



# GOLDEN OAK

## PRIVATE SCHOOL

### Welcome to our new students and their families!

It gives us great pleasure to officially welcome you and your child to the vibrant learning community of Golden Oak Private School. The notes on the following pages contain **important information** about the school year 2023-2024.

#### Contents of this document:

- Chapter 1: Transition Period for young children / Drop Off & Pick Up Times**
- Chapter 2: School calendar**
- Chapter 3: School Fee Payments & Other Costs**
- Chapter 4: Registration & Re-Registration Procedure (additional documents needed)**
- Chapter 5: Food & Meals**
- Chapter 6: Health and Safety Rules**
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#### Contact Information:



School Website: [www.goldenoakcyprus.com](http://www.goldenoakcyprus.com)



Telephone: (00357) 99309749



School Email: [info@goldenoakcyprus.com](mailto:info@goldenoakcyprus.com) / Director's Email: [eec.cyprus@gmail.com](mailto:eec.cyprus@gmail.com)

**Operating Hours: Monday – Friday 07.30 – 17.30**

**Operating Months: September – July**



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### 1. Transition Period for young children / Drop Off & Pick Up Times

#### Drop off & Pick up times (protocol for entering the school premises)

**Drop off** → Teachers will be waiting to collect the children at the main gate between **7.30 am and 8.30 am** every morning. For safety reasons, **parents are not allowed to enter the school premises passed the central gate without an appointment or invitation – parents and strangers are not allowed inside the classroom when children are inside.** We would like all children to arrive by 8.30 am and this is the official closing time of the central gate, so if a parent is running late, please send a message to inform us what time you will arrive (otherwise there will be no teacher at the gate to greet your child).

**Absences** → the teacher at the gate will be holding a register and ticking off which children have arrived at school. If a child is sick, please message the director, Deanna Tsikkou, to inform her that the child will not come to school that day. Otherwise, she will have to telephone the parents to see where the child is.

**Pick up** → There are 2 official pick up times during the day: **13.30 or between 17.00-17.30**. If you want to pick up your child earlier, please send us a message to inform us so that we can have your child ready and waiting.

#### Transition Period for younger students (below the age of 4)

Adapting to a new school smoothly is very important, especially for young children under the age of 4. For children above the age of 4 the adjustment period is usually much easier because they are older and it is easier for them to separate from their parents. Therefore, for children below the age of 4, we recommend a transitional period which will last for approximately 5 days (depending on the child of course). Speak to the class teacher about the exact transition period and methodology.

### 2. School Calendar

Golden Oak Private School follows the same holiday schedule as all the other private schools in Limassol, with only minor differences. Parents will receive the new school calendar so they can see important dates, especially the list of days that our school will be closed for the holidays during the academic year.

#### Please note that:

- School holidays do NOT affect the monthly tuition fees – the fees remain the same every month.
- Some of the above dates may change in accordance with any special circumstances that may arise.
- Some events may be added to the school calendar during the course of the year which the school will inform you about in due course.
- Some more school holidays may be added in accordance with the Ministry of Education.

### 3. School Fee Payments

Please refer to the separate **Price List** document on our website for monthly/annual fees. School monthly fees are always **pre-paid** on the **1<sup>st</sup> day** of each month in advance. Extra costs may be introduced for meals or specialist subjects like Robotics, which require the type of specialisation that normal kindergarten teachers do not have.

#### Terms and Conditions:

- School runs from **September until July** – Parents are expected to keep their child in school for the entire 11 months – even if a child is absent for long periods of time, parents are still expected to pay their monthly fees to hold their place



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- The **€450** Registration/Insurance & Book/Activity Pack fees are pre-paid and non-refundable
- All school fees must be pre-paid for the month, regardless of absences
- School trips, special events, photoshoots, or additional courses by outside professionals will have an additional cost

### Discounts:

- Siblings receive a 5% discount on their fees
- When you pre-pay for the entire academic year, you receive a 5% discount

### Please note that **no discount** is given:

- when children are absent from school for any reason
- because of official school holidays
- if the government requests the closure of schools for a small period of up to 3 weeks.

