



Around the Sun Montessori School
Primary Parent Handbook

2023-24

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General School Information

Our Mission & Philosophy

Our mission at Around the Sun Montessori School is to form a partnership with parents to fuel their child's natural desire to learn by providing a safe, respectful, and developmentally appropriate environment, based on the teachings of Maria Montessori. We strive to bring out each child's individuality, recognizing that children carry within themselves the potential of the person they will someday become. We accomplish this mission by offering children opportunities to learn through hands-on experiences and the exploration of challenging materials, and by providing positive guidance and encouragement.

Following the philosophy of pioneer educator Maria Montessori, we believe the first years of a child's life constitute the most critical period for his/her self-development. Further, we believe that children learn at their own rate through real-life and hands on experiences. A child-centered, prepared environment best enables a young child to learn basic concepts, skills, and values. Encouraging every child's sense of individual worth is an essential part of the learning process – if children feel good about themselves, they will feel good about learning! Children learn best by doing, with opportunities for choice, experimentation, and problem solving. Children should be guided in a predictable, yet flexible environment that allows for independence and creativity. Our goal is to encourage active, self-directed learning so that children can reach their full potential, whatever that potential may be!

Basic Primary Schedule

- The morning primary class operates from 8:30 am – 11:30 am, 4 days/week (M, T, W, Th).
- The afternoon primary class operates from 12:30 pm – 3:30 pm, 4 days/week (M, T, W, Th).
- Extended Day Program (for children turning 5 before Dec 31 of the year they start the program) operates from 8:30 am – 3:30 pm, 4 days/week (M, T, W, Th).
- Kindergarten (for children turning 5 before August 1 of the year they start the program) operates from 8:30 am – 3:30 pm on M/T/W/Th.

Office Hours and Closings

Office hours are 9:00 - 11:30 am on M/T/W. Parents can contact the office via email or phone and calls or emails outside this time will be returned no later than the next open office day. The office is closed on Fridays. Teachers and staff are available for after-school meetings, typically from 3:30 - 4:00 pm, but meetings should be arranged ahead of time via phone, email, or Brightwheel messages.

Ratios & Group Sizes

ODJFS required ratios are, for young preschoolers (ages 3-4), 12 students to 1 teacher or trained staff member; for older preschoolers (ages 4 to kindergarten age), 14 students to 1 teacher or trained staff member. ATS Montessori School's primary program maintains these requirements at all times. The preschool serves no more than 34 children at one time. Group sizes will not exceed 24 students, though more than one group (e.g., extended day and morning preschool) may share a space.

Opportunities for Parents

Parent Participation

Parents and teachers are partners in providing a nurturing, loving environment for the growth and development of your child. We are always interested in your comments regarding the care and education that your child receives from Around the Sun and suggest email as a primary form of communication.

Our classroom is a carefully controlled environment designed to encourage concentration and quiet work. Visitors are permitted but can often be a distraction to young children. Throughout the school year, there will be opportunities for parents to be involved in the ATS community. These might be Open House evenings, sharing your family's cultural celebrations with the class, or reading a special story to the students. These opportunities will be communicated to you via your child's teacher and will be limited to ensure the health and safety of our school community.

We encourage you to be involved with our PTO organization, Friends of Around the Sun Montessori, for social activities outside the classroom and for opportunities to support the children and staff of Around the Sun. As a parent of a child enrolled at ATS, you are already a member and will receive an emailed monthly newsletter with information on events sponsored by FOATSM.

Communication with Teachers

If at any time you have a question or concern regarding your child's care, we ask that you bring it to our attention immediately so that we can take appropriate steps to address the matter. Most initial communication with teachers happens via email and Brightwheel messaging, and phone calls or meetings will be scheduled if needed.

Parent/Teacher conferences will be held twice a year (see school calendar). We will provide you with a written assessment detailing your child's progress and invite you to meet with teachers for an open discussion.

Payment Schedule & Fees

- Registration Fee - A non-refundable, yearly fee of \$55 per child or \$70 per family is due at the time of application. Re-enrollment for current families is \$35/\$50.
- Materials Fee - A \$150 materials fee will be applied to student accounts in two installments of \$75, due in October and March. This fee defrays the cost of your child's slippers, snacks, and other consumable supplies throughout the school year.
- Payments - Around the Sun Montessori School utilizes Brightwheel to process tuition payments for all students. The first payment is due June 1 and secures your child's enrollment for the coming school year. The remaining payments will be due by the 5th of each month September through May.
 - Tuition for morning or afternoon primary school is \$3,500: 10 equal payments of \$350.
 - Tuition for extended day primary or kindergarten is \$6,000: 10 equal payments of \$600.
- Multiple Child Family Discount - Families with more than one child receive a discount of 10%, deducted monthly from their total family tuition.
- Late Payments - A late charge of \$10.00 per child will be added to your invoice on the 10th if payment has not been received. If a payment is not received by the 20th of the month, the child may not return to school until the tuition balance is paid in full.

