

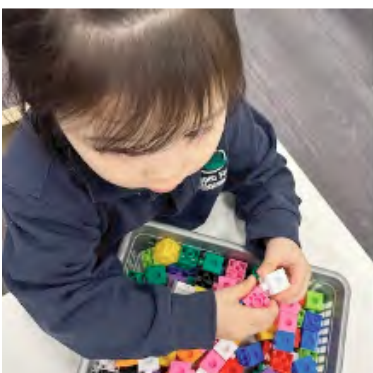


Aspen Hill
Montessori



Parent Handbook *2025-2026*

as of Apr. 1 2025



Welcome to Aspen Hill Montessori!

Our goal for children in care at our Centres is the development of the whole child: social, emotional, physical, and academic. In order to create an environment of equality for all families in our community, and ensure the safety of children in our care, **we rigorously follow and apply the policies in this handbook.**

This handbook is developed to meet or exceed the requirements mandated by Alberta Childcare Licensing and Alberta Health Services.

Please ensure that all adults that are involved in your child's care have reviewed this handbook / policies, as they form an important part of your care contract. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact admissions@aspenhillmontessori.ca.

This manual applies forward of Apr. 1 2025, supersedes all previous editions of our Parent Handbook, and is subject to regular updates throughout the learning year. Updates are communicated via e-mail and take effect 30 days after posting.



Code of Conduct

Reviewed and updated Oct. 1 2018, reviewed Mar. 13 2018; June 4 2019; Nov. 19 2019; updated June 10 2020; expanded July 31 2020; reviewed Feb. 18 2021; updated June 24 2021; reviewed Jan. 18 2022; updated July 9 2022; affirmed Dec. 1 2022; expanded July 31 2023; revised Dec. 2 2023; expanded Dec. 27 2024

By engaging in services and/or employment with Aspen Hill Montessori, all members of our community agree to hold themselves to the highest standards of conduct while in or near the Centre property, and in representation of the Centre brand. By accepting a placement in this Centre, you acknowledge:

- Courteous, professional, respectful and ethical communication is expected and required between Parents, Guardians, Staff, Children and / or Educators at all times
- Physical punishment and/or aggressive physical interaction (grabbing arms, pulling arms, hitting, spanking, slapping, restraining a person) on Centre grounds is not permitted by or between Staff, Parents, Students and / or Educators
- Raised voices / yelling, swearing, cursing, threatening or otherwise aggressive speech, or aggressive acts towards any member of the Centre administration or teaching staff from one adult to another, or from an adult to a child, is not permitted
- Inappropriate / unprofessional conduct in-person, over the phone, online, or in any spoken/written forum, whether or not in visibility of the media, that reflects poorly on the Centre or impacts a staff's / child's / family's experience is expressly not permitted

As a Parent or Guardian, you also agree that your child will be taught about, and be held accountable, for age-appropriate applications of this Code of Conduct, and that you as Parent / Guardian will assist us in working with your child to uphold this Code of Conduct.

All parents, legal guardians, and any adults hired by or associated with the family of the child in care at Aspen Hill Montessori are to be made aware of, and summarily agree by association, to be bound by this Code of Conduct. Violation can lead to immediate termination of services with cause and without refund.

Best Interest of the Child

Created May 1 2023; updated Dec. 1 2023; reformatted Dec. 27 2024

Aspen Hill Montessori administrators, educators and staff operate from a position of 'best interests of the child' in mind. This means that we are constantly observing, reflecting, and scaffolding our approaches based on what is seen from children in our care. We share these observations, reflections and notes with parents, and with supporting educators/administrators in the Centre, to ensure we are providing best support to the child. At times, areas of concern may be noted when observing the child. These areas of concern may affect the child's ability to benefit from or participate in care with their best interests in mind, or they may be affecting other children's ability to fully participate in care. When areas of concern are noted, educators and / or administrators will first collect information and watch for patterns. Entry level solutions will be developed and applied based on our Child Guidance policy. We may consult with other educators and administration for ideas and suggestions on the area of concern.

If the area of concern persists, educators and / or administrators at the campus will reach out to parents. Usually initial reach out is done via at-the-door contact and / or an informational call home to gather more information and share the observations. For complex observations, a follow-up e-mail is sent to confirm the discussion and identify next steps. With parent awareness of the observations, there are a number of methods and resources educators and administrators may then employ to explore and hopefully resolve areas of concern:

- asking for the input and in-class observations of other educators in the Centre who may have different backgrounds or experiences
- developing a written plan for supporting the child in the classroom / posting this plan in the class and sharing with parents
- having one or more video calls with parents to outline observations and brainstorm potential solutions
- consulting articles and books for ideas that may be related to supporting the area of concern

Follow up meetings, e-mails and phone calls are completed with the family as needed to support the best interest of the child and their ability to participate safely and beneficially in the care environment, with the ideal outcome of the child continuing in care. If the area of concern persists, and is impacting the best interest of the child at care and / or the best interest of other children in care, additional steps may be recommended with the family's direct involvement / choice and participation. These methods may include but are not limited to:

- in-class observation and support by a trained 3rd party professional that the parent engages, such as a psychologist, occupational therapist, speech therapist or support worker
- physical limitations (for example, wearing safety device while transitioning outside)
- changing classrooms / class levels / campus if appropriate and available
- reducing the child's schedule of attendance temporarily or permanently

At times, it may be identified by the Centre that the best interest of the child is not served by remaining in care with Aspen Hill Montessori, or that the area of concern is significantly affecting the best interest of other children in care. In these limited cases, the Admissions team works with the family to identify next steps to ending their care contract. Please refer to our Refunds and Withdrawals Policy, Centre-Initiated Withdrawal, to learn more.

This statement is provided for information only; acknowledgment is not required to become a student at the Centre.

Core Policies

Uniform and Indoor Shoes

Reviewed and updated Nov. 14 2018; June 4 2019; reviewed Nov. 19 2019; updated June 10 2020; updated July 31 2020; modified Feb. 18 2021; reviewed June 24 2021; updated Jan. 4 2022; updated July 9 2022; affirmed Dec. 1 2022; expanded Mar. 9 2023; updated Dec. 1 2023; updated Dec. 27 2024; revised Mar. 12 2025

Aspen Hill uniforms are required for Bambini and Casa students every day of care other than Casual Days. **Casa students are expected to own and wear a formal uniform for Formal Days, in addition to everyday uniform.** Please see the school calendar to note Formal Days. **By accepting placement in our Centre, you agree to fully support having your child wear a clean and presentable uniform daily.**

Our uniforms are produced by a dedicated manufacturer, Elegant Design. To contact and order from the manufacturer:

Elegant Design
Bay 11 – 1420 40 Ave NE
Calgary, AB T2E 6L1
403.250.8747 / info@elegantinc.ca

Please review the current Uniform Policy and Package before ordering! There are different uniform requirements for different age groups.



An AHM logo must be visible on the chest at all times while in care. If your child is chilly in the classroom, layer a plain white or navy shirt **UNDER** the uniform shirt, or have your child wear an approved AHM sweater / jacket. The Centre reserves the right to send children home who are not in uniform, or call home to have uniform brought to the Centre. **If you are having difficulty accessing uniform pieces due to financial hardship, please let us know for used uniform options.**

All clothing items must be clearly labelled with your child's name. The Centre is not responsible to find or replace lost uniform items.

Uniform costs are paid for directly by the family and are not included in Centre fees. A typical new family's uniform cost is between \$300 - \$450 per child, with additional pieces purchased over their student's time as items are outgrown. Students must have a complete change of uniform onsite at all times in case of spills on clothing.

Accessories from local retailers

Added Mar. 12 2025

Knee socks

Knee socks are worn with skorts or jumpers, and must be white or blue. Must be plain texture, no ribs or patterns.

Recommend online shopping via Children's Place, Old Navy, Gap.

<https://www.childrensplace.com/ca/p/Girls-Uniform-Knee-Socks-2-Pack-2042327-10>

<https://www.childrensplace.com/ca/p/Girls-Knee-Socks-6-Pack-3030239-01>

https://well.ca/products/robee-kids-socks-pack-solid-knee_288532.html?select=1

Crew socks

Crew socks worn with leggings, shorts or pants should be white, black or dark navy blue, or neutrally colored to avoid distraction. Avoid cartoons, images, and patterns. Recommend online shopping via Children's Place, Old Navy, Gap.

<https://www.childrensplace.com/ca/p/Baby-And-Toddler-Boys-Crew-Socks-10-Pack-2109249-01>

<https://oldnavy.gapcanada.ca/browse/product.do?pid=832317023>

Indoor shoes

Updated Mar. 1 2023; revised Mar. 12 2025

Indoor shoes must be all-black - expect to spend ~\$100 for good quality uniform shoes. All-black runners (best for children under 4) or black school uniform dress shoes are permitted. Choose solid Velcro closures or slip-ons that fit well and stay on your child's feet.

No white soles, light up shoes, cartoon runners, etc. - if in doubt, go with dress shoes.

Web search "toddler all black runner" or "child all black runner" or "toddler all black dress shoe" to find options.

For in-person and online shopping, we recommend Two Giraffes in Calgary (<https://www.twogiraffes.ca/collections/school-shoes/Toddler>) or Little Footprints in Aspen Landing (<https://www.littlefootprints.ca/shop-1?Category=Uniform%252F%2520Dress%2520Shoes>).



https://www.amazon.ca/EvinTer-Toddler-Little-Running-Sneakers/dp/B085VV27Z8/ref=asc_df_B085VV27Z8/

<https://ca.vessi.com/products/kids-weekend-asphalt-black-on-black>

<https://www.vans.ca/en-ca/kids/shoes-c3100/toddler-authentic-pvn000ed9bka>

<https://www.childrensplace.com/ca/p/Girls-Uniform-Embroidered-Cat-Mary-Jane-Shoes-2623366-01>

https://www.nativeshoes.com/ca/jefferson-child/131001001501.html?lang=en_CA&q=black&idx=10

Backpacks and lunch kits

Updated Dec. 27 2024

All children must have a small backpack and a self-contained, zippered lunch kit to bring to the Centre each day with a change of clothes, including underwear and socks. **Look for easy zippers or Velcro that children can manage themselves.** Ensure that the pack you choose is an appropriate size for your child. LL Bean, Indigo, Children's Place, and other specialty children's stores are good sources.