### Daily Operating Schedule

Monday to Friday, from 7.30 am until 5.30pm (optional hot meal served at 12.00)

### School Operating Months

11 months (September – July)

August summer school is subject to availability and enrolment numbers

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## 4. Registration & Re-Registration Procedure

### Completing the registration procedure

To complete a child's registration and secure their spot, the following must be complete:

- Submit a registration form
- Pay the **non-refundable** registration/insurance fee as well as the cost of the book/activity packs which comes to a total of €450.
- Provide a copy of the child's:
  - (1) Birth Certificate
  - (2) Passport or ID card
  - (3) Health certificate of the child (by a paediatrician)

If someone has registered their child but has not provided one of the above 3 documents, please email it to us at [info@goldenoakcyprus.com](mailto:info@goldenoakcyprus.com) or [eec.cyprus@gmail.com](mailto:eec.cyprus@gmail.com) and we will print the missing document to add to your child's file before school opens on 5<sup>th</sup> September.

### Re-registration for the next academic year:

Priority for registration will always be given to our currently registered students and their siblings.



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## 5. Food & Meals at school

The school can only provide 1 meal (a hot meal at lunch time) at an additional cost. Parents must provide the school with a child's breakfast and afternoon snacks. Below we will outline what parents can bring to school for their child's breakfast and snacks.

### Food Allergies / Special dietary requirements

- Parents must inform the school immediately about any food allergies or special dietary requirements, if they have not already done so (there is a section on the application form that parents should have already filled out for allergies)

### Lunchtime – The Mediterranean Diet

It has been observed in recent years that children in kindergartens are increasingly moving away from healthy eating habits. However, the promotion of a balanced diet is important for all of us. According to scientific studies, the Mediterranean Diet is incredibly healthy as it is rich in vegetables, soup, legumes, fruit, cereals and with olive oil as the main source of fat. This diet contributes to the maintenance of good health and longevity. Our aim is to promote the Mediterranean diet by encouraging our students to eat healthy food, as well as drinking enough water throughout the day. Our weekly lunch menu includes: soup, meat (mainly organic chicken), pasta, legumes, fish, salads, rice, orzo, bulgur wheat, and potatoes. On special occasions, of course, the children will be allowed a “cheat day” as a special treat. But in general, we should all try to follow the healthy eating food pyramid below:





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### Our Food Etiquette

- Lunch time is supposed to be a relaxing and enjoyable time for the children.
- Kindergarten teachers remain close to the children and discreetly help them wherever needed.
- Hand-washing before and after meals is compulsory.
- Appropriate table manners are taught.
- Children practice daily responsibilities such as setting the table, helping to clear the table, and even serving the food to their friends. This builds a heightened sense of responsibility and pride in each child.
- Children are encouraged to eat all the different types of food included in the school menu. They learn the value of proper nutrition in their lives.
- We don't force any child to eat if he/she doesn't want to, especially during the first few weeks.

### At our school we do NOT accept:

- chocolate milk
- chocolate
- chocolate/cream biscuits
- sugary snacks
- nuts (choking hazard)
- crisps/chips

### Healthy breakfast / snacks to send to school are:

- Cereals (except chocolate flavoured)
- Oatmeal
- Hard boiled eggs
- Cereal bars (which contain a wealth of nutrients found in oats, nuts, sesame, honey and dried fruit)
- Yoghurt (check the sugar content)
- Juice (check the sugar content – prefer 100% juice content)
- Fruit smoothies
- Sandwiches
- Sweet potato fries (Homemade, baked sweet potato fries are a nutritious alternative to french fries).
- Carrot sticks and hummus/ guacamole
- Tortillas (whole wheat tortillas that you can fill with either a little peanut butter and jam, or honey and a little butter, or veggies, avocado, turkey, and low-fat cheese).
- Cut pieces of fruit
- Cut pieces of vegetables
- Cheese sticks
- Whole-grain crackers and nut-based butter
- Baked peanut butter and banana quesadilla

### Advice for making cakes/cupcakes:

We allow cupcakes and cakes at school (manly for special occasions like birthdays), as long as the sugar content is kept to a minimum. Our advice is to avoid adding sugar or margarine. Substitute with some honey, coconut butter, pure cow's butter or olive oil. You can make many healthy cupcakes in different flavors and add pieces of dark cooking chocolate if you wish. In general, if you want to give chocolate to your children, prefer the one with 75% cocoa content.





