

Garden Oaks Elementary

901 Sue Barnett • Houston, TX 77018

(713) 696-2930 • (713) 696-2932 fax

2009-10

Lower Elementary

Houston Independent School District



Creating a College-Bound Culture

MONTESSORI GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

Lindsey Pollock, Principal

Moses Diaz, Assistant Principal

HISD does not discriminate on the basis of disability or sex and complies with the provisions of [Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act](#), [Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act](#), and [Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972](#).

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In addition to the Garden Oaks Elementary student handbook, we have Montessori program guidelines to support your child's progress on their Montessori journey. Thank you for your adherence to these guidelines!

ARRIVALS

Breakfast begins at 7:15am. Your child is invited to participate in HISD's free breakfast program. All students gather in the cafeteria in the morning and are dismissed to their classes at 7:45am. Your child must be in class by 8:00 a.m. It is important to be on time to class so your child will have the full benefit of the instructional day. After 8:00 a.m. students must have a tardy slip from the office to be admitted to class. Numerous tardies to school will disqualify your child for participation in campus perfect attendance celebrations.

PARENT/TEACHER COMMUNICATION

A red folder is provided for notes, homework logs and school notes. This folder will be sent home every Monday. Third graders will have homework sent home daily. First and second graders will have work sent home once a week and it must be returned on Friday. We **MUST** to have up-to-date contact information for you on file at all times. Should your phone number change, stop in the front office to update this information for our computer system. If you would like to come for a conference, please call ahead to arrange an appointment during the teacher's planning time.

DISMISSAL

School ends at 3:00 p.m. We walk the children to the front of the school for pick-up. **NOTE:** Only the people listed on the enrollment or emergency forms will be allowed to pick-up your child. For any change in your pick-up policy, we **MUST** have a written notice or you need to call the office and arrange to fax your request for a change. We are not allowed to send your child home with a friend without your written permission.

TOYS

All toys must be left at home. They are not considered a presentation and are a distraction. Toys brought to school will be collected by the teacher and returned to the parent upon request.

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PRESENTATIONS

We have presentation time on Friday afternoon. Children are encouraged to tell about or show an item of educational or cultural significance.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Please submit your \$40.00 supply fee as soon as possible (Checks made payable to Garden Oaks Elementary School). This will allow us to purchase all of the necessary supplies that the students use such as pencils, notebooks, colored pencils, markers, folders, as well as other supplies. In addition, your child will need a flash drive on a lanyard for use during the school year. Be sure to clearly mark the flash drive with your child's name.

BACKPACKS

In order to send home the work that your child completes, as well as messages and homework, a small backpack or book bag is needed. Please no large backpacks or backpacks with wheels as our storage space is limited.

CLOTHING/SHOES

The school uniform is a polo shirt in navy, red or white. The pants, shorts or skirts are khaki. In order for your children to be safe on the playground, please have them wear sport shoes. Boots, flip flops, etc. have proven to be unsafe and we will request that your children sit out during physical activities if these shoes are worn. The Garden Oaks Elementary student handbook outlines our policy in greater detail.

NOTE: First graders - please bring an extra change of clothes.

LUNCH AND SNACK

As we all know, healthy eating habits are very important to a child's learning and growth. A list of ideas to help you supply your child with a good lunch and snack is attached. We ask for your support in encouraging a healthy diet. Our lunch time is early, so your child may bring a small snack. Junk food, candy or gum are not allowed during the school day. Also know that we always stress good manners during meal times! We appreciate you reminding your child(ren) of appropriate manners during meal times at home, too. The next page is provided to help you plan sack lunches and snacks.

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APPROPRIATE SNACK AND LUNCH SUGGESTIONS

PROTEIN

Cheese cubes
Meat chunks
Nuts
Cottage cheese
Yogurt
Peanut butter sandwich
Meat or cheese sandwich
Boiled egg
Egg salad sandwich
Beans

FRUIT & VEGETABLES

Any and all fruits
Any and all vegetables
Any low calorie dips

BEVERAGES

Water
Herbal tea
Milk
Unsweetened juices

GRAINS/CEREALS

Bran muffins
Pasta
Rice
Whole wheat crackers
Whole wheat bread
Whole grain dry cereal
Bagels
Pancakes
Tortillas
Whole grain waffles

DESSERTS

All fruits
Granola bars
Whole grain cookies
Low fat pudding cups

Children like to help prepare snacks and lunches. This process teaches them to eat correctly, to prepare food and refine their motor controls. Let them help you peel, cut and package their lunches. **Healthy bodies help to make healthy minds!**

Foods high in sugar, artificial sweeteners and dye are not beneficial for your children. These foods reduce their ability to be calm and concentrate.