A zippered lunch bag is also required, as well as a spill-proof child-friendly water bottle. Please avoid metal water bottles unless you provide a cushioned cover, as children tend to swing them and injury themselves and others.



Please do not send multiple Tupperware containers / Ziplocks / self-sealing containers without a zippered lunch bag to contain them. Please avoid Bento boxes / YumBoxes unless you have worked with your child on how to open / close these themselves, to avoid spilled food.

Acknowledgement of this policy occurs in our online Families Records application. In the case of discrepancy, this offline policy document will apply.

Arrival and Dismissal

Reviewed and updated Aug. 1 2018; May 8 2019; June 4 2019; Nov. 19 2019; reviewed and updated June 10 2020; expanded Feb. 18 2021; updated June 24 2021; updated Jan. 18 2022; updated Feb. 15 2022; updated July 9 2022; revised Dec. 1 2022; updated Mar. 1 2023; updated Oct. 3 2023; updated Dec. 1 2023; confirmed Dec. 27 2024; revised Feb. 9 2025; revised Mar. 12 2025

Aspen Hill Montessori uses Coordinated Universal Time (the global synchronized time issued for electronics connected to the Internet) as our standard for determining time for late arrivals and pickups. Please ensure that your phone is set to update its time from a central server.

Arrival Routine

Updated June 10 2020; June 24 2021; updated Feb. 15 2022; expanded July 9 2022; revised Oct. 3 2023; confirmed Dec. 1 2023; expanded Dec. 27 2024; revised Mar. 12 2025

The Centre requires that children are brought to care on time for their care schedule to allow them to receive the full benefit of the daily lesson plans and respect the work cycle.

You may choose to participate in morning Special Interest Classes (SICs) (optional parent-paid programming). Children admittance for SIC starts at 7:45AM and ends at 8AM sharp (teachers walk with the class away from the doors at 8AM by the Centre clock). Thank you for understanding that staff cannot admit children before 7:45AM due to licensing restrictions. We do not allow late admittance to SICs; if you are late thank you for waiting for flexible core hours entry to begin.

Admittance is flexible between 8:30AM and 8:55AM for core hours care. Doors close at 9AM sharp by the school clock, Montessori programming starts at 9AM sharp.

We strongly discourage late entry during work cycles, as it is hard on the student and on the other learners, and requires a staff member be on-hand to receive them. **The mid-day NO COST flexible entry window for Nido and Bambini students is 11-11:45AM; for Casa students 11:30AM - 12:15PM (coincides with outdoor and lunch time).**

- Late entry for any reason outside of the flexible window, include medical/dental/gymnastics etc. between, is charged a **penalty late fee of \$30 per instance per child**. This ensures we can provide the staff needed to supervise and support the transition of your child into care. It also discourages late arrivals.
- This fee will be advised as we admit your child and will be automatically withdrawn from your bank account. If you do not have Rotessa set up, bring exact cash with your late arrival to avoid delays to admittance.
- *The fee is taken even if you have alerted us in advance to your late arrival, and even if the late arrival is due to external circumstances. If you don't wish to pay the fee - please arrive in the mid-day flexible entry windows.*

Please follow all Centre directives regarding entrance location for your child that are sent home before your child enters care. Parents are expected to follow all staff directions regarding prompt drop-off and departure. Confident goodbyes are required of all attending adults. Attending staff reserve the right to ask families who are lingering to move away from the entry space if they need more time with their child.

Dismissal Routine

Updated June 10 2020; updated June 24 2021; updated Feb. 15 2022; revised Feb. 22 2022; updated July 9 2022; updated Dec. 1 2022; updated Dec. 1 2023; revised Feb. 9 2025; revised Mar. 12 2025

The Centre relies on families to work in partnership with us for consistent pick-up times. This ensures teachers can effectively complete their end-of-day duties, as well as ensuring your children can count on seeing your presence. Dismissal is flexible between 3:15PM and 4PM if your child is not enrolled in any optional programming. *If possible, advise the Centre of your 'planned usual' time to pickup at the start of the year so we can have your child dressed and ready to go.*

Pickups between 4:01 - 5:15PM (regardless of reason or notice) will be charged a late fee of \$30 per instance, which will be automatically withdrawn via Rotessa.

You may choose to participate in afternoon Special Interest Classes (SICs) (optional parent-paid programming). Afternoon SICs starts at 4PM and end at 4:55PM. Children get ready to go home starting at 4:55PM; parents should be on-site or 5PM to pickup. Latest pickup is 5:15PM.

Emergency care fees of \$50 for every 5 minutes (or portion within) are in place as of 5:16PM, even if you advise that you are delayed, as we are not licensed for care past 5:15PM.

If you have concerns about your child not being dismissed on-time / promptly at dismissal, please contact office@aspenhillmontessori.ca so we can address with the teaching team.

For your child's safety and protection, no child will be released to anyone other than a person whose name appears on the registration form or Emergency Information form, unless arrangements have been made in advance of pickup. Anyone picking up a child must be at least 18 years of age, and may be asked to present photo identification if unknown to staff. If your family situation presents concerns around restricted access to certain family members, please alert Centre staff with a photo of the restricted member to assist staff in maintaining your parenting arrangements.

Once your pickup person has arrived at the Centre, please promptly identify yourself to the teachers supervising, collect your child and their things, and depart the facility grounds. Once you have identified yourself to staff and we have signed out your child to you, the Centre is no longer responsible for supervision of your child.

Please do not allow your child(ren) to play unattended outside of the facility, in our fenced play spaces, in the fields, and / or in the parking lot. The Centre will not be held responsible for accidents, injury or death that may result from lack of parental supervision once responsibility has been assigned back to the family. Repeated offences of children left unattended on the facility grounds after dismissal may result in suspension of the family from attending services at the Centre.

Late Pickups

Updated Mar. 1 2023; updated Dec. 1 2023; revised Feb. 9 2025; revised Mar. 12 2025

If you will be late and know before 4:30PM, notify your child's campus via 403-454-9292 (Christie Crossing) or 403-455-3133 (Strathcona). You will still be charged emergency care fees as noted in the Dismissal Routine section above, but it allows us to reassure your child on when you will arrive.

If we have not received notification, and the child's usual pickup time has passed, the Centre administration will begin calling parent and emergency contacts on record for someone to retrieve the

child. If emergency contacts and / or the family cannot be reached, Alberta Family Services and / or the Calgary Police will be contacted.

Families that demonstrate a regular pattern of inconsistent pickups without communication may have their child's placement at Aspen Hill Montessori cancelled with cause.



Acknowledgement of this policy occurs in our online Student Records application. In the case of discrepancy, this offline policy document will apply.

Fees and Tuition

Reviewed and updated Oct. 1 2018; June 4 2019; updated Nov. 19 2019; reviewed Feb. 18 2021; updated June 24 2021; updated Jan. 18 2022; updated Mar. 1 2022; revised July 9 2022; updated Nov. 24 2022; updated Dec. 1 2022; updated Mar. 1 2023; updated Dec. 1 2023; updated Feb. 21 2024; updated Apr. 7 2024; updated Dec. 27 2024; revised Feb. 9 2025

All fees apply to all students and are non-refundable regardless of reason once paid. Please refer to our Refunds and Withdrawals Policy for additional important information.

One-time registration fee

The one-time registration fee is currently set at \$500, but is subject to change after Jan. 1 each year. This fee is collected within 3 days of submission of registration paperwork. This fee expires once a child withdraws from our programs. This fee is non-refundable and non-transferrable, regardless of reason, and is not applied to your parent-payable tuition portion or any optional programming fees.

Tuition deposit

Revised Nov. 30 2022; updated Mar. 1 2023; revised Dec. 1 2023; updated Feb. 21 2024; revised Feb. 9 2025

Once a child has received a Placement Letter (your care contract with our Centres), the first month of any optional programming fees may be due. No other deposit to hold care is required.

Monthly tuition fees

Revised Feb. 21 2024; updated Apr. 7 2024; revised Feb. 9 2025

Current list price and parent-payable portion month tuition fees are listed on the Centre website at www.aspenhillmontessori.ca. Depending on your date of enrollment and season you have committed to, the amount that you pay may vary from what is listed on our website. Your student's personal tuition amount payable per month is available on your Placement Letter, or inquire through admissions@aspenhillmontessori.ca. Please see our supplementary sheets on our Fees and the Affordability Grant program for more.

Our learning season goes from approx. Sept. 4 through to August 20 each year, depending on where the calendar falls. We do not discount for short months (i.e. months where winter break and spring break fall), or charge more for months with more learning days. Please refer to our learning season calendar and note the days away / days closed as applicable.

Methods of payments for monthly tuition any optional programming fees you select are indicated in your Care Contract. Payments are made via automatic bank withdrawal, 5 business days prior to the upcoming month of care. **It is your responsibility to ensure your bank information is accurate and appropriate funds are present before the monthly withdrawal date to avoid NSF charges (\$80 per failed transaction) and delays to entering care.** Auto-withdrawals are processed via an external system that operates under separate terms and conditions required as per Canadian banking law. These terms and conditions are available on request at admissions@aspenhillmontessori.ca. *Please note, cancelling your approval of auto-withdrawals does not end your obligation to your care contract/Placement Letter, and does not cancel your care contract.*

If you opt to pay by monthly cheques, bank processing penalty fees of \$150 will be charged up front before cheques are accepted. It is your responsibility to ensure you have provided cheques from the correct bank account, that cheques are made out clearly, and are signed. NSF fees for cheques are also \$80 per failed transaction.

We do not accept credit cards. At this time, we are unable to accommodate annual/bi-annual/quarterly lump-sum payments due to the Provincial Affordability Grant.

Children are not allowed to enter care until monthly parent-payable portion fees as noted in your Care Contract are received and processed by the Centre. The Centre reserves the right to charge 18% monthly interest on unpaid fees, and / or send to collections if arrangements are not made promptly to pay.

The Centre reserves the right to cancel enrollment by month-end with notice in writing via e-mail to the parent contact on file for more than two late or NSF payments within a learning season.