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Below you will see some pictures of healthy lunch-box options:







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### 6. Health and Safety Rules

The health and safety of all our children and staff is our top priority. We strictly adhere to Covid-19 safety protocols throughout the year. We are also very aware of the need for a healthy and hygienic environment in the classroom and playground. Hand washing is taught and carefully monitored, and care will be taken with cleaning of tables, toys, door handles etc. If your child shows signs of illness, do not send him/her to school. This is to minimize the risk of other children or adults becoming sick as well. Sickness is recorded as an excused absence.

#### When children should stay home from school:

Children must stay home if they have symptoms of possibly contagious or serious illnesses that they might spread to other children, including:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Unusual Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Unusual Headache
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

#### When children will be sent home from school:

Our school staff serves as the link between parents and children. When a child complains of illness, it is the responsibility of the school to note and communicate common symptoms, such as fever, vomiting, and diarrhea to parents. The school is not allowed by law to diagnose specific illnesses, and we are not equipped to care for an ill or injured student for an indefinite amount of time. Parents are responsible for picking up their child in a timely manner once notified by the school. If the parents are unable to come themselves to pick up their child, then they must inform the school who they are allowing to act on their behalf to pick up their child.

#### Colds

Keep children home with a coloured nasal discharge, fever, bad cough, headache, nausea, vomiting or if the child is too tired or too uncomfortable to function at school.

#### Cough

A child needs to remain home if he/she has a dry/productive persistent, barking and hacking cough or is unable to practice respiratory etiquette (turning away from others and covering their mouth) and proper hand washing.





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### **Fever**

Children must be fever free for 24 hours (without the aid of a fever-reducing medicine), before returning to school.

### **Head lice**

Parents are responsible for monitoring their children for head lice. Please notify the school and grade level teacher if your child has head lice. If signs of lice are observed at school (itchy scalp, frequently scratching, redness behind the neck or ears), the school will have to do a discrete examination of the child's hair. If the school confirms head lice is present, we will contact the child's parents to collect him/her.

### **Conjunctivitis**

Children whose eyes are red or pink, and who have eye pain and reddened eyelids, with white or yellow eye discharge or eyelids matted after sleep may have Purulent Conjunctivitis. They should not be in school until they have been examined and treated. A Medical Note stating that the condition is not contagious or has been properly treated is required to return. Children with pink eyes who have a clear drainage and no fever, no eye pain, and no eyelid redness do not need to be kept home.

### **Returning to School After Sickness**

If the child has been home sick for any of the above mentioned illnesses, they must be cleared by a doctor and free from symptoms for 24 hours without medication. The school requires that you present a doctor's note for re-submission to the school after illness. This is done to protect all of the other children and staff as well.

### **Medication in school**

Please note that the school does not have the authority of administer any medication to children.



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### 7. Toilet Training

#### Using the Toilet

Children must be **fully toilet trained** and not wear diapers to attend the school. A teacher will always be near the bathroom when a child goes to the toilet in case of any emergencies. Please provide extra clothes and underwear for your children, in case of toilet accidents.

A child is considered toilet trained when he or she can complete the following steps unassisted:

- Know when he/she needs to use the bathroom
- Alert the teacher or get to the bathroom on his/her own
- Know how to get his/her trousers and underpants off and on
- Clean his/her own private parts with paper
- Put all toilet paper in the bowl/bin
- Flush the toilet
- Wash their hands

We understand that young children have occasional accidents, particularly during transition times, such as when a child begins school. A child who has had an accident needs to know when he/she has had an accident, alert the teacher, be able to clean him/herself and be able to change his/her own clothes with minimal assistance. The school does not keep extra clothing and parents are responsible for providing spare clothing that the child may need throughout the day.