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ABSENCES AND TARDIES

As required by state law, *any* absence requires a note explaining the reason for the absence within three (3) days*. If we do not receive a note, the absence will be reported as unexcused and recorded on your child's report card. Family vacations and special events must be planned to ensure that your child attends school in compliance with compulsory attendance laws. These are not considered excused absences.

Getting your child to school every day and on time lets them know that you support their education and value the work we do on campus!

HOMEWORK

Each child will be assigned homework and a reading log. Included on the reading log will be the week's spelling words. In addition, math pages from a workbook will be sent home for additional practice. All of the work will be sent home on Monday in a red folder. PLEASE RETURN THE HOMEWORK IN THE FOLDERS. Third graders will have homework sent home daily. First and second graders will have work sent home once a week and it must be returned on Friday. It is important to teach your child good study/homework habits. This helps them develop a sense of responsibility as well as gives them the opportunity to practice skills they have learned in class. Set aside a special place and time each day for homework to be completed.

CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Every person in the classroom is expected to respect and help maintain the environment. This includes putting materials away appropriately, keeping one's work space orderly, replacing or repairing any breakage of materials, performing the assigned class jobs and helping clean the classroom once a week. It is important that these types of responsibilities be carried through at home such as in daily tasks, chores or special assignments around the house.

CONTRACTS

Every Monday students receive a contract. This shows work choices and assignments in the classroom. As the child completes a piece of work it is checked by an adult and recorded. This is our daily record keeping and helps us keep up with many children doing different things. We send this home on Friday for you to look over along with a progress sheet. If you have any questions or concerns about the work your child is doing, please note these on the progress sheet and return to school.

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FIELD TRIPS

Trips outside of school broaden students' knowledge by providing hands-on experiences which enrich and enliven the curriculum. We welcome parent participation. Your permission for your child's participation in field trips **MUST** be in provided on the HISD consent form *prior* to the trip. *If you are interested in serving as a chaperone on a field trip, you must register through HISD's VIPS program. Go online to start the process and then stop by the front office to leave a copy of your driver's license to complete your background check. This process must be complete PRIOR to going on a field trip with your child.*

OBSERVATIONS

As a Montessori parent, you have entered into a parent contract which includes volunteer hours and observation of your child's classroom. We recommend you visit twice during the school year between October and April for 30-60 minutes observing your child's class in action. It is essential that you see how learning occurs in a Montessori classroom with children doing independent and group work. Remember to bring along a notebook to jot down your observations and to record any questions you may have regarding the visit. You are strongly encouraged to debrief with your child's teacher after your visit by email or phone. During your visit it is important to maintain the instructional integrity of the program so teachers focus on the students during class time.

CONDUCT

All students are expected to follow school and class rules both in and out of the classroom. The students create their class rules through discussion and agreement. We discuss individual rights and responsibilities. Core values that drive acceptable school conduct including RESPECT for oneself, others, the materials, the classroom and the school.

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HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU!

Birthdays are such fun to celebrate! It is a time to focus on the birthday child's special day, emphasizing his or her growth since birth.

We celebrate birthdays in our classroom in the following ways:

1. We dramatize the passage of time since the birth of your child by having the birthday child carry the earth's globe around a light representing the sun, focusing on the number of revolutions the earth has made since the birth of the child. We read special events from the life of your child for each year.
2. We ask that the birthday child bring one photo for each year of life and a list of some special events in his or her life. Please help your child identify each picture so he or she can share something about it with the class.
3. You are invited to send a simple nutritious snack (NO birthday cake or cupcakes with icing, PLEASE). ONE SIMPLE SNACK and a box drink (if desired). Fruit, cheese, nuts, muffins, carrot sticks or popcorn are some examples of acceptable snacks.

One final request: The children are very aware of invitations that come to school and those who are not invited are often sad that they have not been included. Therefore we can only distribute invitations for entire group events. Also, please be aware that we do not disclose phone numbers or addresses of students at school.

Thank you so much for your support in our efforts. We know you want your child's day to be very special and so do we!

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PARENT SIGN-UP SHEET

We NEED your help in the classroom! Below is a list of some opportunities for you to contribute to the school and our classrooms. Remember that your volunteer hours are an essential part of the Montessori program and the commitment you signed when you enrolled in the program. Your participation helps us provide and sustain an outstanding program and makes it much more fun for the children! Please indicate below how you will contribute. Anything you can do will be greatly appreciated!

Remember you must register through HISD's VIPS program. Go online to start the process and then stop by the front office to leave a copy of your driver's license to complete your background check.

Parent's Name: _____

Child's Name: _____

Contact #: _____

E-mail Address: _____

- _____ Room Parent
- _____ Listen to children read or read to the class
- _____ Field Trips
- _____ Work in the gardens
- _____ Help organize parties
- _____ Make materials
- _____ Build outside tables or other furniture

Comments:

Thank you in advance for your support!