If you are experiencing financial hardship and need to make arrangements to pay, please reach out to admissions@aspenhillmontessori.ca by the 15th of the month. If alternate payment arrangements are made, they must be confirmed in writing with the Centre with a detailed schedule and information about the expectations on the family to pay.

From time to time, Centre fees and payment methods accepted may change. Aspen Hill Montessori reserves the right to issue 30-day written notice to parents of upcoming contract and / or fee amendments on a go-forward bases. Families who do not wish to continue with the Centre due to these changes must respond with written notice within the 30-day period.

Affordability Grant

Added Mar. 1 2022; updated Feb. 21 2024; revised Dec. 27 2024; revised Feb. 9 2025

Based on the Centre's status with the Province, you may qualify for an Affordability Grant provided by the Government of Alberta. Please see <https://www.alberta.ca/federal-provincial-child-care-agreement.aspx> for more information and/or refer to our supplementary sheet on the Affordability Grant. All funding programs offered are administered by the Government of Alberta, and the Centre decides each season on participation. No action is needed on your part to qualify for the Grant; the Centre does this on your behalf.

Aspen Hill Montessori does not guarantee participation in the Affordability Grant program. **By accepting placement in Aspen Hill, you commit to paying the list price for your child's tuition in the event that funding is no longer available at our Centre.**

Any amount your child's schedule qualifies for is removed directly from your up-front tuition that you pay. If your child's Grant amount changes mid-year, you remain responsible to pay the difference of AHM's list price tuition to the Centre even if this amount increases mid-contract.

The Centre reserves the right to charge a Tuition Deposit up to full list price for your child's Care Contract. In the event that a full-price deposit is required, any grant funding you qualify for will be credited to your account at the Centre after your last contracted month of attendance.

At this time, a reduction in hours you actually attend does not reduce eligibility for the Affordability Grant. However, this is subject to change.

Childcare subsidy

Added Mar. 1 2022; updated Dec. 1 2023; updated Dec. 27 2024; revised Feb. 2025

The childcare subsidy program in Alberta was concluded as of Mar. 31 2025.

Delayed entry / mid-year entry specific to tuition

Added Aug. 18 2021; confirmed Dec. 1 2023; revised Feb. 21 2024; updated Apr. 7 2024; expanded Dec. 27 2024; updated Feb. 9 2025

The Centre does not allow space to be held for delayed entry without a holding penalty fee being paid. (For example, if your child does not turn 19 months until November, and you have registered for Sept. entry into Bambini, you must pay the holding penalty fee for the missed month(s) to retain your child's space.) The Affordability Grant program does not apply to non-attending children. Please inquire to admissions@aspenhillmontessori.ca for the current holding penalty fee. Individual situations may be negotiated separately at the Centre's discretion.

If you choose not to pay for the missed months, the Centre considers your child's placement cancelled. In this case you will be notified by e-mail, any pre-paid fees will be forfeit, and your child's space will be reallocated to a family on waitlist.

You would be welcome to inquire about spaces available to re-apply 30 days prior to your interested month of entry; however, placement mid-cycle is not guaranteed.

Acknowledgement of this policy occurs in our online Student Records application. In the case of discrepancy, this offline policy document will apply.

Illness and Pre-Existing Conditions

Reviewed June 4 2019; updated Nov. 19 2019; reviewed and updated Jan. 15 2020; reviewed and updated Mar. 9 2020; updated May 13 2020; updated July 31 2020; updated Dec. 1 2020; reviewed Feb. 18 2021; reviewed May 31 2021; updated June 24 2021; updated Sept. 16 2021; updated Jan. 18 2022; updated July 9 2022; clarified July 29 2022; revised Dec. 1 2022; expanded Jan. 13 2023; updated Dec. 1 2023; updated Feb. 21 2024; revised Dec. 27 2024

Our policies are based on our commitment to help families stay well. When we keep our school environment safe, children can attend and derive the most benefit from care.

Our Centre has a firm ‘do not attend’ approach when your child is ill. If your child has any symptoms of illness, do not bring them to care until they are symptom-free.

Symptoms of illness not acceptable by AHS in group care include:

- vomiting / diarrhea, and/or exposure to an active-symptom gastrointestinal case *within the immediate household* in the last 2 days
 - o Diarrhea is defined by AHS as more than one loose or watery bowel movement within a 20-minute time period, normally accompanied by other discomfort in the child
- ongoing severely aching stomach that prevents your child from fully participating
- thick nose mucous of any colour that requires constant wiping (e.g. heavy production down face every 5 minutes)
- sore throat / complaining of sore throat
- deep, chesty cough (e.g. rattle in chest, barking sound, phlegm rattle, etc.)
- dry cough that is frequent and persistent, preventing the child from fully participating
- unknown / new rashes or hives / bumps
- mucous / gooey discharge from the eye (any color)
- red rimmed and/or itchy eyes
- sores on the mouth or body
- severe diaper rash that is causing significant discomfort for the child
- excessive fatigue or listlessness (falling asleep at unsafe times / unable to participate)
- consistent high temperature over 37.7 for more than 30 minutes

Children who are sent home ill from the program or who report in from home as ill may not return to care until they are 100% symptom-free AND fully able to participate in the program.

The minimum return window is one full care day after being sent home. For example, if your child is sent home on Tuesday due to illness, the earliest your child could return is Thursday morning **assuming they are symptom-free.**

If your child has lingering symptoms past the return window and you feel they are well enough to be in care, you must obtain a doctor's note that describes the lingering symptoms and that states that they are no longer contagious. If you do not wish to obtain a doctor's note, your child must remain home until they are symptom-free. *Thank you for understanding that parent assurance that the symptoms are not contagious does not qualify for re-entry.*

If a child presents with illness symptoms at entry, staff reserves the right to refuse admittance to your child (or an affected staff member) and send them home with the transportation person that brought them. The Centre also reserves the right to call the parent / guardian back to Centre for pick up if any

symptoms are noticed shortly after drop-off. Thank you for supporting our illness policy to ensure our Centres can remain illness-free as much as possible.

If your child becomes ill while at Centre we will notify you promptly so that arrangements can be made within a 30 minute window to take your child home. If we are unable to reach you or you are unable to make plans to arrive within 30 minutes, we reserve the right to call your emergency contact person on your child's records to collect the child from Centre. (Please make sure that all numbers and information are kept up to date, and that your emergency contact understands we may reach out to them). Children who are waiting for pickup will be isolated with a supervising staff member in an area that is easy to clean upon departure.

Ill staff members must report immediately to the Office, and depart the premise as soon as coverage for their duties is secured.

Repeated concern with children being brought to care ill and / or parents refusing/unable to collect ill children may result in care being cancelled with 30 days' notice in the best interest of the child and Centre wellness.

Thanks for your support to keep Aspen Hill Montessori a safe and healthy place to learn.

Pre-existing conditions

Updated May 13 2020; updated June 10 2020; updated June 24 2021; affirmed Dec. 1 2022; updated Dec. 1 2023; expanded Feb. 21 2024; confirmed Dec. 27 2024

If your child or a staff member has a pre-existing condition such as autism, epilepsy, febrile seizures; and/or seasonal allergies, asthma and/or other non-bacterial/viral presentation that could be mistaken for bacterial/viral, you will be required to complete a set of medical forms specific to the needs of Alberta Childcare Licensing before your child continues care. These will include an Emergency Plan and possible a Medication Authorization Form for rescue medicines.

The Centre reserves the right to request a detailed supporting note from a medical doctor (identifying condition, symptoms, steps to take at care, medication needed) that is current dated to support a condition identified by a parent.

For children or staff whose pre-existing conditions require at-Centre medication (EpiPen, ventilator, seizure rescue, etc.), dedicated Centre medication must be checked in via senior staff at the Centre prior to the first day of attendance. It must be clearly labelled in original packaging from the prescribing pharmacy with the student's prescription and name. These will be stored out of reach of students, but within quick access if needed.

Parents remain responsible for replacing medication on-site before expiry dates.

The Centre reserves the right to refuse entry for care to children with pre-existing conditions who require on-site medication, if that on-site medication is not provided by parents and / or is expired.

Administration of medicine

Updated Nov. 19 2019, July 9 2022; confirmed Dec. 1 2023; updated Dec. 27 2024

The Centre is only allowed to administer any medications that are prescribed by a doctor, with the original pharmacy labelling on the package and dosage instructions. Please leave over the counter

medication (Tylenol, Claritin, etc.), naturopathic remedies (rub, salves or ointments), or home remedies at home, they cannot be kept at or stored at the Centre. A legal guardian of the child is welcome to stop by the Centre during the day to bring and apply or provide these types of remedies directly to their child if they prefer.

If your child or if a staff member has been cleared from a bacterial infection by a medical doctor, and requires the remaining doses of an antibiotic to be administered at Centre, this will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Antibiotics will need to arrive in prescribed containers with dosing instructions, and parents or staff will be required to complete a Medicine Administration Form to leave with the Centre. All medications will be stored in a secure location.

Outbreaks / endemic / pandemic illness

Added Mar. 9 2020; updated Dec. 1 2020; reviewed Feb. 18 2021; updated June 24 2021; updated Jan. 18 2022; updated Dec. 1 2022; confirmed Dec. 1 2023; revised Dec. 27 2024

The Centre will follow and enforce all quarantine, closure and isolation requirements / recommendations made by Alberta Health Services, the Canadian Federal Government, and / or the World Health Organization in managing and preventing the spread of identified outbreaks, pandemic and endemic illnesses that may affect our city. This may include refusing entry to the Centres for children that have been identified or potentially identified as having been exposed to the noted illness, for the time period recommended by these governing organizations.

In the event of a sudden closure without advance notice, Administration will make every attempt to post information on the Centre doors and send updates via e-mail.

Acknowledgement of this policy occurs in our online Student Records application. In the case of discrepancy, this offline policy document will apply.