- Late Pick-Up Fees - A late pick-up charge of \$10.00 for every 10-minute segment or portion thereof after 11:35 am or 3:35 pm will be applied. See “Late Pick-Up” in our policies and procedures below for details.
- Returned Checks - A \$45 processing fee will be added for all returned checks.

Around the Sun Montessori School Policies and Procedures

Enrollment

Our Enrollment Process

Around the Sun Montessori will begin the enrollment process as follows:

- Placement will begin in January with currently enrolled students.
 - Enrolled students will be given first priority to reenroll for the following year. However, placement can only be guaranteed for the student’s current class assignment. For example, a parent of a child enrolled in the afternoon primary class can request that child be placed in the morning class, but **that change cannot be guaranteed**.
 - Children who are progressing to another level of learning (Kindergarten or Elementary) will be placed in the appropriate level class according to their age and/or level of development.
- Siblings of currently enrolled students are given second priority and will be placed into available openings.
- General enrollment to fill any available openings will begin February 1.
- After all openings are filled, a waiting list will be started. Your enrollment fee is required in order to be placed on the waiting list.

Please note: Although enrollment is generally filled on a first-come, first-served basis, the Directors will take into account the balance of the classroom and must consider factors such as age, developmental readiness, and gender when considering placement.

Admissions Requirements

It is the policy of Around the Sun Montessori to admit students aged 2.5 - 12 without regard to race, culture, gender, or religion. Each child's health and safety are of extreme importance. Upon enrollment, there are forms needed to comply with state licensing requirements. Around the Sun Montessori does not conduct state assessments. By state law, children must be current and up to date on all immunizations at or prior to the start of school, with exceptions to immunization requirements listed under 5104.014 ORC. Approval of exceptions is at the discretion of the Administrators.

- Child’s Medical Statement (requires physician signatures)
- Child Enrollment and Health Information Form

We would appreciate any other information that you feel is important so that we can provide your child with the highest level of care.

Attendance Policies

Arrival and Departure

Around the Sun is located in the lower level of First Christian Church. We are proud to be part of First Christian Church's rural setting, please respect the calm of the surroundings by approaching the building slowly and safely.

Drop-off and Pick Up Map





2023-24 Drop-off and Pick Up Procedures

→ → → **Drop-off Route:** For morning primary, extended-day, kindergarten, and elementary classes, drop-off will be from **8:30 - 8:40 a.m.** Afternoon primary class drop-off will be from **12:30 - 12:40 p.m.** All students will be dropped off in the lower parking lot (★).

Primary, Extended-Day, Kindergarten, and Elementary Pick Up: All students will be released from the same location (★), please park and walk over. If the weather is agreeable, the children will be released from the playground but if it's raining, too cold, etc. they can be picked up inside, using the entrance next to the playground. Morning primary class pick up will be from **11:20 - 11:30 a.m.** Pick up for afternoon primary, extended-day, kindergarten, and elementary classes will be from **3:20 - 3:30 p.m.** (A late fee will incur if pick up is after the allotted window.)

Arrival/Drop Off

Parents/care givers will enter the school grounds via the main driveway on Sharon Copley Rd. Vehicles will form a line leading into the lower parking lot. While in the vehicle line, pull all the way to the front until traffic is stopped (see diagram). Please keep your vehicle as far to the right as possible to allow for safe departure of exiting vehicles. Please remain in your vehicle for the duration of the arrival/dismissal procedure and wait for a staff member to open your vehicle door.

- Please have your child ready to exit on the passenger side of the vehicle. A teacher will greet you and your child and help your child exit the vehicle. A parent volunteer or ATS Staff member will then walk your child to the classroom door where a teacher will help them get ready for the day. Please be respectful of those in line behind you and do not linger after your child has exited your vehicle.

- Arrival times are as follows:
 - AM Primary/Extended Day/Kindergarten: 8:30 - 8:40 am
 - PM Primary: 12:30 - 12:40 pm
- You will exit the school grounds by proceeding forward and following the blue loop. Please stay to the right and continue out of the main driveway (see diagram).
- Please make every effort to arrive within the drop-off time frame. We understand that there are instances where you may arrive after 8:45 am/12:45 pm. If this occurs, please park and walk your child to the classroom door where a staff member will greet your child and let them in to start their day.

