

Welcome Parents and Students to Children’s Garden at ABC-Stewart School!

Below are links to the 2022-2023 School Calendar and Tuition and Fees schedule. This information may also be found on our website (<https://abcstewartschool.org/>). Thank you.

[2022-2023 School Calendar](#)

[2022-2023 Tuition and Fees Schedule](#)

Teachers:

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ABC-Stewart Office Information:

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Rae McQueary

Administrator

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Stefanie Stafford

Director

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Crystal Anderson

Accounting; questions regarding billing

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Philosophy

We, as your child's teachers, have a love for nurturing children. We strive to create a peaceful place for students to be independent, enjoy exploring the school works, and be thoughtful of their peers and teachers.

Dr. Maria Montessori's teaching philosophy is the path of inspiration that serves as a direct guide for how Children's Garden serves students' educational and personal/social needs. She believed in children having an innate desire to learn and grow with the teacher being the guide in nurturing their natural curiosities. Self-directed activity, hands-on learning, and collaborative play are what we see as valuable cornerstones of the Montessori method of education.

We will set up the materials on the shelves so there is a practical life section, sensorial section, math section, language section, science section, geography section, and art choices and activities. Nature and the four seasons will also inspire creative work choices and activities in the classroom.

All works will first be introduced by the teacher before the students work on them independently. Students develop and learn at their own pace. As students master works, we will move ahead with them onto more challenging works so students continue to be engaged and focused in their learning. We work to create a space where the students come to view it as their room with their work materials on the shelves. With us as nurturing guides in their space, we believe we can foster a sense of responsibility, respect, and self-reliance. As we are continually inspired by Dr. Montessori to work on behalf of the child, we look forward to welcoming students into their classroom, Children's Garden, as children are "a hope and a promise for mankind" (Montessori, Maria. *Education and Peace*. 1949).

Parent Cooperator

We believe that parents know their child best and can serve as a significant cooperator with the teachers in the education of their child.

Please feel free to discuss concerns and questions with us as well as share your observations on how your child is developing throughout the year. We can work together to guide them in their growth. Dr. Maria Montessori summarized our main goal beautifully in her book, *The Absorbent Mind*, when she said, “The teacher, when she begins work in our schools, must have a kind of faith that the child will reveal himself through work.” With our lower student-teacher ratio, we look forward to getting to know each of our students and their families well, and becoming aware of students’ individual learning styles.

We believe in collaborating with parents as we will both be guides in their development this year. Please take time to read through this entire handbook and send us your questions and comments as needed. Here is a list of parent cooperator needs Children’s Garden has for the 2022-2023 school year:

- Drop and pick up your child on time. Morning traffic and drop off begins at 8:15 am and ends at 8:25 am. If your child is not staying for Splendid Days, pick up is at 11:00 am. Afternoon traffic begins at 2:45 pm. Please read through this school year’s Traffic Pattern and Policy document.
- Traffic is not a time for long conversations since it **WILL** hold up the entire line. If you have questions or need to deliver a message, please email the teachers. Also, if you have important documents that are for the office, please park and bring them in.
- Please note that teachers will have planning time scheduled on Wednesday afternoons. Wednesdays will be a half day for all students.
- Provide a change of clothes (top, bottoms, underwear, socks) in a ziplock bag with your child’s name and classroom on it. As the weather changes we will send home extra clothes for a spare set of clothes to be sent back that fits the season.
- Please send in a **4x6 family photo** that we may put up in the classroom on the Family Wall.
- Please see the **Supply list** on the next page and send in supplies with your child during the first week of school.

Supply List

- Rubber rain boots to be left at school
- One two-pocket folder
- Lunch bag and ice pack
- Set of extra clothes (place in a ziplock bag labeled with your child's name)
- Backpack
- Family Picture (4x6)
- 1 box of tissues
- One package of baby wipes

* **Backpacks**

Every child needs a backpack every day. Please remember to place the appropriate tag on your child's backpack each day. You will have a **Splendid Days tag** if your child is attending splendid, or a **Traffic tag** if you are picking your child up at 11:00 am or 2:45 pm dismissal. You will receive backpack tags at our parent orientation meeting.

Attendance Policy

Attendance every day is vital to your child's success at ABC Stewart Montessori School. Children thrive with consistency, so it is important to attend school every day when possible and be on time. Being in the classroom on time helps students find their place in the room and start their day off right. Class begins promptly at 8:30 a.m.

We know there are times when your child must miss school. Please contact our administrator, Rae McQueary, so we know that your child will not be attending. If your child is sick, please be sure to let us know of the illness so we can be aware.

If you need care before or after class time, please drop your child off in the Splendid Days room. Splendid Days is open from 7:30AM-5:30PM for your convenience.