Refunds and Withdrawals

Reviewed and updated Sept. 1 2018; June 4 2019; updated Nov. 19 2019; revised Mar. 9 2020; reviewed and updated June 10 2020; confirmed Feb. 18 2021; updated June 24 2021; updated Jan. 18 2022; updated July 9 2022; revised Nov. 24 2022; revised Dec. 13 2022; updated Mar. 1 2023; expanded Dec. 1 2023; updated Feb. 21 2024; updated Apr. 7 2024; updated Dec. 27 2024; revised Feb. 9 2025

All families committing to Aspen Hill Montessori are provided with this policy in advance of paying any fees. **If you have questions about this policy, please inquire through admissions@aspenhillmontessori.ca before completing enrollment.**

Non-Refundability/Non-Transferability

Updated June 10 2020; updated Jan. 18 2022; revised Nov. 24 2022; revised Dec. 13 2022; revised Dec. 1 2023

All fees are NON-REFUNDABLE and NON-TRANSFERABLE once paid, regardless of reason, even if a family withdraws from the Centre prior to starting care. Applications to reconsider special circumstances will NOT be reviewed.. *Please see the separate section on Centre-initiated withdrawal for more information.*

Parent-Initiated Pause in Care

Added Dec. 1 2023; updated Dec. 27 2024

No portion of fees paid will be refunded in the event of a child's temporary absence due to reportable illnesses, viral / bacterial illness, injury, vacation, or personal leave.

Fees must continue to be made as per your care contract in order to maintain a space in our Centre. We do not provides payment pauses due to extended leaves of any reason.

You are welcome to continue to pay for your child's core tuition placement at the parent-payable portion for the extended time you are away, and resume care when you return, or you may start the withdrawal process. You would need to re-apply to the Centre upon your return as a member of the public if you withdraw, spaces are not held for future return without full payment of fees.

Parent-Initiated Withdrawal

Revised Nov. 19 2019; revised Mar. 9 2020; update June 10 2020; updated July 9 2022; revised Nov. 24 2022; revised Dec. 13 2022; updated Dec. 23 2022; updated Mar. 1 2023; revised Dec. 1 2023; updated Feb. 21 2024; expanded Apr. 7 2024; revised Feb. 9 2025

If you wish to withdraw your child from Aspen Hill Montessori, 30 days' written notice 'month-over-month' in advance of the 1st day of the planned month of withdrawal must be provided via e-mail to admissions@aspenhillmontessori.ca. Notice must include the child's last day with the Centre. Responsibility for fees remains with the family until such notice is received. **If less than 30 days' notice is given, the family remains responsible to pay the following month's care fees.** Fees that have already been paid are non-refundable.

If your payments are set up via pre-authorized bank account payment, cancelling your approval of auto-withdrawals does not end your obligation to your care contract, and does not cancel your care contract. If you end approval for auto-withdrawals because you are withdrawing from care, and money is still owed to the Centre, remaining funds owed must be transferred to the Centre via e-transfer or current-dated cheque as Admissions will direct. Delinquent funds past 30 days once pre-authorized payments are cancelled will result in funds being sent to collections with 18% interest applied.

Once formal notice of withdrawal is given, the child is required to depart on or prior to their noted date of departure. The Centre is not obligated to accommodate the child after this time.

At-Home Services

Created June 10 2020; updated June 24 2021; updated Mar. 1 2023; confirmed Dec. 1 2023; revised Dec. 27 2024

If your child develops a medical condition that prohibits them from permanently attending care in any setting (for example, severe allergies, severe seizures, cancer, etc.), the Centre will work with families to develop an at-home learning plan where possible. Supporting doctor's notes and recommendations will be expected. **Please note that all contractual commitments to the Centre remain in place unless otherwise arranged via Administration.**

Centre-Initiated Withdrawal

Added Nov. 1 2018; reviewed Nov. 19 2019; updated Feb. 18 2021; revised Nov. 24 2022; updated Dec. 1 2022; revised Dec. 13 2022; updated Mar. 1 2023; updated Dec. 1 2023; confirmed Dec. 27 2024; updated Feb. 9 2025

Ongoing evaluation of child progress and the family's support of and integration within the Montessori environment is made by the teaching and administration staff of the Centre. Children are provided a 2 week 'settling in' period before observations began.

During their time with the Centre, issues may be noted with the child's progress, ability to settle in the environment, or with achieving developmental targets that allow them to operate safely within the environment without causing harm to self or others. Please see our Best Interest of the Child policy for additional considerations.

In these cases, the teaching team will progress to any and / or all of the following, depending on the severity of the behaviours/situation:

- Working directly with the child on alternative approaches
- Phone call / e-mail home to the parents to open brainstorming on solutions
- Discuss the situation with the parents at the door, as well as through one or more ZOOM meetings
- Send the child home for one or more days to the parent's care
- Shift the child between classrooms or programming areas / schedules within the Centre, with parent awareness
- Review issues during parent-teacher interviews and develop an action plan
- Send a letter home with the child
- Make in-Centre appointments to sit and review the concerns with the family
- If possible, connecting the family to external support resources such as psychologists / behavioural therapists, or offering the family the chance to have their child attend with a direct-support aide paid for by the family

In some cases, there may be issues with adherence to Centre policies or with the family's integration into Centre life (i.e. regularly not wearing uniform, non-payment of fees, routine speeding in parking lot, aggression towards staff, etc.). In these cases, the administrative staff will use any and all of the following to address the concerns:

- Sending an e-mail home to the parents
- Discussing with adults at pick-up
- Scheduling a ZOOM meeting with the family
- Sending the child home for the day to the parent's care
- Sending a letter home with the child
- Make outside-of-Centre appointments to sit and review issues with the family

In some instances, it may be decided that any and/or all of the following are occurring:

- The Centre is not the ideal fit to ensure the safety and / or the best educational future and / or healthy development of the whole child
- The family approach is not congruent with the approach of the Centre

Situations which are grounds for immediate pause of care and / or termination at the discretion of the Centre include:

- The child displaying ongoing and frequent behaviours that cause consistent and continuous disruption to the care environment AND/OR immediate and serious harm to themselves or harm to others (i.e. climbing shelves; running away from staff while outside; attempting repeatedly to leave the premises; hitting their head on the floor or equipment in a repetitive manner; involuntary breath holding; striking out at others; repeated biting; inability to communicate with staff verbally or non-verbally; refusal to drink / eat while in care)
- No available methods have provided results that indicate growth towards resolution is occurring AND/OR child's family is unwilling to partner on next steps
- The family directly violates policies of the Centre intentionally and without reasonable action to correct
- A child is performing ongoing and documented / witnessed conscious actions that violate the Code of Conduct of the Centre (hitting, swearing, bullying)

If the Centre decides that your child is no longer able to attend care with AHM, the Centre will issue notice of termination of provision of services via e-mail to the family. Any deposits, where possible and if applicable, will be returned to the family. 30 days' notice month over month will be provided at minimum unless health and safety is at immediate risk. If your child is removed from care partway through the month, the remaining tuition fees and / or extended care fees for the month are not refundable.

Children who have been terminated from services by the Centre are removed effective the date indicated in the communication. All Centre materials must be returned within 10 days of the effective date of removal to the Centre or the family will be charged current market value for the items. The Centre will return all materials belonging to the family / student within 10 days for pickup outside of the front doors of the campus the child attended.

Specific to Natural Disaster / War / Pandemic Illness

added Mar. 9 2020; updated June 10 2020; updated Nov. 24 2022; confirmed Dec. 1 2023; confirmed Dec. 27 2024

Please see our separate policy regarding Unforeseen Large-Scale Events.

Acknowledgement of this policy occurs in our online application. In the case of discrepancy, this offline policy document will apply.

Supporting Policies

Birthdays and Celebrations

Updated May 1 2019; reviewed June 4 2019; updated Nov. 19 2019; reviewed June 10 2020; updated Dec. 1 2020; reviewed Feb. 18 2021; updated May 26 2021; updated June 24 2021; updated Nov. 1 2021; reviewed Jan. 18 2022; revised Mar. 1 2022; updated July 9 2022; revised Dec. 1 2022; expanded Feb 13 2023; updated Mar. 1 2023; updated Dec. 1 2023; updated Dec. 27 2024

Celebrating at care

We look forward to celebrating your child's birthday at care! Please email the Centre at office@aspenhillmontessori.ca a **minimum of two weeks** prior to your child's birthday so we can help schedule the celebration. Please note, celebrating your child's birthday is up to the parent to initiate, the Centre does not remind families. Birthdays are held at 2:30PM ONLY, and you will take your child home with you afterwards. We cannot accommodate birthdays earlier in the day due to other programming scheduled, as well as for the best regulation of our students.

To support the Montessori style of celebrating birthdays, please bring a poster board (24" x 36") with 1 to 3 photos pasted on of your child from each year of their life, including the current year. We recommend grouping the photos by year of age. You can decorate the poster as much as you like to express your child's personality and preferences, see some examples below for ideas. You can also search 'Montessori birthday poster' in a web search engine for other ideas. *Please note, other decorations such as balloons, streamers, cardboard cutouts, etc. are not allowed in the Centre as they are too distracting for children.*



Montessori birthday celebrations focus around a ceremony called a 'Earth Goes Round the Sun'. The children sing a special song, and the celebrated child walks one year around a symbolic sun for each year of life. On each circulation, the child and teacher shares memories from that year of life, assisted by the picture board and the parent. We find that this is a wonderful way to recognize the journey of the child as a person and their accomplishments to date.

Up to two adults are welcome to attend the celebration by arriving a few minutes before, and departing immediately afterwards. Thank you for understanding that we cannot accommodate extended family or other children (cousins, siblings) beyond the two adult limit. We will also ask you to remove your shoes, please wear socks or indoor shoes.

Simple food that is commercially packaged individually or small gifts that can be sanitized (pencils, keychains, etc.) may be brought to distribute if you wish, but it is not required. Cakes and cupcakes are not allowed. Please note that children will NOT be allowed to eat food-related items while at care. They will take them home so parents may make their own choices about consumption. If you choose to bring items, you will be expected to bring one for every child in the class space - please ask at office@aspenhillmontessori.ca for the number of children. Please ensure items can be tucked in backpacks on the way out the door - pre-sealed package of fruit snacks, a sealed oatmeal cookie, a sealed bag of gummies, etc. is fine.