If staff have reason to believe a child is not completely toilet trained, the teacher will arrange to discuss the matter with parents to find a solution. We will help parents with the toilet training procedure.

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### 8. Packing your child's school bag & pencil case

#### Items Children Need in their bag for school every day:

Items that should be brought to school daily are as follows:

- a reusable water bottle (labelled clearly with your child's name) filled with drinking water (the class teacher will refill the water bottle as needed). Children are encouraged to drink water whenever they need to. Big water bottles are readily available for children to refill their own bottles.
- breakfast & 2 healthy afternoon snacks (only a hot lunch can be provided by the school). We place an emphasis on healthy food and drink (please refer back to chapter 4). Please speak to your child's teacher should you have any questions or concerns about your child's eating habits at school. Parents can choose to send food to school every Monday for the entire week (as long as the food is properly labelled). The students have their own kitchen and fridge where their personal food items can be stored.
- 2 extra sets of clothes, including underwear and socks (to be replaced as needed)



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● a fully stocked pencil case (sharing is still prohibited due to Covid-19 rules). Please label all of your child's things. Each child should have the following items in their pencil case and school bag:

- |  |                                       |   |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1) 3 thick HB pencils                    | 6) 1 small ruler                      | 11) 1 small notebook for parent-teacher daily communication |
| 2) A packet of thick colouring pencils   | 7) 1 UHU glue stick                   | 12) 1 packet of wet wipes                                   |
| 3) 2 thick erasers                       | 8) 1 set of paint brushes             | 13) 1 packet of tissues                                     |
| 4) 2 pencil sharpeners for thick pencils | 9) 1 apron (to be worn when painting) | 14) 1 small hand sanitiser                                  |
| 5) 1 pair of safety scissors             | 10) 1 A5 red envelope folder          |   |

**Sunscreen / Insect Repellent:** Please apply sunscreen before your child comes to school. The first 'outside time' is between 7.30 am and 8 am. If your child is susceptible to insect bites, please apply insect repellent before they come to school in the morning. If you wish to leave insect repellent in their bag for re-application, please label this clearly with your child's name and inform the teacher. If your child has any allergies to insects or bees, please inform the school.

### Items that will be kept at school (clearly labelled):

- a school sun hat for outside time (which can be purchased from the school in September). The school hat costs **€10 and is immediately labelled with your child's name.**
- Book/Activity Packs

Please do not send personal items or toys from home. It is easy for these to get lost and this can cause distress. If your child has difficulty leaving a very special item at home, please talk with the teacher.

### School Clothing

A school hat (available for purchase from the school in September) is compulsory. We do not have a school uniform this academic year. Clothing should be comfortable keeping in mind that children will be involved in play which may be messy. Shoulders should be covered. On days where children have PE, we recommend that students wear suitable footwear for active play, such as sneakers/trainers/runners. Something warmer to wear in the air-conditioned classroom is also recommended. Please label all items and check periodically for your child's missing items.

## 9. Birthdays at school

We understand that birthdays are a special day and that your child might like to bring in a cake to share with classmates. Therefore, we allow parents to bring in birthday cakes as long as they have spoken to the class teacher in advance.

We cannot accept homemade cakes, unfortunately, due to covid restrictions. Anything you bring in to school should be bought from a professionally licensed shop. As a school, we prefer if you bring in individual pieces, like cupcakes, which the children can take home with them instead of offering the children cake in class (for reasons related to sugar-related hyperactivity).

Please always check the sugar content of the cakes you buy.

If you do not allow your child to eat cakes, or he/she is allergic to any type of cake, please inform the school before September.

Parents are allowed to bring party gift bags for a child's classmates instead of cakes.





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Please note that birthday party invitations may only be distributed at school if the entire class is being invited. Since your child is part of a Montessori classroom, please remember that the children in your child's class have different ages.