Dismissal/Pick-Up

Dismissal will start a few minutes early to accommodate the vehicles in our parking lot and to dismiss each student individually. Please plan to arrive at the following time according to your child's class and form a line either outside the playground fence or in the hallway beside the school office:

- Morning Preschool (Extended Day Thursday): after 11:20 am and before 11:30 am
- Afternoon Preschool/Extended Day (M/T/W)/Kindergarten: after 3:20 pm and before 3:30 pm

Teachers will dismiss the children, one family at a time, from the playground or classroom.

If someone else will be picking up your child, please inform the school as early as possible via the Brightwheel "approved pickup" fields, Brightwheel message, email, or text. If that person is new to us, please ask them to have a photo ID ready. Please note, families dealing with custody issues will be required to provide copies of paperwork detailing court orders. We will not dismiss your child to anyone not authorized by you in writing. These forms will be kept confidential in the child's file.

Those making their way back to their vehicle are responsible for the safety of the children in their care the entire way back to their vehicle, and they will want to be aware of other parents' vehicles coming and going.

Please look out for each other during this pick-up time. Several families have infants or younger siblings. To help save the effort of unbuckling then buckling the younger children, please consider offering to wait by their car while they collect their children. Or consider making arrangements that you convey to the school about walking another student to their car. This could be especially helpful when the weather gets colder. Parents with younger children can also contact the school, and we will find a way to assist you with the pick-up process. Parents are also welcome to bring younger children to the line if they prefer.

Dismissal is a busy time, and teachers need to remain focused on the children's safety. If you have a question or concern to discuss with the staff, please write a note or email as opposed to asking during the dismissal process. This will avoid distractions and delays. Teachers will reply at their earliest convenience.

Late Pick-Up

Children anxiously anticipate the expected arrival of a parent, and we appreciate your promptness in picking your child(ren) up from school. A late pick-up charge of \$10.00 for every 10-minute segment or portion thereof after 11:35 am or 3:35 pm (depending on the class your child is enrolled in) will be applied. For example, if a parent arrives at 3:36, a \$10 fee will be charged. The fee will increase to \$20 if

a parent arrives at 3:46, etc. This late fee will be added to the next month's tuition. If you are late for whatever reason (flat tire, appointment, traffic, etc.) a late charge will be issued. A "no exceptions" policy makes it easier for us to apply the late policy to everyone consistently and fairly. We appreciate your understanding and consideration.

Absent Day Policy

Parents should contact the school at least one week prior to a planned absence or the same day of an unexpected absence. Please use, in order of preference: 1) Brightwheel system messaging to staff (accessed on the app or online); 2) email to aroundthesunmontessori@gmail.com; 3) voice message or text to the school's number, (330) 350-1507. If your child has any diagnosed illness or communicable disease, parents should contact the school with that information so that we may notify other parents. ATS notifications will not specify the child or family, only the presence of the specific condition at the school.

While we attempt to contact parents via Brightwheel message, phone, or email when we have not received word about a child's absence, parents should not expect to be contacted immediately if a child does not arrive as expected.

Child Management Policies

Safety

To ensure the safety of your child, Around the Sun Montessori has established the following policy:

1. No child is ever left alone or unsupervised.
2. A staff member is present and records your child's arrival and dismissal times. A staff member is always aware of each child's presence while they are in attendance at Around the Sun.
3. Each staff member always has immediate access to a telephone.
4. A plan is posted explaining the action to be taken and the staff's responsibilities in case of a fire, and/or emergency.
5. First aid supplies are always available.
6. A teacher trained and certified in First Aid and CPR is always present.
7. Please note, there are no swimming activities at Around the Sun Montessori.
8. Transportation is not provided to and from school or to offsite activities.
9. ATS does not participate in activities near, in, or on water eighteen inches or more in depth.

While our elementary school does share our facility, elementary students use separate classrooms, hallways, and bathrooms.

No Smoking Policy

Around the Sun maintains a no-smoking policy during hours of operation in the building and on the property.

Child Guidance

We believe that a child in an environment of love, trust, and respect will gain self-discipline and a desire to learn and succeed in a positive way. The purpose of discipline for young children is to teach coping skills and discourage inappropriate behavior. We also believe discipline should include acknowledging the child's contributions, respecting his or her achievements, and praising his or her progress. Our guidance policy is designed to help students develop self-discipline and self-respect.