Birthday invitations

If you create a digital invitation or e-mail with birthday details and send to office@aspenhillmontessori.ca, we would be happy to do a single-send of the invitation to the children in your child's class and / or children you can identify by name, with directions for the families to contact you directly if they are interested to participate. Please note, we will not send follow up e-mails or reminders for invitations to respect the privacy of families. Thank you for understanding that we are unable to provide children's names for birthday invitations due to privacy.

If you choose to do paper invitations, please ask the office for the number of children in your child's class, and we can put an invitation in each backpack. If invitations arrive with specific names, we will also put them in backpacks.

Gifts sent to care

We want to create an inclusive care environment that reduces opportunities for children to feel left out or excluded. If your child wishes to distribute goody bags etc. for their birthday, please ask administration for

a count of the total children in class. Thank you for understanding that we do not allow distribution of individual gifts at the Centre from one child to another.

Secular holidays and holy days

In order to avoid the 'tourist trap' approach to multiculturalism, we do not celebrate any cultural holidays or holy days (for example, Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, Christmas, Halloween, Ramadan, Hanukkah, Diwali, etc.). We are a diverse Centre culturally and not all holidays have a positive association to all families. Children are not allowed to distribute items to friends around these holidays, such as valentines, Halloween candy, Christmas cards, etc. - thank you for your support to keep our Centre an inclusive place to attend.

We do discuss and explore celebrations of the seasons during our Casual Dress Days, as well as learning about important non-mainstream cultural celebrations as we explore continents around the world. If you would like to share your family's culture, please speak with your child's teacher. We would love to work with you to include every-day ways to showcase and share language, imagery, cultural dress and celebrations in our teachings to help your child embrace their culture.

Acknowledgement of this policy occurs in our online Records application. In the case of discrepancy, this offline policy document will apply.

Child Guidance

Revised and separated July 21 2021; reviewed Jan. 18 2022; confirmed July 9 2022; affirmed Dec. 1 2022; updated Jan. 30 2023; updated Dec. 1 2023; confirmed Dec. 27 2024

Our Centre uses a child guidance strategy of teaching children how to manage their own behavior through the tenants of Montessori philosophy. In the best interest of the children, we help develop the ability to express their wants and needs appropriately by giving them a variety of tools (what words to use, appropriate ways to express emotion through role play and modelling, substitution). The children then learn to express their emotions and solve problems by making appropriate choices. For children who are non-verbal, primary tools used are adult-to-child modelling and speaking 'on behalf' to create appropriate scenarios, accompanied by redirection to another activity or removal of the offending material causing the challenge.

There are a number of steps taken before children are in our environment that provide the best possible outcomes for a calm, nurturing environment based on the Montessori core principles:

- setting clear and understandable rules from the beginning of the learning season
- preparing an environment that looks inviting and welcoming
- creating a curriculum path that offers opportunities in Math, Language, Science, Culture, Sensorial and Practical Life
- providing material that is designed to develop the child's interests
- creating an environment where expectations are expressed but feelings are allowed

Our key strategies to use in the classroom are:

1. Lead by example: We encourage children to follow guidance, and lead by example with teachers following the same rules.
2. Minimize need: We regularly review our environments and classrooms to ensure that they are established to encourage and allow children to be independent.
3. Redirect: Move a child away from a situation or issue by retargeting on a new activity.
4. Use words that call attention to the problem: "You are hurting your friend" or "Ouch! That hurts!" gives more concrete information than saying no, while still getting across the message that what they are doing is not OK. We reinforce the consequences of actions, and emphasize that when we care for others, we are caring for our environment as well.
5. Give positive alternatives: We tell the child what we would like them to do instead of the forbidden action. This positive instruction lets them know how to behave in a way that gains approval. Words like: "We walk in the classroom." "We sit on chairs." "Use two hands to carry your work."
6. Give simple explanations: ("Hitting the toy might break it"; "That's Miss Suzie's—not for students") helps them understand the consequence of their action. We can use a caution word, like danger, to establish reason why: "Play over here, Callah. The step is dangerous."
7. Have a warning signal: Teachers may let a child know that they're on the wrong track with an alert sound: "Ah, ah, ah!" Then they follow immediately with instructions: "Move away from the

box, or it could fall and hurt you.” We focus on the consequences of actions to help the child understand the outcome to build their logic patterns.

8. Ask for the rule: When students are breaking a rule they’ve learned, a teacher might ask them: “Where do we throw balls?” or “Can you show me how we use walking feet?” This helps reinforce that they know the rule, and gives them a chance to correct themselves.

Teacher voices are kept modulated and positive, yelling and / or using the word ‘no’ is not appropriate in our classrooms. We do not provide 'time-outs' or any type of isolation as a form of reprimand.

If a resolution cannot be developed by the child taking ownership for the challenge, the child is redirected to other areas in the class where they can be successful. If the issue involves another child, we ensure that both children have the venue to express their concerns and apologize mutually to each other. Methods like space by yourself, redirection, and discussion are used; punitive punishment such as time-outs and any physical admonishment are not used in Montessori education. Peace Tables / thinking tables / reading corners may be suggested and available for older children to sit and relax or reflect. This is a standard Montessori practice.

If a child is experiencing ongoing behavior issues in the class, the active teachers consult with the Administration team. Please see our Best Interest of the Child policy to learn more.

Acknowledgement of this policy occurs in our online Records application. In the case of discrepancy, this offline policy document will apply.

Communication, Calendars and Schedules

Reviewed and updated Aug. 1 2018; June 4 2019; Aug. 7 2019; Nov. 19 2019; reviewed June 10 2020; updated July 31 2020; reviewed Feb. 18 2021; updated June 24 2021; updated Jan. 18 2022; reviewed July 9 2022; updated Dec. 1 2022; updated Mar. 1 2023; expanded June 5 2023; updated Dec. 1 2023; confirmed Dec. 27 2024

It is important that all families stay aware of Centre activities. The following communication vehicles are used to ensure families are informed:

- Centre calendar distributed via e-mail/PDF (also on Parent Portal website)
- Paper newsletter, sent out once a month
- E-mail communications
- Re-posting important documents on the Centre's website under the Parent Portal section at www.aspenhillmontessori.ca
- Online observation sharing app, currently DailyConnect

All families are expected to be aware of the Centre calendar, sent at the start of the year with regular updates and reminders provided by e-mail. It is up to the families to ensure they are aware of their child's upcoming Centre activities, PD days, and vacation periods. The Centre is not responsible to provide care for children that arrive at Centre at identified non-care days.

We want communication to be two-way between the Centre and our families. Please feel free to contact the Centre through e-mail at office@aspenhillmontessori.ca or phone: 403-454-9292 (Christie Crossing) or 403-455-3133 (Strathcona) with any concerns or information about your child.

It is essential that families advise the Centre as soon as possible if they are not receiving regular e-mail sends (once per week on average), or if they are having difficulty accessing the communication / observation app (updated once per week). While the Centre will provide support if requested, it is the responsibility of the legal guardians / parents to ensure that they are connected to the Centre communications they wish to receive.

Parents can subscribe to our e-mail newsletter by clicking to

Christie campus: <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/su/m2ptbtm/AHMChristieList>

Strathcona campus: <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/su/FihR17N/AHMStrathconaList>

We strongly recommend contacting office@aspenhillmontessori.ca as well to let us know you have joined our lists so we can ensure that you are on all appropriate lists.

The Centre uses a mobile / web app, currently DailyConnect, to keep families updated on their child's day within care. Please see our Supervision and Observations Policy to learn more.

The Centre may take planned or spontaneous walking field trips to nearby locations. We will notify you a minimum of 1 week in advance of any field trips that require hired transportation with proper consent and information forms.

From time to time, the Centre may invite in guest speakers. These guests will always be supervised when with the children. You will receive advance notice of guest speakers where possible.

Acknowledgement of this policy occurs in our online Child Records application. In the case of discrepancy, this offline policy document will apply.

Community Consultation

Added Nov. 27 2019; updated June 10 2020; revised Feb. 18 2021; updated June 24 2021; reviewed Jan. 18 2022; updated July 9 2022; updated Dec. 1 2022; updated Mar. 1 2023; updated Dec. 1 2023; confirmed Dec. 27 2024

Aspen Hill Montessori operates an Advisory Board that allows members of the wider community to connect with our Centre.

Community members are invited based on their integration into the Centre community, and their level of participation in making our Centre an effective place to learn and work. The administration team of the Centre regularly looks for opportunities to involve more members of the wider West Calgary communities with the Centre, to ensure an evolving engagement with organizations that affect and influence our families. Invitations to participate are normally issued by e-mail. Terms are ongoing unless a member requests to leave. We are happy to consider all requests to join.

The Board generally meets online once per quarter or as needed. At minimum, the Board holds one meeting in June to review the Centre year just passed, and the Centre year upcoming.

The Centre maintains working relationships with the Christie Crossing shopping complex and its vendors, as well as with First Lutheran Church, Suzuki Music School, and other user groups at the Church.

This policy is provided for information only; acknowledgment is not required to become a student at the Centre.

COVID-19

Created March 23 2020; updated May 4 2020; reviewed and updated June 10 2020; updated July 31 2020; updated Dec. 1 2020; updated Feb. 18 2021; updated June 24 2021; updated July 29 2021; updated Sept. 16 2021; updated Jan. 18 2022; updated July 9 2022; revised Nov. 24 2022; updated Dec. 1 2022; updated Mar. 1 2023; updated Dec. 1 2023; updated Feb. 21 2024; confirmed Dec. 27 2024

If you or anyone in your household been in contact with someone that is confirmed to be an active case of COVID-19; **DO NOT send your child to care.** Please contact the Centre immediately at absent@aspenhillmontessori.ca . **Our regular Illness Policy is in effect, refer to this separately.** We will provide further instructions for when the child/staff can return to care.

Travel restrictions

The Centre follows all current requirements via the Province of Alberta and Alberta Health Services.

Masking

Children are not required to wear a mask while in care, but are permitted to if parents prefer and / or if they can accomplish mask wearing without excessive face touching / on/off removal of the mask. Staff may choose to mask at care based on personal preference. Families are expected to respect individual choice to mask or not.