### 10. Parent-Teacher Communication

Communication with parents is very important for us. To ensure we work closely with you please read on to see the different ways that we communicate about school events, weekly news but most importantly your child's learning. At the start of the academic year, the whole school comes together for you and the children to be introduced to the teaching staff within the school. This gives you the opportunity to put a friendly face to your child's teachers and get to know the staff better. Throughout the year there are different ways the school will communicate with you about your child and school life in general.

1. **Teacher Communication:** Your child will have a small **communication book** in his/her bag that is used throughout the year by the class teacher and parents to communication and minor things. Your child's class teacher will also inform you every so often about what your child has learnt and/or will be learning so that you can do some 'homework' together. For many of our English Language topics, our school has created videos for the children on its own **Youtube Channel: English with Deanna Tsikkou**. Certain videos may be recommended as 'homework' for the children.
2. **Viber Parents' Group:** the school creates a group for parents on Viber for weekly updates, homework, and photos.
3. **Email:** The principal and staff are contactable via the school emails and will respond quickly.
4. **Website & Facebook Page & Instagram Page:** We publish a lot of new information on our website and Facebook/Instagram Page. It is crucial that you read it as it has important content regarding parent's evenings, upcoming events, key updates about the school and much more significant information. You can find out more information about our school on our website.
5. **Reports & Parent-Teacher Meetings:** twice a year, you will receive a report and you will be invited to an online parent-teacher meeting where you will have the opportunity to discuss your child's progress with the class teachers. Times and dates are sent out via email and letters and we encourage you to sign up for a time slot. At the first parent consultation evening of the year, you will have the opportunity to meet your child's class teacher. At the second parent consultation, you will have the opportunity to meet with your child's class teacher as well as any of your child's specialist teachers. Each appointment allocation is 10 minutes long. During parent evenings, information will be shared about your child's strengths, development needs and next steps in learning. You will also be given ideas as to how you can support your child's learning at home. If you are unable to attend the appointment, please let your child's class teacher know so we can try to arrange another time convenient for you. Due to the pandemic, it has been decided that all parent-teacher meetings will be held online for the foreseeable future.

### The Communication Book

In your child's school bag, you have been asked to buy and put in 2 very important things for parent-teacher communication: a red A5 envelope folder and a small notebook. Every day, it is the parent's responsibility to check the notebook to see if the teacher has written anything inside, and vice versa. When a message is read, the parent must sign below the comment and reply if necessary. The same should be done by the teacher. The teacher responsible for parent communication in the notebook is Mrs. Harita. This notebook should be kept inside the red A5 folder and should always be inside the child's bag. This is the easiest way to maintain daily communication with the teacher about your child. Anything you want to inform her about should be written in the notebook and dated. For example, if your child has slept badly the night before, the teacher should be informed through the communication book as this affects the child's ability to focus. This communication book is essential and will prove helpful in parent-teacher communication.



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### 11. Assessments & Evaluation

#### Assessments

Assessment is a natural, ongoing and important part of daily learning. Students are observed in a variety of situations, and a wide range of assessment strategies are used. The teacher observes the children to:

- Build up a clear picture of the child and his or her interests
- Identify what and how the child is thinking and learning
- Assess the effectiveness of the environment on the child's learning
- Assess the child's progress and development, and to identify the next steps.

It is important to identify the needs of each child and to view learning as a continuum, with each student achieving developmental milestones in different but relevant ways. Through listening and observing, areas of learning that the children particularly enjoy can be identified, and stimulating experiences can be planned to consolidate or extend the learning further.

#### Reports

Parents receive official reports on their child's progress twice a year, in December and June. The reports are emailed to parents to keep our eco-friendly culture.

#### Assessment is an integral component of teaching and is required in order to:

- determine the student's strengths, needs and interests
- monitor student growth over time
- determine how a student solves problems
- celebrate learning and achievements
- diagnose exceptionalities
- identify and document achievement of curriculum expectations
- provide information to parents/guardians, support staff and other teachers
- evaluate curriculum and methodology
- enhance teaching

#### Authentic assessment is continuous in that it includes:

- Observing
- interacting
- determining appropriate expectations (individual targets)
- planning
- focused teaching
- choosing suitable materials
- providing appropriate learning experiences
- evaluating and observing again

Teachers will perform individual and group observations and examine a checklist of things they have taught the children and they will say whether or not the child has learnt this age-appropriate skill.