At Around the Sun, we try to arrange the environment to avoid problem-causing situations. We adapt our expectations to fit the developmental levels of the children to minimize frustrations and inappropriate behavior. We encourage children to develop their own control, autonomy, management of feelings, and problem solving. Throughout the school year, children will be made aware of appropriate and considerate behavior, and why these are necessary for the enjoyment and harmony of the group. We establish the following three "ground rules," which will provide a framework for setting appropriate boundaries and limits:

1. We will keep ourselves safe.
2. We will keep others safe.
3. We will keep the materials safe.

We use group discussion and role playing at group time to explore possible application of these three "ground rules" and the natural and logical consequence of breaking them. Children develop their abilities to control themselves at different rates. We will take into consideration the needs of the particular child involved. No single technique will work with every child every time. Through gentle reminders and consistent modeling, children become sensitive to the needs of others and develop a respect for their learning environment. When a gentle reminder is not enough, the teacher will intervene respectfully but firmly to stop the behavior.

In the rare event that a child exhibits behavior that may harm another or herself, the child will be safely removed from the group until she is able to regulate her behavior and safely return to normal classroom activity. When the child is ready to return, teachers will review the reason for the separation and what behavior is expected. We do not use corporal punishment, including spanking. A child is never subjected to cruel or severe punishment, humiliation, or verbal abuse. A child is never denied food or forced food as a form of punishment. A child is never punished for wetting, soiling, or not using the toilet. We model a sense of control in our own touch and voice. We are firm about our limitations when they are appropriate to the situation and the child's ability to understand and comply. We are consistent. We analyze possible reasons for behavior problems and make whatever adjustments in the environment that we can. We offer choices, try to redirect activity, point out natural or logical consequences of different behaviors, help the child individually or in a group to problem solve. Every effort will be made to enable the child to regain control of himself/herself through conflict resolution, redirection and/or changing the environment. All staff members have been made aware of the above policies and are trained accordingly.

Discharges

On the rare occasion that a child is consistently unable to allow others to function in the classroom on a particular day, parents may be contacted and asked to pick up their child. Should a child be an ongoing source of disruption or destruction, the parents will be notified and may be asked to schedule a conference with the staff. The health and safety of all children and staff members may require the withdrawal of any child whose behavior is determined to endanger himself/herself, other children, or staff members. A child may also be dismissed if it is found that the child's needs are not being met with the program. All efforts will be made to meet the needs of each child in the classroom. Around the Sun does not suspend students.

Special Needs

Around the Sun recognizes and honors the unique pace and abilities of each child and strives to be fully accountable for placement of a child in an environment that can fully meet that child's needs. ATS operates within the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act, including administering medication to children with disabilities and following altered care procedures as assigned by a physician to children with disabilities.

Serving children with special needs can sometimes mean that a child needs greater external assistance than a Montessori environment can provide. Some children may be better served in an environment that offers more adult check-ins and prompting, and they may benefit from a setting in which the entire class is moving towards the same goal. It is our intention to work with the parents of every child to achieve their maximum potential. Around the Sun will clearly communicate any related concerns or observations to the parents in conferences, both formal and informal, and through written communication. It is expected that parents will follow through with any requested outside intervention when learning discrepancies or behavior patterns that interfere with normal learning or the learning of others are routinely observed. Around the Sun staff does not diagnose or label children. If support services are required to improve the child's situation (as determined by an outside specialist), those services must be ongoing until the professional releases the child. Ongoing enrollment at Around the Sun may be dependent upon continuation of the services.

Outdoor Play

We go outside most days. Please make sure your child has appropriate clothing, including gloves, snow boots or mud boots, raincoats and possibly snow pants.

We will be going outside if the "real feel" temperature (air temp, plus wind chill) is above 25°F and it is not actively raining or otherwise unsafe for children to be outside. These conditions may include but are not limited to temperature, humidity, wind chill, ozone levels, pollen count, lightning, rain, or ice. Please presume that your child will be going outside and plan accordingly, including treatment of seasonal allergies or asthma, and clothing that is appropriate to the weather.

Food and Allergy Policies

Snack Policy

To ensure the safety of all students, Around the Sun will provide a daily allergy-safe and nutritious snack, including water. Please notify staff before the start of the school year about any special food requirements due to allergies or cultural/religious dietary requirements. The snack fee is included in the \$150 materials fee with half due in October and the other half in February. Families are encouraged to send a clearly labeled water bottle with their student each day. If your child requires medical food, you must provide it.