Illness

We will contact you if your child becomes ill at school so that you may take them home. Common reasons for calls include; vomiting, diarrhea, unexplained rashes, injury or a fever of 100 degrees+. **If your child experiences any of these symptoms the night before or morning of school, PLEASE KEEP THEM HOME. If your child is vomiting, they can return to school after 24 hours of no vomiting. A child must be fever free (without tylenol) for 24 hours before returning to school.**

Medications

If your child needs to be given medication during the school day, please go to the office and **give medication to the administrator so that it may be stored safely.**

Dress Code

Dress your child in clothing that is comfortable and allows your child to run and play freely. **Learning can be messy, so please don't send your child in his or her "best" clothes.** We will be outside unless it is pouring rain, heat index of 100 degrees, or wind chill of below 20 degrees. During wet conditions, we recommend sending your child in **rain or snow boots.** Please dress your child appropriately according to the weather. **Coats, hats, and mittens or gloves** are a must during winter months. Layers can be helpful. Also, keep your child's independence in mind when selecting clothes. How is his or her independence facilitated through these clothes? Dress your child in clothes that they can easily pull down and pull up in the restroom. If your child has a dress or skirt on, please have shorts or pants underneath. **Every child should wear underwear to school. Please, no pull ups!** If your child is still having accidents, please send several pairs of extra clothes. Please send your child in shoes that he or she can take on and off independently, such as velcro shoes. Certain accessories such as jewelry, purses, sunglasses, toys, and money can be dangerous and a distraction. Excessive branding or costumes can also be distracting. These items should not be brought to school.

Drop Off and Pick Up

Drop off begins at 8:15 a.m. and ends at 8:25 a.m. Half day students' pick up is at 11:00 a.m. All parents should be in line for pickup at 11 am. **Please be on time at 11:00 am.** Morning students staying for Splendid Days will be clocked in at 11:00 a.m. Afternoon pick-up begins at 2:45 p.m. Thank you so much.

If your child arrives in the traffic line in the morning, PLEASE have them prepared to exit as soon as you pull up to the teacher. That means car seats unbuckled, coats and backpacks on and lunch boxes in hand. You may pull into a parking spot, prepare your child, then enter the line if you need to. Cold weather will be here before we know it and the teacher may need to hold an umbrella or be wearing thick gloves which makes it difficult to unbuckle. Not preparing your child takes up time they could be having in the classroom and also holds up the traffic line for others. Also, students should already have eaten breakfast prior to drop off and should not be finishing their meal as they exit the car. Walking in and opening the door independently is an important part of our morning routine and your child cannot do this successfully if they are carrying their coat or backpack.

Lunch and Snack

We will be providing a simple, healthy snack for your child that she or he will independently prepare when hungry during our morning work block. If your child has any allergies or dietary restrictions, please inform us before school begins. Please pack your child a nutritious and well balanced lunch each day. Cold lunches will need an ice pack, as they are not stored in the refrigerator. Please send food that your child can eat independently. Pack food in a way that the child can easily access it. You may have your child practice opening the containers a few days before school begins. We want to encourage independence by students getting their lunch out and ready to eat and cleaning up their spot when lunchtime is over.

Toys/Personal Belongings

Toys and personal belongings are not allowed inside the classroom. Students must leave them at home. Please do not send in umbrellas to school.

Introduction of Letter Sounds

In Children's Garden, we introduce the letter sounds rather than the letter name. When writing, we teach lower case letters first, then capital letters. The following is the order that we introduce letter sounds:

b , m, s, t, a c, g, h, r, o d, f, k, l, u j, n, p, w, e x, y, z, v, q, i.

There is a speech therapist available to assess children who may need those services. It is not uncommon for multiple students to use these services in the classroom. **Early intervention is best!**

Monthly Home Reading

This is optional homework for you and your child. You and your child may keep track of all the books read at home. These can include books read to the child and/or books that your child has read independently. When your sheet is full, return it to school so that your child may share this at meeting. This encourages reading readiness and strengthens reading ability.

Mystery Bag

Each day a different student will be sent home with the Mystery Bag. This is an exciting way for your child to share something interesting from their home. **This item should not be a toy.** You and your child together should come up with 3 clues about the item and rank them from hardest (clue #1) to easiest (clue #3). Here is an example of clues for a sand dollar:

1. It is white 2. It has holes in it. 3. It is found in the ocean.

Curriculum

Practical Life, Grace and Courtesy, Sensory Motor, Language, Math, Science, Culture/Geography, Art Crafts/Song Singing, Gross Motor Development, Cooperative Living and Creative Work.

2022/2023 Children's Garden Special Interest Shelf Curriculum

American History, Astronomy/Space, Dinosaurs

Book Orders

We will be ordering books from Scholastic online. You will find instructions in your child's backpack each month.

Birthday Tradition

If you would like to bring a sack for the class on your child's birthday, please schedule this with a teacher the day before their class celebration. We will celebrate birthdays on or as close as possible to your child's birthday. If your child has a summer birthday, we will celebrate his/her half-birthday, only if requested. Please bring a nutritious snack and special napkins/plates by 8:30 am. **Birthday snack example:** graham crackers and cut strawberries. Please no goodie bags.