Health protocols

The Centre may follow enhanced sanitization procedures, screening procedures, and entry / exit protocols from time to time based on the current state of health in Calgary. Information on current health protocols will be sent to you via e-mail as required. Your strict and continued adherence to these procedures is required to participate in all Centre programs.

Refunds related to COVID-19

Families who are registered for childcare services are aware of COVID-19, and the potential impacts to childcare. **If a family chooses to keep their child home due to discomfort with the current COVID-19 situation, no refunds or credits for services are provided.**

Acknowledgement of this policy occurs in our online Records application. In the case of discrepancy, this offline policy document will apply.

Custody, Parental Access and Parental Rights

Created Oct. 23 2019; updated June 10 2020; reviewed Feb. 18 2021; updated June 24 2021; updated Jan. 18 2022; updated July 9 2022; affirmed Dec. 1 2022; updated Dec. 1 2023; confirmed Dec. 27 2024

All information provided to the Centre regarding custody, parental access and judicial decisions are confidential and private to Centre administration and the family involved. Requests for the Centre to provide information to support a custody or access case is considered on a case-by-case basis.

Parental rights

Updated Dec. 1 2023

We require all legal guardians' contact information (full name, e-mail address, phone number, and mailing address) to appear in your child's file. If one of the legal guardians mentioned do not wish to be contacted about Centre items, potentially up to and including emergency situations, they must submit a letter (physical or via e-mail) to the Centre indicating what they are willing to be contacted for, and / or that they waive their rights to be involved (as they select) in the current scholastic year. This letter can be repealed at any time at the parent's discretion and must be updated yearly. Having this letter in the child's file releases the Centre from being obligated to involve or contact that particular parent. If no letter exists, the Centre reserves the right to contact both or either legal guardian regarding information about their child, and to release information about the child's progress and activities at the Centre to all guardians as requested.

If there is only one legal guardian for the child, the Centre reserves the right to request written confirmation via e-mail to stay on-file with the child.

Custody information

Updated Dec. 1 2023

It is important that the Centre is aware of any separation or divorce situation that affects the living arrangements of the registered child. This is important insofar as it affects the primary parent from week to week and / or pickups from Centre, and who the Centre is allowed to release the child to. It is also important as it may relate to statements or behaviours that the child may make while in Centre.

If you have a custody agreement involving your child, a digital or physical copy of this agreement is required to be on-file with the Centre at the time of registration. If the agreement changes during the child's tenure, it is the obligation of one or both parents to provide the Centre with a new copy. If a new copy is not provided, the Centre reserves the right to maintain the custody information from the existing document for pickup authorizations and contact authorizations. All custody agreements are confidential. No judgements about your situation / the child's situation are made at any time.

Parental access

Unless a custody agreement is on file with the Centre, the Centre is permitted to release the child to either of the listed parents / legal guardians on the registration forms without further confirmation.

Acknowledgement of this policy occurs in our online Child Records application. In the case of discrepancy, this offline policy document will apply.

Discrimination-Free Environment

Revised Sept. 1 2018; reviewed June 4 2019/Nov. 19 2019; updated June 10 2020; reviewed Feb. 18 2021; updated June 24 2021; reviewed July 9 2022; updated Dec. 1 2022; updated Dec. 1 2023; confirmed Dec. 27 2024

Aspen Hill Montessori maintains and conducts all practices relating to enrollment, discipline, and all other terms and benefits of childcare services in a manner which does not discriminate against any child, parent or family specifically on the basis of:

- Race
- Colour
- Origin
- Nationality
- Immigration status
- Religion
- Marital status
- Sexual orientation
- Gender identity
- Socioeconomic status
- Disability

The Centre may decline admission to a child who is not within the age limitations of the program for insurance and licensing restriction reasons, or whose social / emotional / behavioral / developmental needs are not best met by a rigorous independent-oriented academic learning environment.

Discrimination against any of the above listed items by any member of the teaching or administration staff is grounds for immediate dismissal with cause from the Centre.

Discrimination against any of the above listed items by the adult members of any family whose child attends the Centre against any other parent of or child who attends AHM is grounds for immediate termination of services provided to the family committing the offense.

Children who commit discrimination offences without parental presence will:

1. First infraction: be guided according to Montessori principles for correction, with a note or comment home to parents
2. Second infraction: at Centre's discretion, be removed from the classroom setting and sent home to parents, with a discussion and plan of action with the parents
3. Third infraction: at Centre's discretion, enactment of a Centre-initiated withdrawal (see Refunds and Withdrawals Policy).

Acknowledgement of this policy occurs in our online Records application. In the case of discrepancy, the offline policy document will apply.

Emergencies / Situations Requiring Urgent Action

Reviewed and updated Nov. 15 2018; June 4 2019; expanded Sept. 10, 2019; reviewed June 10 2020; updated Feb. 18 2021; updated June 24 2021; updated Jan. 18 2022; reviewed July 9 2022; updated Dec. 1 2022; updated Jan. 12 2023; updated Dec. 1 2023; confirmed Dec. 27 2024

We follow these steps in any emergency:

1. Assess the seriousness of the situation.
2. If required, call 911 and secure everyone's safety.
3. Give assistance to victims.
4. Follow appropriate procedures as per First Aid Training and CPR.
5. Notify families of children/staff involved. This shall be done by a Senior Administrator, or person designated.
6. Reassure the children.
7. Meet with parents and / or affected child(ren) as needed, documenting all information
8. Complete an Occurrence Form (internal)
9. As required, notify Alberta Childcare Licensing and / or Alberta Health Services and complete a Provincial Incident Report

All core staff and administrators are trained in CPR and First Aid. Staff will treat minor injuries. Please refer to our Illness and Injury Reporting Policy to learn more.

In order to meet with licensing requirements, Portable Emergency Information Records are maintained for each child at the Centre. These emergency records are easily accessible to the staff in case of an emergency. These records specific to each classroom are taken off the Centre premises on nature walks, during fire drills, during outdoor gym classes and in the event of an emergency evacuation. It is very important to keep us informed of any change in your child's information as they occur by notifying office@aspenhillmontessori.ca.

Specific Situations

Snow / extreme cold or heat days

Reviewed Sept. 15 2018; expanded Sept. 2019; updated June 24 2021; affirmed Dec. 1 2022; updated Dec. 1 2023

There are days when weather makes travel difficult or attendance unsafe. The Centre follows the recommendations of Environment Canada, Alberta Childcare Services, and/or Alberta Health Services when we make decisions that affect our Centre community. On these days of extreme or severe weather, classes may not be held or care may be ended early at the Centre's discretion. Please watch your e-mail for official notice of closures and early end days.

Refunds are not provided for occasional days (1-2 times per year) when the Centre is closed due to weather. While the Centre attempts to provide reasonable notice (24-48 hours) prior to closure, sudden changes in temperature or weather conditions can lead to less-than-ideal notification windows. The Centre reserves the right to make these closures in extreme situations as needed to protect our vulnerable population, and for the safety of the entire Centre community.

In the case of severe snow/ice or other emergencies, a same-day early closing may become necessary. If this should become necessary, parents will be informed and asked to pick up their child(ren) early.

Intruder

Updated Nov. 19 2019, reviewed Feb. 18 2021; updated June 24 2021; affirmed Dec. 1 2022; revised Jan. 13 2023; updated Dec. 1 2023; confirmed Dec. 27 2024

An intruder is defined as any unauthorized person who is inside an AHM campus without reason and/or is attempting to interfere with our classrooms, staff or students in any unwanted way. A visitor can become an intruder if they do not leave when requested, if they attempt to access areas of the facility that are off-limits, or if they are demonstrating behaviours that are inappropriate in a childcare setting. Intruders can present an emergency situation in any Centre setting. The staff at AHM are trained to approach all unidentified or unauthorized persons as intruders.

In order to prevent intruders, we facilitate and are strict with our locked door policies and our parent identification requests. If we occupy a shared facility and exterior doors cannot be locked, the interior program doors to our programming rooms may be locked to outside entry. We also ensure that visitors to our campus, such as parents or vendors, are always escorted by a member of administration while on-site.

If an intruder is identified on campus:

1. Administration should be notified. Any descriptive features of the intruder should be communicated if possible.
2. All children present are calmly moved to a secure space (inside a room, locked door if possible) as far away from the intruder as possible. Where possible, word is spread via text to other rooms for children and teachers to shelter in place.
3. An administrator works with intruder to attempt to encourage them to leave the building calmly, without putting themselves in danger.
4. If it appears that the intruder will not leave willingly, the administrator calls 911 (when safe / able) and / or pulls a fire alarm.
5. If unable to call 911 but still able to communicate with other classrooms, teachers will evacuate children to the muster point at each campus where possible, and teachers will call 911.
6. Situation management is turned over to emergency services when possible.
7. If required, parents will be called for early pickup.

Please see instructions specific to your campus regarding early pickups and how to arrange in advance.

Unknown pickup person

Added Jan. 13 2023; confirmed Dec. 1 2023

Please advise staff at drop-off if someone other than a parent will be picking up your child, to avoid end of day confusion. Please advise your person picking up that they may be asked to provide ID.

If a person unknown to staff arrives to pick up your child:

1. Teacher will ensure the child is under direct supervision from a staff member
2. Teacher will get administration to phone legal guardian
3. Legal guardian must confirm the identity of the person over the phone and that pickup was expected
4. If legal guardian cannot be reached and pickup person cannot be confirmed, emergency contacts will be called and child will NOT be released
5. If no approved person can be reached, Calgary Police will be called.

Under no circumstances will a child be released to someone unknown to staff that a legal guardian has not verified. Please note, approved pickup people still must show ID at pickup if they are not known to Centre staff. We appreciate your patience as we work to keep your child safe.

Evacuation

Revised July 2nd, 2015; reviewed Sept. 5 2018; reviewed Nov. 19 2019; updated Feb. 18 2021; updated June 24 2021; confirmed Dec. 1 2023
Please refer to the separate Evacuation Policy.

Missing child

Updated Nov. 19 2019; reviewed Feb. 18 2021; updated June 24 2021; updated Dec. 1 2022; expanded Jan. 13 2023; updated Dec. 1 2023

Staff do visual and verbal headcounts of children into and out of programming rooms, and at all points of transition within the day.