Depending on specific allergies in each class, snack foods will be selected and purchased by staff. Examples of snacks provided may include items such as pretzels, popcorn, applesauce, or cheese sticks. Children learn through experience, and snack time at Around the Sun can provide an excellent opportunity to develop positive attitudes toward healthy foods. Snack will be available in the classrooms, and the children are given the opportunity throughout work time to prepare a snack for themselves. If the child feels that he/she would like a snack, it is his/her choice when to eat. Teachers will, of course, be

available to supervise and assist when needed. The children are not interrupted during their work time, and children can enjoy feeling a sense of autonomy and accomplishment by preparing their own snack!

Lunch Policy

Due to the nature of the allergies present in our classrooms, Around the Sun is a completely peanut and tree nut free environment. No peanut/tree nuts or peanut/tree nut butters or products that may contain peanuts/tree nuts or that were manufactured in a plant where peanuts/tree nuts are present can be brought into the school. Specific allergens/foods to avoid for lunch students will be sent via email at the beginning of the school year.

ODJFS requires that lunch meals provided by parents meet 1/3 of the child's recommended daily dietary allowance as specified by the USDA (see below for specific chart). This includes 1 serving of fluid milk, 1 serving of meat or meat alternative, 2 servings of fruit and/or vegetables, and 1 serving of bread or grains. If the child's lunch does not meet the state requirements, ATS will offer supplements to meet the requirement. Exceptions will be made for any student with allergies that remove a full food group. School-aged children will not be permitted to carry medications and medications/food alternative/modified diets. Please see the chart labeled "Portion Sizes for Meals" in the appendices of this handbook.

Allergies

Around the Sun Montessori recognizes the potentially serious consequences for children with food allergies. These allergies may include a condition known as anaphylaxis; a severe, potentially life-threatening allergic reaction brought about by exposure to certain foods or other substances (e.g., bee stings). ATS does not purport to be, nor can it be deemed to be, free of food items and nonfood items that may lead to a severe allergic or anaphylactic reaction. For example, the church community itself does not have a "no-nut policy," so it is possible that peanuts and tree nuts may be brought into the school environment from time to time by church members. As such, we cannot claim to be "Allergen Free." We can, however, attempt to create an "Allergen Safe" area where we make all reasonable efforts to reduce the risk to children with life threatening allergies, in accordance with this policy.

Health and Safety Policies

Each child attending Around the Sun shall secure and have on file verification of a medical exam conducted within the past 13 months as required by Ohio law. Please use the form titled "Ohio Department of Job and Family Services Child's Medical Statement." The form must be signed by a health care provider.

Management of Illness

There are occasions when a child is too sick or contagious and therefore should not be brought to school. The child may return to school once he/she has been symptom free for a minimum of 24 hours without medication or has written permission from a health care professional. If a doctor diagnoses an ear or throat infection, as an example, and the child is prescribed an antibiotic, the child may not be brought to school until he/she has been on the medication for at least 24 hours.

To protect children and staff, we have set up some guidelines regarding illnesses. A child with any of the following signs or symptoms of illness should not attend school. If these symptoms are observed at school, the child shall be immediately isolated and discharged to his/her parent or guardian or person designated by the parent or guardian:

- Temperature of at least 100°F when in combination with any other sign or symptom of illness. Temperature shall be taken either with a forehead or by the axillary method with a digital thermometer.
- Diarrhea (three or more abnormally loose stools within a twenty-four hour period)
- Upper respiratory illness - including congestion, constant uncontrolled nasal discharge, mucus in the eyes, colored mucus in the nose, severe uncontrolled productive cough
- Severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whooping sound, or repeated coughing that the child can not sufficiently cover to avoid the spread of germs
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Redness of the eye or eyelid, thick and purulent (pus) discharge, matted eyelashes, burning, itching or eye pain
- Untreated infected skin patches, unusual spots or rashes
- Unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool
- Stiff neck with an elevated temperature
- Evidence of lice, scabies, or other parasitic infestations
- Sore throat or difficulty in swallowing
- Vomiting more than one time or when accompanied by any other sign or symptom of illness
- If child becomes sick without obvious symptoms. In this case, the child may look or act different. There may be an unusual paleness, tiredness, irritability, or lack of interest.

When ill, a child must be kept home and the school should be notified of any diagnoses obtained. When the child has a diagnosed communicable disease per the current version of the "Ohio Department of Health Communicable Disease Chart," all parents will be notified (by either an exposure report or a sign posted on the school door) once a contagious disease is reported.

Preventive Practices

Around the Sun shall implement the following preventative practices for the management of communicable disease on a daily basis:

1. A child care staff member with current, valid training in the management of communicable diseases shall observe each child daily upon arrival at the center.
2. We provide training for all staff in the process of hand washing and disinfection procedures prior to working with children, including a thorough review of the requirements for hand washing and diapering.
3. We release employees who have a communicable disease or who are unable to perform their duties due to illness.
4. We notify parents, within the next day of center operation, when their child has been exposed to a communicable disease per the current version of the "Ohio Department of Health Communicable Disease Chart."