Classroom Rules

RESPECT ourselves, others, our environment.

Children's Garden Student Guidelines

1. Be kind to one another.
2. Walk slowly, gracefully, and quietly.
3. Talk softly.
4. Pick up a chair with two hands and always put it back under the table.
5. Use a rug for all floor activities, and always keep work neatly on the rug.
6. Never sit or walk on rugs.
7. Carry work with two hands, holding it close to your body.
8. Never disturb or interrupt another's work. You may join a child's work only when you ask and if the child agrees.
9. Always put work away when you are finished and before getting new work out.
10. When you need a teacher, walk over to her and touch her shoulder. Wait patiently.

The Three Steps

In Children's Garden, we teach the children to use the Three Steps when resolving conflict with their peers. If a child doesn't like what another classmate is doing, he/she should:

Step 1: Use your words. Give a kind message that you do not like that behavior and for that classmate to please stop.

If the behavior continues, he/she should:

Step 2: Walk away.

If the behavior is still a problem, he/she should:

Step 3: Tell the teacher about the behavior.

***ABC Stewart Montessori School's 4 R's:**

Respect, Reserve Judgment, Responsibility, and Results

Conflict Resolution (CR) Rhyme

Words are the way

Try to talk

If you can't, then walk (meaning we want to use our words not our body and if using our words is not enough then walk over and get some help... from a teacher or another student that is a good "peace mentor")

*Peace work inspired by Virginia Losuke @montessorimoxie

The Montessori Family's Role

By P. Donohue Shortridge

**The Montessori experience is a partnership between the school and the family.
Here are some strategies for parents of young children in Montessori.**

Learn about Montessori Philosophy

Create and maintain active dialog with school/respect school policies

Come to all the parent nights
Read handbooks, notes and hand outs
Observe your child at Montessori
Ask questions of your child's teacher/administrator

Arrival and Departure are Very Important

Adequate sleep
Proper daily nutrition
Pleasant morning routine
Refrain from DVDs/radio/cell phone use in car

Arrive on time

Child walks into school

Child carries own possessions into school

Mom/Dad shows confidence, rather than effusive emotion or ambivalence

Parent and child greet staff person/parents refrain from cell phone use
Child is not discussed with teacher in front of child
Return when you say you will/refrain from cell phone use
Take time to greet child/allow for natural transition
Tell child you are happy to see him rather than ask what he did today
On ride home, notice things, sing, tell jokes, stories or allow for silence
Refrain from DVDs/radio/cell phone use on ride home
Tell child about what is happening next/keep routine the same
Upon arrival at home, child is expected to put belongings away

Tips for Daily Life

Routine, routine, routine

Your child can do just about everything for himself

"Every useless aide arrests development" M. Montessori

Everybody does chores/show him how

Hands-on activities are best

Beginning, middle and end of all activities

Limits are needed for your child's optimum development

Your child shows you he needs more limits when he acts out

Unstructured, slow time in nature is crucial every day

Your child's intelligence grows through purposeful movement

Organized sports can wait

Computer skills can wait

TV, movies, DVDs, computer games can wait

Most of your extra-curricular activities may also have to wait

Do not negotiate that which is not negotiable/ "OK?" at the end of a sentence

Slow down; your child can't move, think, talk or transition as fast as you

Together, sort through your child's toys, books, remove many of them

Each possession has a place

Be present; your child does not understand "later"

More conversation and laughing and less badgering

Your word is your bond/your child is learning to trust from you

Enjoy and accompany your child through his development

Parenting is the biggest work you will ever do. Your child needs you to do it well.

P. Donohue Shortridge, a Montessorian since 1980, speaks and writes about children and their families in the American culture. She conducts parent night talks, staff in-service sessions and workshop presentations. Visit her website at www.pdonohueshortridge.com

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fostering the authentic life of children and their families in the American culture

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A Poem for Parents: Nothing

*When children come home at the end of the day,
The question they're asked as they scurry to play is,
"What did you do at school today?"*

*And the answer they give
makes you sigh with dismay.*

"Nothing, I did nothing today!"

*Perhaps nothing means
that I played with blocks, counted to ten, or sorted some rocks.*

Maybe I painted or learned to tie my shoe

Or learned what happens when you mix red and blue

Maybe I learned to tuck in my chair and put my work away

Or maybe I learned to be kind to a friend while I was playing outside today,

Maybe my scissors followed a line and I learned to write my name.

Maybe I learned some sounds or numbers or learned to play a new game,

Maybe I made a craft or sang a song from beginning to end,

Or maybe I learned to play with a special, brand new friend.

When you're in preschool

And your heart has wings,

"Nothing" can mean so many, many things.

(Author Unknown)