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### The purpose:

#### 1. Observation

The process of systematically viewing and recording student behaviour for the purpose of making instructional decisions. In Kindergarten, opportunities for observation occur throughout the day during classroom activities. The teacher observes by: watching the way students go about their work and the way they interact with others and their surroundings; listening to students' ideas, thoughts and feelings to gain an understanding of their skills, knowledge and values; and talking with students about their ideas, creations, feelings and understanding so they can reveal the way they think and learn.

#### 2. Checklist

A list of expected skills, concepts, behaviours, processes and/or attitudes used to facilitate assessment of student achievement. In Kindergarten, opportunities for the use of checklists may occur during activity time or at certain periods during the day (e.g., Math circle) as key behaviours or expectations are observed.

### Teachers will make the following types of assessments:

1. Diagnostic assessment is used to determine what the students currently know and can do and to identify strengths and weaknesses so that suitable instruction can be provided.
2. Formative assessment is the on-going assessment of student learning used to inform and improve performance and instruction.
3. Summative assessment provides a cumulative description of student achievement and assists students, parents and teachers to plan further instruction and learning activities

### What are children assessed on?

When watching students, Kindergarten teachers observe how the children: \* interact with others in various settings \* follow routines \* play \* select and complete tasks \* when they choose to be alone \* during teacher-direction lessons and activities.

When listening to and talking with students, Kindergarten teachers should: \* talk informally with children in a variety of situations throughout the day \* listen to children talk among themselves and in group discussions \* talk with and listen to children while they are reading and writing \* organize opportunities for children to share their learning with the class, with a group, with a friend and with the teacher.

Effective observations provide a continuous record of a child's progress and the basis for appropriate programming that meets individual needs. Observations are most effective when: \* they are linked to learning expectations \* records are dated, organized and maintained \* the teacher focuses his/her observations on one or two students at a time \* they are planned as part of the day.

### Children are graded on the following skills:

#### 1. personal and social development:

- adjustment to school routines
- interactions with classmates or others
- participation in large- and small-group activities





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- development of play
- cooperation skills
- degree of independence
- self-image
- conflict resolution skills

### 2. development in academic areas:

- English Language/Literacy
- Greek Language
- Science
- Mathematics/Numeracy

Teachers will also provide written comments at times, so some reports will outline a child's strength and weaknesses, setting future targets for improvement.

**Reports are presented to parents twice a year, once before Christmas and once before the end of the school year. The purpose of the report is to help parents understand their child's strengths and weaknesses.**

### 12. Afternoon Nap Time (for young children)

Our school program runs from 07.30 until 17.30, with a new fun activity taking place every 30 minutes. Hot lunch is served between 12.00-12.30. For children who do not need an afternoon nap, the afternoon schedule is very action packed after 13.00.

For children younger than 4, we offer nap time between 13.00 and 15.00 every day (if the parents of the child have requested this option). A teacher sits with the children during their nap time. If you would like your child to have an afternoon nap, please inform the school if you have not already done so, so that a bed can be reserved for your child.

The children each have their own mattress in the sleeping room, but parents need to bring their own bed linen: a fitted sheet and a flat sheet. Every Monday morning the parent should bring a clean set of the above sheets. Every Friday we will send them home with the child for washing. Clean sets can then be returned to school on Monday morning again. This is done purely for hygienic reasons, as bed linen should not be recycled from child to child and parents can use the washing liquid and fabric softener that they prefer and they can always be sure that their children have clean sheets.

Please note, we cannot force a child to sleep if he/she refuses to do so. Of course, the teacher will try her best to encourage the child to sleep, but it may not always work. If this happens on any particular day, we will allow the child to join the afternoon activities instead, and we will inform the parents.



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## 13. Afternoon Children's Club

Our daily school program runs from 07.30 until 17.30, with a new fun activity taking place every 30 minutes.

From 13.30 until 17.30, we offer afternoon care for siblings and friends aged 4-8.