5. Around the Sun shall follow the current version of the "Ohio Department of Health Communicable Disease Chart" for appropriate management of suspected illnesses. The chart shall be posted in a location readily available to center staff and parents.

Hand Washing

Hand washing shall be in accordance with health department guidelines. All employees shall wash hands and under fingernails with soap and running water upon arrival at the center, after each diaper change, after assisting a child with toileting, after any contact with bodily secretions, after cleaning, after toileting, and before preparing or eating food.

Diapering Procedure

Diapering shall be handled in conformity with the following methods:

- At the diaper changing station, there will be a disposable separation material that acts as a barrier placed between the child and the changing surface, which is discarded after each use.
- The center will have disposable gloves available for diapering. Teachers will wash hands with soap and water after changing a diaper.
- The diaper changing station will be disinfected after each diaper change with an appropriate germicide.
- Children's clothing soiled with fecal matter to be sent home with a child will not be rinsed at the center, but will be placed directly into a plastic bag, sealed, and stored away from the rest of the child's belongings and out of reach of children.
- Soiled diapers shall be disposed of in a plastic lined, foot activated receptacle or other type of receptacle that prevents hand contamination. The receptacle shall be covered or otherwise enclosed and be inaccessible to children. These containers shall be emptied, cleaned, and disinfected daily, or more frequently as needed to eliminate odor.
- Toilet training shall occur based on children's readiness and consultation with parents or guardians regarding practices in the children's homes. Around the Sun shall ensure that toilet training is never forced.

Medications and Topical Products

Medications schedules should be adjusted to allow for medications to be given at home when at all possible, and for any medical foods to be consumed at home. Around the Sun staff will dispense medications according to guidelines outlined on a child's Medical Physical Care Plan or a Request for Administration of Medication. Emergency medications for allergic reactions or asthma (such as Epi pens or inhalers) must be kept on site and will be stored and labeled according to ODJFS regulations. Teachers and staff must be trained by the parent on the use of these medications.

Over-the-counter topical products such as lotions and lip ointments should not be sent to school with children without express permission from the school administrator. Once at school, they will be stored away from children but readily available to staff.

Emergencies and Accidents

Through appropriate supervision, most accidents can be safely avoided. Our staff is appropriately trained in CPR, First Aid, Communicable Disease Recognition, and Child Abuse and Neglect Recognition. If an emergency does occur, the procedure is as follows:

- A staff member with first aid training responds to the child's immediate needs.
- If the situation warrants emergency services, another staff member will call 911, and then the parents.
- If transportation is needed, the child's individual emergency instructions listed on the Child Enrollment and Health Information form on file will be consulted. Emergency personnel or parents may transport the child. A staff member will stay with the child if a parent is not present.
- Accidents will be reported to the parent by the Accident/Incident Report Form. Minor accidents will be treated with first aid, which will be described on the Accident/Incident Report Form.

If your child has unique health needs (i.e., has food allergies, asthma, sensitivity to bee stings, etc.), please provide us with details of required treatment. Parents will be asked to complete a Medical and Physical Care Plan form so proper care and prevention can be provided.

Plan for Evacuation

- Daily attendance is recorded each day by teachers.
- Evacuation plans are posted at exits.
- Teachers lead children out of the classroom to designated "safety area."
- Children and staff gather at designated safety area. Staff will take attendance to make sure all children are accounted for.
- Administrator/Teacher takes attendance records, first aid kit/emergency medications, and parent contact information in evacuation whenever possible.
- If needed, parents are called and arrangements are made to pick up children.

Fire drills will be conducted on a monthly basis. Weather-related drills are conducted March through September. Evacuation routes and severe weather plans are posted by the exit. Quarterly lock down drills are conducted.

In the unlikely event of a terrorist-type emergency, staff and children will remain on the school property until parents (or other authorized caregivers) arrive to pick up children if deemed safe.

If it is necessary to leave the property, the Medina Fire Department and Montville Police Department will assist in transporting children to a safe location. In the event of evacuation off the premises, students will be taken to Waite Elementary School and we will utilize the communications at our disposal (email, Brightwheel, Transparent classroom, and/or phone) to contact parents. In the event of total loss of communication, the school will also post notice of this evacuation location on the main preschool entrance door.