If at a point of transition a child cannot be located, the facility is immediately locked down and all children and staff shelter in place in classrooms. Administration will begin a detailed search inside and outside of the facility for the child with support staff assistance.

If the child cannot be located within 10 minutes, the administrator will call 911 immediately. We provide the following information:

- Child's name and age
- Address
- Physical and clothing description of child, including any distinguishing marks, such as visible birth marks or scars
- Medical status if necessary
- Time and location the child was last seen
- Person with whom the child was last seen

Children will shelter in place with instructors until the child is found. Provincial Licensing will be contacted within 30 minutes if the child is not located, and same-day if the child is located.

Uncollected children

Reviewed and revised Nov. 1 2018; updated Nov. 19 2019; reviewed Feb. 18 2021; updated June 24 2021; affirmed Dec. 1 2022; updated Dec. 1 2023

If a parent or caregiver fails to collect a child at the closing of their contracted care time, the following procedure will be followed:

1. Telephone both parents or caregivers and leave messages if needed.
2. If they are unable to be reached, we will then call one or both of the emergency contacts on the child's record.
3. In the event that a parent or an emergency contact cannot be reached within a 15 minute period past the planned pickup time of the child, we will call Calgary Police.
4. We will continue to call parents / emergency contacts until Police have taken over.

Swearing / rude gestures / violent talk

Added Jan. 13 2023; updated Mar. 1 2023; expanded Dec. 1 2023

We understand that young children may be experimenting with gestures and / or words they may have seen from home. However, we expect that all families will be conscious of the impact that using socially inappropriate gestures / words / topics around children may have, and will limit use in the presence of children as well as educate their children on what is appropriate to use at care.

Sometimes children will accidentally mis-pronounce a word while learning to speak / learning English that may sound like a swear word; or may unintentionally make a rude gesture. Educators watch for additional signals such as environment, age of child, context, use in a sentence vs. stand alone word, child's reaction, laughing/giggling, and body language to indicate if the action or word was intended to offend / gain reaction before we reach out to families.

Children model what they see online and on TV. If children are watching action-based anime, cartoons, or superhero shows, they may bring violence / violent actions or topics into care (hitting, punching, jumping on friends, throwing things, yelling, etc.) They also may say things to friends that are violent or rude. We strongly recommend limiting these types of shows for your child, and being very aware of older siblings or family relations that may be watching these shows when your child is present.

If children swear, talk about inappropriate/violent topics, suggest violent actions, or make seemingly rude gestures and it is noticed by teachers and / or administration, this is against our Code of Conduct and is treated seriously. Please refer to the Code of Conduct for expectations of behaviour. Steps will include the following:

- Stopping the action / words with verbal commands
- Removing the instigator from the class environment to the care of an administrator until more information can be gathered
- Getting help from an administrator
- Calling home to families
- Having families meet with administrators / teachers and child to discuss consequences / resolutions
- Having the child sent home early from care if determined necessary

We look to partnership and support from families to eliminate future occurrences.

Repeated offences may result in any / all of the following actions, at the decision of administration, and depending on the family's willingness to participate in solutions:

- Requirement for the child to follow up with a medical professional, such as a psychologist, before returning to care
- Temporary or permanent class change for the instigator
- Temporary suspension from care for the instigator
- Permanent cancellation of care services without refund

Hitting / scratching / pushing / kicking

Added Jan. 13 2023; updated Dec. 1 2023

Negative physical contact from children to staff, or between children, or from staff to children, is not allowed as per our Code of Conduct.

Child to child, child to staff

If child-to-child or child-to-staff negative physical contact is made, and intent to hurt is apparent (eye contact, words, pursuit, etc.) the child instigating will be separated from the situation. The instigator will be talked to one-on-one with an educator or administrator at an age-appropriate level; the victim will also be attended to and listened to. Children will be encouraged to talk about it / apologize as needed / able if willing. Parents will be advised of the interaction, and may be asked to sign an Occurrence Form.

If ongoing patterns of intent-to-hurt or willful negative physical interaction are established, the following approach will be used with appropriate documentation:

1. teachers will work on internal strategies with administration and implement a plan for the child
2. if not successful, parents will be contacted at the door to alert of concerns and asked to talk with their child at home
3. if still no success, parents and administration / teachers will have a ZOOM meeting to review information / brainstorm solutions
4. solutions implemented
 5. where possible, additional modifications to child's programming may also be made (reduced schedule, changed class, changed teacher, break from care, etc.)
6. if still no success, parents and administration will discuss options for temporary or permanent removal from care

Please refer to our Best Interest of the Child policy for more.

Staff to child

If staff-to-child negative physical contact is made or alleged to be made, senior administration will document the family's information with urgency and conduct an internal review to assess staff and situational statements. The child may temporarily change classes or teachers while the review is being conducted. Administration will consult with Provincial Licensing as required, and will complete an Occurrence Form and / or an Incident Report as needed.

Families involved will be invited to an in-person meeting or ZOOM meeting with administration to review the findings and decide on next steps, with the appropriate authorities involved as required. Actions taken will be decided based on severity of the occurrence at the discretion of the Centre, which may include staff retraining, reassignment, suspension or termination.

Body exposures / inappropriate touching

Added Jan. 13 2023; modified Mar. 1 2023; expanded Dec. 1 2023

While we understand that young children may be curious about bodies, they are not permitted to explore these curiosities while at care. We expect that all families will have age-appropriate conversations with your child at home from 2 years and forward about keeping hands to ourselves, private spaces on our bodies, and privacy in bathrooming. We have these broad conversations when appropriate as group lessons for Casa classes for ages 3 and up.

If children under 3 years of age are exhibiting body curiosity (lifting shirts up, pulling pants down, attempting to look down others pants, etc.), teachers will focus on redirection to other activities, verbal confirmation that the activity is not desirable, and talking to parents to get support from home. Simple actions such as snap-down bodysuits under uniform may be suggested. Individual action plans will be looked at per situation.

If children over 3 years of age are exhibiting body curiosity with others / are self-touching and it is noticed by teachers, teachers / administration may take steps including:

- One child at a time in bathrooms to prevent looking under stalls
- Closing of urinals in boys' bathrooms
- Direct monitoring by teachers in bathrooms / open door approach
- Discussions at circle time about privacy
- Talking to parents for conversations at home

If a child over 3 years of age is seen intentionally and/or repeatedly exposing a private body part to another child, is discovered touching a private body space of another child:

1. The child touching or exposing (instigator) will immediately be removed from the space to an administrator's support. Parents will be called.
2. If applicable, the child seeing the exposition and / or receiving the touch (victim) will be treated with First Aid procedures from a supporting adult. Parents will also be called.
3. Statements will be documented from the child(ren) involved without leading or prompting from the staff; Occurrence Forms will be completed
4. Families will be asked to come to the Centre to meet with administration. Administrators will sit with involved families to talk to each child independently and decide on the best course of action per child.
5. Childcare Licensing will be informed to decide if an Incident Report needs to be filed. Additional investigation may occur depending on the severity of the occurrence.
6. More than one occurrence may result in temporary or permanent removal from the Centre of the instigating child.

(Adults involved negatively in any of the above activities would fall under the jurisdiction of the appropriate authorities and are outside of the scope of this document.)

We are required by law to report any reasonable suspicion of child abuse or age-inappropriate body awareness to Alberta Childcare Licensing Intake Line. The teachers do not to investigate or determine whether or not child abuse has occurred.

Child disclosure of potential abuse / visible potential of abuse

Updated Nov. 19 2019; reviewed Feb. 18 2021; updated June 24 2021; affirmed Dec. 1 2022; expanded Jan. 13 2023; updated Dec. 1 2023

If a child discloses any type of concerning statements to an adult in care, we will listen and believe the child without attempting to gather details or investigate. All statements made are required by law to be reported to the Alberta Childcare Connect and to the Child Abuse Hotline. Please note we are not obligated to inform parents that the statements have been made.

Acknowledgement of this policy occurs in our online Records application. In the case of discrepancy, this offline policy document will apply.

Evacuations

Added June 24 2021; reviewed Jan. 18 2022; updated July 9 2022; revised Dec. 1 2022; revised Mar. 1 2023; updated Dec. 1 2023; revised Dec. 27 2024

To be prepared for potential evacuation at any time, all children in the Centre are required to wear indoor shoes at ALL TIMES. Indoor shoes must be closed toed, sturdy and close securely, with solid treads on the bottom. We strongly recommend that children wear uniform options appropriate for the season (for example, tights or leggings under dresses / skorts in winter instead of knee socks; a sweater or cardigan in winter not just a short sleeve shirt.)

We are required by Alberta Childcare Licensing as well as the Calgary Fire Department to practice unannounced fire drills once a month. There is a fire evacuation plan and a fire extinguisher placement floor plan posted throughout each Centre. All staff have been provided with training on emergency evacuations. The staff conduct a fire drill review monthly to ensure all staff are comfortable with the procedure in the case that a real fire should occur. At monthly meetings the staff go over the previous fire drill and record notes in the monthly meeting minutes. Evacuation routes are posted in each room to ensure clarity for all persons working at the time.

In a drill situation, we mimic the fire bell, and have all children exit through assigned exits of the Centre buildings. We gather immediately outside to be counted / do attendance in our cohorts. We then return inside as quickly as possible to minimize exposure of children to the weather, as they will not have their coats on (to simulate a real emergency). While we attempt to select days that have better weather, we also are required to prepare children and staff for a potential evacuation in less-than-ideal conditions.

The children will evacuate the Centre immediately if the fire alarms sound regardless of the situation. If the Centre is deemed safe, we will return to regular classes. Parents/guardians will then be notified at pickup time.

In the event of a true emergency that requires us to leave the immediate building, staff gather their class calmly and exit using the signed exit door closest to their location. Teachers are instructed to take the class Emergency Backpack, which will contain emergency contact information for children in the class and rescue medications for children requiring them. If possible, teachers will 'sweep' coats to be put on outside once the class is a safe distance from the building at the muster point.