Hot lunch is served between 13.30 and 14.00 (depending on the arrival of the children).

For the children that arrive in the afternoon, the afternoon schedule is very action packed after 14.00 and the children have a lot of fun.

We can help children with their homework as well, if they need any help.

## Children's Afternoon Club

Monday-Friday, 13.30-17.30

Ages: 4-8



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TELEPHONE:  
99309749



Cost: € 200 / Month

Agios Athanasios, Limassol



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### 14. Student Behaviour, Bullying & Discipline

First and foremost, our teachers do not accept bullying behaviour and try to stop it immediately.

We teach our students to be kind and polite to both adults and children.

One of the great benefits of the Montessori approach is that children have the opportunity to learn how to behave in a social situation from other children slightly older than themselves. Staff maintain an ethos of positive guidance at all times. Here are some techniques that we use when dealing with challenging behaviour:

- Positive intervention and distraction
- Modelling good behaviour
- Practising social skills through drama and role play
- Talking things through
- Time-out with adult observing other children
- Time-out to calm down
- Practising acceptable behaviour but giving no attention to unacceptable behaviour

Positive Behaviour Management is a vital component in helping Our school to achieve its aims and values. Our Promoting Positive Behaviour policy also provides our students with the boundaries and rules that they need in order to fulfil their potential and contribute to the wellbeing of others. Discipline is essential to good learning situations. The general aim of our school is to provide an atmosphere of mutual respect and collective responsibility. Students, parents and teachers all have an important part to play in achieving this atmosphere. The rules of the school are of a common sense nature, bearing in mind the interest and safety of all concerned. We take a positive approach to promote responsible behaviour. We recognise and praise good behaviour, effort and application through the use of certificates, stickers, public display etc.

Evaluations have shown that promoting positive behaviour and attitudes do have a significant impact on students' social skills and behaviour, but this doesn't happen overnight. While we are confident that these approaches will work for the majority of students, we have taken the precaution of putting in place a system based on traffic lights (red zone, yellow zone, green zone) which will be used if a child does not respond positively to the above approaches. These are placed prominently in the classroom along with a visual reminder of the steps for both teachers and students.

Parents will always be informed about challenging behaviour and the teachers will work with the parents to help the child in question.





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### 15. Academic System

#### Blended Program: Montessori & the British Early Years Learning Framework

Our school delivers a blended curriculum that incorporates both Montessori Education and the Early Years Learning Framework. Our blended program takes only the best elements of both programs and they work together to enhance children's learning and development during their crucial formative years. Montessori Education and the British Early Years Learning Framework work hand-in-hand to positively support children's learning and development from birth to age six. Each curriculum provides children with a different approach to learning that ultimately supports not only their academic knowledge, but also their personal and social development. The Montessori Curriculum enhances the British Early Years Learning Framework by providing children with the optimal learning environment, materials, and guidance to discover their full potential. The Montessori Curriculum covers five key learning areas that focus on nurturing strong academic and wellbeing foundations. This type of learning provides children with hands-on learning experiences using educational materials that teach real-life skills and inspire a love of learning. We want our children to love learning to want to learn more and more. Let's bring joy back into the classroom!

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#### Learning and Teaching Philosophy

Golden Oak provides a play-based approach to teaching and learning for ages 3-6, encompassing the British National Curriculum in a Montessori Classroom. We focus equally on the academic development and personal-social development of the children in our care. Their happy smiles are our reward.

#### **Children are unique, curious, and creative individuals who are natural learners and rich in potential.**

Children are unique individuals whose points of view need to be listened to and respected. Children are competent and capable individuals who can take responsibility for their learning. They have an innate desire to discover, learn, and make sense of the world. Children express their ideas, construct and demonstrate their understanding in multiple ways, including artistic expression, constructive play, imaginative play, and role play. They have the right to realize and expand their potential.