School Activities

Daily Schedule

The following schedules are a guideline of what happens in a typical day at Around the Sun. Teachers may adjust these to allow for changes in weather, special events, and classroom dynamics.

Primary Schedule

- 8:30-8:40 (12:30-12:40) Arrival and Greeting. Children will put personal belongings away in their cubby, take off outdoor shoes and put on school shoes/slippers.
- 8:40-11:00 (12:40-3:00) Child Work Cycle. Children will use this time to choose work independently or participate in individual or small group lessons. Teachers will spend this time observing the classroom and providing lessons as necessary. Snack is available for the children to prepare and eat when they are hungry.
- 11:00-11:20 (3:00-3:20) Large group and gross motor time. We go outside most days the “real feel” temperature is above 25°F degrees and it is not actively raining.
- Please note, naptime is not part of our daily schedule, however there is space that can be made available for students on a needed basis.
- 11:20-11:30 (3:20-3:30) Dismissal

Extended Day and Kindergarten Schedule

- 8:30-11:20 Follows Primary schedule with specialized small group and individual work activities during the Work Cycle.
- 11:20-12:00 Lunch (provided by parents, please see allergen policy above, specific allergies to be sent via email to lunch families at beginning of the school year.) Per ODJFS requirements, your child’s meal must meet 1/3 of nutritional daily needs.
- 12:00-12:30 Recess. We go outside most days the “real feel” temperature is above 25°F degrees and it is not actively raining. We may utilize the field outside the fenced playground as a “routine walking trip.”
- 12:30-3:20 follows Primary schedule with specialized small group and individual work activities during the Work Cycle.
- 3:20-3:30 Dismissal

Activities We Avoid

ATS does not

- Participate in off-site field trips.
- Engage in water activities/swimming.
- Provide infant care, including dedicated times for sleeping , napping, and resting.

Policy on Hours of Operation

When Medina City Schools cancel classes or have a delayed opening due to weather, Around the Sun may close for the day or a portion of the day. We will post the closings on WKYC and Transparent Classroom and send an email notification.

We will use our licensing agency, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, and the Medina County Health Department as our guide for closing due to health risks.

Please note: Around the Sun follows a slightly different schedule than the Medina City Schools for some holidays, so please refer to the ATS school calendar, posted on the school website, for specific dates. The office is closed when there is no school.

Reporting

Ohio Data

Around the Sun does not participate in formal screenings and assessments on enrolled children other than child progress reports. We do not report child level data beyond enrollment numbers and ages to the State of Ohio and we do not participate in Ohio's Step Up to Quality rating system (OAC 5101:2-17).

Child Abuse and Neglect

At Around the Sun, we will take whatever steps are necessary to protect children from abuse and neglect and to support the school's children, parents, and staff. If you suspect any child abuse or neglect in our school program, please report it immediately to the staff. Likewise, adults who work with children in this school are legally required to identify signs of suspected abuse and responsibly react to potentially abusive situations so that children may be protected. To protect the safety and well-being of all children, it is the policy of Around the Sun to report any signs of suspected abuse to the appropriate authorities.

Other Policies

Grievance Policy

If parents have any concerns, please follow this process so ATS teachers and staff can work together with you for the best resolution:

1. Communicate concern to ATS staff member.
2. Attempt to resolve through open communication. Collaboratively, we will work together to resolve the issue or concern.
3. Parents and administrators can determine if a meeting needs to be arranged.
4. If an arrangement cannot be made, both parties have the option to decide if enrollment in the center will continue.
5. Parents can find more information on ODJFS's website: <https://jfs.ohio.gov/>

Media Release

Unless expressly prohibited in writing, Around the Sun assumes permission to post photos of students in advertisement, marketing materials, and social media platforms. We may also utilize video conferencing platforms such as Zoom, Google Meet, or Google Classroom to allow for remote learning or sharing of special events with family. No identifying information will be shared about students in these posts.

Birthdays are a Celebration of Life

The Celebration of Life is our way to commemorate your child's birthday in the classroom. This celebration allows us all to enjoy some happy moments and memories with your child. You will receive detailed information about your child's Celebration of Life a few weeks prior to their special day. We understand that many birthdays fall during summer months when we are not in school. We will recognize half-birthdays for those children so that each student can have an opportunity to be celebrated.

Separation

We understand that separation can be a very stressful time for children as well as parents. Our belief is that separation reactions in children are valid and to be expected. Children who are supported by their teachers and parents as they separate from home have the opportunity to move into new realms of learning and growth. Assuming that children will "get over it" or "grow out of it" does not provide them with the opportunity to work through their feelings. In an environment of understanding and support, children become competent and self-confident. They learn not only how to leave, but how to venture out - how to try new things. Helping children achieve a successful separation (not just physical, but emotional) and adjustment to our school is our goal. When children are able to master their separation feelings upon arriving at school, they have achieved a giant step in their growth.

