share your child's progress with you in the areas they are learning. We will conduct our Parent Teacher Conferences twice per year in August and in April. A link to sign up will be sent out via email to sign up for the time that works best for your schedule. We thoroughly enjoy sharing our observations and we hope you are able to join us during these conference weeks. Your children are welcome to attend.

1.26 Personal Grooming and Hygiene

Please ensure your child is bathed and ready for the day dressed in clean, weather-appropriate clothing. Children feel better physically, mentally, and emotionally when they are clean. Poor hygiene can affect social interaction as well so we encourage parents to be diligent in cleanliness. If you need assistance for any reason regarding this subject, please contact us and we are more than happy to help by providing support and resources.

We will be practicing certain hygiene activities such as brushing teeth, face washing, hand washing, and hair care in order to instill appropriate cultural hygiene practices. Should we notice a child arriving at our center unkempt or dirty frequently, we will assist the child and schedule a meeting with the family and the Director.

1.27 Camera Access

We offer access to our camera system for parents to check in on their children for \$25 per month. We offer this childcare perk to provide a peace of mind for parents and families and where you are able to see the activities we conduct daily. If there is anything that may raise concern, please contact the Director to review and resolve any issues.

1.28 Finder's Fee

We implement a policy for our employees prohibiting any babysitting or nannying outside of our center for families who are enrolled with IMM. Because we invest in our teachers and their career development, should any family enrolled with Inquisitive Minds Montessori hire one of our employee's to babysit outside of our center or disenroll to employ our current or former employee to nanny, the family will be charged a \$1500 Finder's Fee.

1.29 Nap Time

We require a 2 hour nap and quiet time for all students 6 years and younger. For those who do not nap, we will offer quiet literacy activities on their mat during this time to offer a chance to rest throughout our busy days. Families must provide a blanket, crib sheet, and a nap mat. We offer the option to purchase one of our high quality nap mats for \$30. If the nap mat is not provided within the first week of enrollment, we will charge your account the \$30 for one of our nap mats.

1.30 Health and Safety Plan

For any information regarding our health and safety plan or emergency and evacuation plans, please see our Health and Safety Plan on our files on our website or you may request to review them in our center.

1.31 Summer Camps

Summer is a fun season for our center where we invite children ages 6-12 for a summer of non-stop opportunities to discover, create, and socialize! We offer enrichment-based activities and themes as well as specialty camp opportunities for children to have a variety of choices based on their own personal interests. Field trips are offered for these age groups as well and we encourage families to volunteer to supervise.

Our summer camp sign-ups will be posted at the beginning of each year and there is an additional summer camp fee to cover the additional activities and there are limited spots available.

1.32 Emergency Care

We offer emergency care if a life-altering event has occurred and alternative care options have been exhausted. Please contact the Director immediately to discuss options and to determine if the situation qualifies for emergency care.

We serve any right to update and improve our policies and procedures at any time. We will notify all parents and families of our policy changes a minimum of 14 days before they take effect.

Daily Schedule

- 5:30-7:30 Sleep/Quiet Time
- 7:30-8:00 Breakfast
- 8:00-8:30 Free Play
- 8:30-10:30 Pre-K/Curriculum
- 9:30-10:00 Morning Yoga
- 10:30-11:00 Outside
- 11:00-11:10 Group Meditation
- 11:10-11:15 Wash Hands for Lunch
- 11:15-11:45 Lunch
- 12:00-2:00 Nap/Quiet Time
- 2:00-2:30 Outside/Snack
- 2:30-4:30 Pre-K/Curriculum
- 3:30-4:00 Specials (yoga, Zumba, etc.)
- 4:00-5:00 Free Play
- 5:00-5:30 Dinner
- 5:30-6:00 Outside
- 6:00-7:00 Free Play
- 7:00-7:15 Evening Snack
- 7:30-8:00 Quiet Routine (bedtime routine, stories, etc.)
- 8:00-10:00 Bedtime