#### **Children's play is an inquiry into the world around them.**

Play capitalizes on children's natural curiosity and exuberance. Through play, children test and revise their ideas to make connections between previous and current experiences. They construct their own meaning and understanding of how the world works. Play enables children to develop a sense of autonomy and identity, as well as their ability to make informed decisions. Children become increasingly skilled at being group members, initiating and working together, asking questions and exploring possible worlds through imagination. Purposeful play requires time. Our schedule includes uninterrupted blocks of time during which we provide a balance between a classroom rich in child-initiated play and playful focused learning.

#### **Children's curiosity should be fostered and encouraged.**

We offer a curriculum that is engaging, relevant, challenging and significant for learners in the 3-6-age range. Through an inquiry-based approach to teaching and learning, children engage in authentic, meaningful learning experiences that enable them to take action. This approach also supports students to develop transdisciplinary skills, attitudes and knowledge, thus empowering them to become independent, life-long learners and resourceful, internationally-minded global citizens. We understand the importance of mother tongue in the acquisition of language.



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### **Children learn more through relationships with other people.**

Children socially construct their knowledge and understanding of the world by interacting with other people and with the surrounding environment. They need opportunities to participate in collaborative learning activities involving dialogue, conflict, and negotiation. A quality learning community involves effective partnerships between parents, teachers, and children. Connections with home and family are integral to learning in the early years.

### **Our learning environment actively supports physical, social, intellectual and emotional development.**

We offer a learning environment that provides individuals with a sense of belonging, reinforces respect and empathy and promotes effective communication. Our children are encouraged to be active and take thoughtful risks, to recognize their own accomplishments, to take responsibility for their actions and to develop resilience and positive self-esteem. Teachers and children can modify spaces to provoke and extend inquiry, or to respond to the needs of the learners. We provide a variety of human-made and natural resources that are readily available for the children to discover, explore, and construct meaning from. Environments are intentionally created to invite exploration, provoke curiosity, engage the senses and celebrate the children's learning journey.

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### **Areas of Learning**

We focus on 7 Areas of Learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- Communication and Language
- Basic Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

### **Learning Development Activities**

We use a wide variety of fun activities throughout the week that encourage development in all areas of learning:

- Science and mathematical development
- Fine motor skills development
- Language and communication development
- Imagination development
- Creativity development
- Gross motor development and coordination

### **Children learn through**

- playing and exploring - children investigate, experience and try to do new things
- active learning - children should be able to be encouraged to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and they should be able to enjoy their achievements



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- creating and thinking critically - children learn to develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things
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### Teaching & Learning Approach

Our child-centred teaching incorporates the non-academic skills such as confidence building and social development that our children should be able to also need in their lives. We promote a holistic approach to education and implement it in project-based, experiential learning so that knowledge is whole, enmeshed in practice, understood and includes learning to know oneself and others. Holistic education is a comprehensive approach to teaching where educators seek to address the emotional, social, ethical, and academic needs of students in an integrated learning format. We want to empower our students to be independent thinkers, not merely followers.

Our academic program follows the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum and we try to meet the Early Learning Goals for each age group. We want our students to develop a love of independent learning, which should be able to help them when they join primary school thereafter. Our program includes daily Phonics, Literacy (English) and Numeracy (Maths) lessons – all of which help our students develop reading, writing and number skills. The 4 main types of learning styles that our teachers use to maximise learning for all students are: Visual, Auditory, Reading/Writing and Kinaesthetic.

A diverse range of teaching and learning styles can be seen in our classroom, with lots of opportunity for play time as well. We aim to help students in their physical, intellectual, emotional and social development through play, within a secure and caring environment. All the areas of learning are developed through a combination of child-initiated activities, as well as carefully planned and structured activities that are meaningful to your child. By providing the tools to meet every child's needs, we hope that they should be able to develop self-confidence, gain independence, learn new skills, and enjoy meeting other people.

Our school policy is to support students with additional learning needs alongside their peer group in the normal classroom setting. The close nurturing environment at our school means that all students have the care and support that they need to be effective and happy learners and that good communication between home and school is always maintained. Students with particular needs should be able to be working their way through an individualised teaching programme to help them build up confidence and skills in the areas that they need to then fully access the core curriculum alongside their peers.

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