Encouraging children to participate fully in saying goodbye, hugging, kissing, crying, waving, and saying, "I'll miss you," are all ways of bringing feelings out in the open. Once in the open, they are easier to deal with.

Clothing and Shoes

Children are encouraged to wear comfortable, practical clothes, which allow free movement and are suitable for art projects. Fasteners, zippers, and buttons should be easily manageable for the child. Children are encouraged to come to school in non-skid, closed-toe shoes, which are safe and comfortable for outdoor play.

All articles of clothing, coats, etc., brought to school must be clearly and permanently marked with your child's name. It is helpful if you point out to your child his/her name or any other identifying marks you choose to use. Children should have one labeled bag with an individually labeled, weather-appropriate change of clothes to be stored at the school at all times. The school cannot be responsible for keeping track of unmarked items not clearly identifiable as belonging to your child.

ODJFS Required Appendices

See below for "Portion Sizes for Meals" and "Center Parent Information."

Portion Sizes for Meals

Meal	Component	Minimum Serving		
	Age of Child	1 & 2 years	3-5 years	6-12 years
Breakfast	Meat or Meat Alternative (optional)	½ oz.	½ oz.	1 oz.
	Fluid Milk	½ cup	¾ cup	1 cup
	Juice/Fruit or Vegetable	¼ cup	½ cup	½ cup
	Grains/Breads/Dry Cereal	½ slice ¼ cup or ⅓ oz.	½ slice ⅓ cup or ½ oz.	½ slice ¾ cup or 1 oz.
Meal	Meat or Meat Alternative	1 oz	1 ½ oz.	2 oz.
	Fruit Or Vegetable	¼ cup	½ cup	¾ cup
	Grains/Breads/Pasta/Noodles (cooked)	½ slice ¼ cup	½ slice ¼ cup	1 slice ½ cup
	Fluid Milk	½ cup	¾ cup	1 cup
Snack	Meat or Meat Alternative	½ oz.	½ oz.	1 oz.
	Fruit Or Vegetable	½ cup	½ cup	¾ cup
	Grains/Breads/Pasta/Noodles (cooked)	½ slice ¼ cup or ⅓ oz.	½ slice ¼ cup or ⅓ oz.	½ slice ¼ cup or ⅓ oz.
	Fluid Milk	½ cup	½ cup	1 cup

Center Parent Information

The center is licensed to operate legally by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS). This license is posted in a noticeable place for review.

A toll-free telephone number is listed on the center's license and may be used to report a suspected violation of the licensing law or administrative rules. The licensing rules governing child care are available for review at the center.

The administrator and each employee of the center is required, under Section 2151.421 of the Ohio Revised Code, to report their suspicions of child abuse or child neglect to the local public children's services agency.

Any parent of a child enrolled in the center shall be permitted unlimited access to the center during all hours of operation for the purpose of contacting their children, evaluating the care provided by the center or evaluating the premises. Upon entering the premises, the parent, or guardian shall notify the Administrator of his/her presence.

The administrator's hours of availability to meet with parents and child/staff ratios are posted in a noticeable place in the center for review.

The licensing record, including licensing inspection reports, complaint investigation reports, and evaluation forms from the building and fire departments, is available for review upon written request from the ODJFS. Inspections are also online at <http://childcaresearch.ohio.gov/>. Parents may search for a specific program and sign up to be notified when the program's latest inspection is posted online.

It is unlawful for the center to discriminate in the enrollment of children upon the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin or disability in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 104 Stat. 32, 42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq. To file a discrimination complaint, write or call Health and Human Services (HHS) or ODJFS. HHS and ODJFS are equal opportunity providers and employers.

Write or Call:
HHS
Region V, Office of Civil Rights
233 N. Michigan Ave, Ste. 240
Chicago, IL 60601
(312) 886-2359 (voice)
(312) 353-5693 (TDD)
(312) 886-1807 (fax)

Write or Call:
ODJFS
Bureau of Civil Rights
30 E. Broad St., 37th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215-3414
(614) 644-2703 (voice)
1-866-277-6353 (toll free)
(614) 752-6381 (fax)
1-866-221-6700 (TTY) or (614) 995-9961

For more information about child care licensing requirements as well as how to apply for child care assistance, Medicaid health screenings and early intervention services for your child, please visit <http://jfs.ohio.gov/cdc/families.stm>.