CHRISTIE CAMPUS

Children exit through the front doors and line up along the front wall of the Centre. In a true emergency, staff and students proceed to the Muster Point at the edge of the complex on the grass with teacher-provided surrounding supervision. Teachers take attendance for their class and help children put on coats. Administrators will evaluate the situation working with first responders as appropriate.

If re-entry to the building is not possible and / or weather is cold, cohorts will proceed to Master Rim's Taekwondo Centre in the same complex, or Avenue Health across the complex, depending on the situation. Our evacuation location is indicated on the front doors of the Centre if we must leave to another location.

Administrators will call parents for early pickup. The situation will be discussed and where the children can be picked up from. In the event that parents/ guardians cannot be reached, the emergency contacts will be notified.



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STRATHCONA CAMPUS

Strathcona Campus children meet at a muster point at the edge of the main parking lot next to the sheds, depending on where the issue presents. In the event that a full evacuation is required, children are taken to Sobeys on 14th Ave. SW.

Administrators will call parents for early pickup. The situation will be discussed and where the children can be picked up from. In the event that parents/ guardians cannot be reached, the emergency contacts will be notified.

Acknowledgement of this policy occurs in our online Records application. In the case of discrepancy, this offline policy document will apply.

Extended Hours

Added April 13 2015, revised July 22 2015, revised September 1 2018, reviewed and updated May 8 2019; reviewed June 4 2019; updated Nov. 19 2019; reviewed June 10 2020; reviewed Feb. 18 2021; updated June 24 2021; updated Jan. 18 2022; reviewed July 9 2022; updated Dec. 1 2022; expanded Dec. 14 2022; revised Feb. 8 2023; updated Mar. 1 2023; revised Dec. 1 2023; updated Feb. 21 2024; updated Dec. 27 2024; revised Feb. 9 2025; updated Mar. 12 2025

AHM no longer offers an extended hours program.

Emergency care

Revised Dec. 14 2022; revised Feb. 8 2023; updated Mar. 1 2023; updated Dec. 1 2023; updated Dec. 27 2024; revised Feb. 9 2025; revised Mar. 12 2025

Emergency care is provided when parents arrive past our service hours to retrieve their child. **Hours of service are known in advance.** Plan your travel ahead considering the weather and distance, as well as traffic, to ensure you arrive on-time.

Our emergency care penalty fees help us to cover staff costs for remaining past their scheduled time and are intentionally high to discourage parents from arriving late. Requests for exceptions to our emergency penalty fees will not be considered; however, the Centre reserves the right to provide consideration for exceptional circumstances on a case-by-case basis.

Emergency care penalty fees are processed via auto-withdrawal on your behalf, with notice provided via e-mail.

Please see our Arrivals and Dismissals policy in the Parent Handbook for current rates and time windows applicable.

Thank you for understanding that emergency care should only be used in true emergencies. It is difficult on your child and requires emergency staffing by the Centre.

Acknowledgement of this policy occurs in our online Records application. In the case of discrepancy, this offline policy document will apply.

Food and Healthy Eating

Reviewed June 4 2019; revised Nov. 19 2019; updated June 10 2020; expanded July 31 2020; reviewed Feb. 18 2021; updated June 24 2021; reviewed Jan. 18 2022; reviewed July 9 2022; updated Dec. 1 2022; expanded Mar. 1 2023; reviewed Dec. 1 2023; updated Dec. 27 2024

Aspen Hill Montessori creates a healthy eating environment by role modelling healthy eating behaviours and allowing children to decide how much to eat from what is offered. Staff supervising snack and lunch sit at the level of the children and eat with them, offering support as requested and monitoring for safe food intake. Staff do not use bribes or rewards to pressure children to eat. We encourage mealtimes that are pleasant with positive conversations, and focus on independence of eating and selection. Children must remain seated while eating, and are given at least 20 minutes to eat snacks and meals.

Students are required to have a non-spill water bottle that they can open themselves at all times, in all class levels.

Children must bring their own healthy lunches as well as a morning and afternoon snack. We encourage a variety of snacks and lunches that are balanced nutritionally, with as little sugar as possible. Please minimize pre-packaged 'snacks' in a lunch (granola bars, chips etc.); fresh food in resealable containers is best. Juice boxes, pop, chips, cookies, cake/cupcakes and candy affect your child's energy in care and can drastically affect their mood and skills during learning cycles. If you are struggling to provide healthy food for your child, please ask to talk to administration in confidence so we can help connect you to resources.

Good ideas for children are:

- Leftovers from at home meals
- Special meals from your culture
- Pasta in a Thermos
- Pretzels
- Berries
- Yogurt
- Cold vegetables and dip
- Applesauce / fruit sauce
- Cheese cubes
- Crackers
- Slices of meats
- Cold pasta salad
- Hamburger pieces
- Bread / bun / pita / naan

To increase the amount of time children have to enjoy their lunch, please make your child's lunch as 'self-serve' as possible. We cannot heat food in microwaves; please pre-heat food and send in temperature-controlled Thermos-brand containers. Ensure containers are easy to open, and work with your child on how to open items themselves. We also recommend a cold pack to keep lunches cool, as we cannot refrigerate items.

Staff are also asked to bring healthy lunches, especially when food will be eaten in the presence of children. Power drinks (RedBull, Monster) / pop are not allowed when in-ratio with children. Any 'group food' provided to staff is encouraged to be healthy – crackers, cheese, veggie trays, fruit trays instead of donuts and muffins.

It's important to understand that we cannot force children to eat or drink. As per Alberta Health Services, adults provide the time, space and invitation for children to eat, as well as access to food sent from home. Children decide how much, what to eat, and if they want to eat. If we have noticed that your child has not had anything to drink within a 2 hour period, and if they are unwilling, we will call home to advise and recommend pickup. If we notice a longer pattern of an unwillingness to eat or drink (over a 2-3 day period), we will touch base to advise via our online app or the office team (phone or e-mail). We encourage all families to ensure their children eat a good breakfast and dinner at home, in case their children are not as interested in daytime food. If you are concerned about your child's intake of food and water at care, reach out to office@aspenhillmontessori.ca.

Acknowledgement of this policy occurs in our online Student Records application. In the case of discrepancy, this offline policy document will apply.

Grievances

Reviewed and updated Nov. 15 2018; June 4 2019; Nov. 19 2019; reviewed June 10 2020; updated Feb. 18 2021; updated June 24 2021; revised and modified July 21 2021; updated Jan. 18 2022; reviewed July 9 2022; affirmed Dec. 1 2022; updated Jan. 13 2023; revised Dec. 1 2023; confirmed Dec. 27 2024

Individual concerns should be e-mailed to office@aspenhillmontessori.ca . Administration will consult with the teaching team to gather information, and then will set up a ZOOM meeting or a phone call with parents to discuss. If no resolution is developed, Administration will send the matter to the AHM Board and / or a third-party mediator. Assistance will be retained and involved to help all parties come to an abiding agreement on how to proceed. Collaboration between all parties is essential.

The Centre reserves the right to return all refund-allowed payments as per signed child contract and cancel the enrollment of a family with due process and notice to said family if a mediated agreement cannot be abided, or if the Centre feels that the child's or family's needs cannot be best met by the Centre.

Allegation against a staff member or the Centre

Updated June 24 2021; updated Jan. 13 2023; reviewed Dec. 1 2023

If an allegation is made against a member of staff or the Centre from a parent, another co-worker or from a child's disclosure, it must be reported in writing to office@aspenhillmontessori.ca. It is important to remember that allegations don't necessarily mean that the alleged occurrence has taken place. An investigation will be launched internally to gather information. Families will also be provided with an opportunity to provide more information via a phone call, ZOOM call or in-person meeting. Provincial Childcare Licensing and / or Alberta Health Services may be involved as appropriate. All information gathered will be provided to a neutral third party such as the AHM Board and / or a third-party mediator for review. During the investigation, the staff member and / or family and / or child(ren) concerned must be supported and treated with respect. Allegations are very upsetting and stressful, and it is important that the staff member and/or family and/or child(ren) are not judged until the result of the investigation is made final. If it appears from the result of the investigation that the allegations are justified, the Administration Team will instigate disciplinary procedures. This will always be done in full consultation between the Administration Team and legal counsel.

A parent who is uneasy about any aspect of the Centre's provisions should first discuss these concerns with the Centre's Administration team. We believe children and parents are entitled to expect careful attention to their needs and wishes. Our intention is to work in partnership with parents and the community, and we welcome suggestions on how to improve our Centre programs at any time.

Acknowledgement of this policy occurs in our online Records application. In the case of discrepancy, this offline policy document will apply.

Immunization

Created Apr. 11 2019; reviewed Nov. 19 2019; updated June 10 2020; reviewed Feb. 18 2021; updated June 1 2021; reviewed July 9 2022; affirmed Dec. 1 2022; updated Dec. 1 2023; updated Dec. 27 2024; revised Feb. 27 2025

We are committed to helping families stay well. When we keep our Centre environment safe, children can attend and derive the most benefit from their class time and parents can attend their own schedules consistently.

We request that all staff and students in our Centre complete the immunizations / vaccinations as recommended by Alberta Health Services, appropriate to their age group. Learn more about the immunization schedule at <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/info/hp/cdc/if-hp-cdc-ip-sm-routine-imm-schedule.pdf> , and at <https://www.alberta.ca/immunization-routine-schedule.aspx> .

All staff and children in applicable age groups are recommended to be vaccinated for COVID-19.

As per Alberta Health Services regulations, staff or children who contract a reportable disease will not be allowed to attend care without full clearance from a licensed medical doctor, and based on Provincial isolation periods as at <https://www.alberta.ca/notifiable-disease-guidelines.aspx> . No refunds will be provided for children who miss care or must terminate care based on missing immunizations or reportable diseases.

If your child does not have current vaccinations, you will be required to complete a Waiver related to reportable diseases – please request through office@aspenhillmontessori.ca . If there is a verified case of a reportable AHS disease determined in the Centre that your child attends, any unvaccinated children must remain at home until the window of contagion as provided by AHS has passed. We do not provide refunds or credits for missed care or services due to reportable disease absence.

Acknowledgement of this policy occurs in our online Student Records application. In the case of discrepancy, this offline policy document will apply.

Nut-Free Environment

Updated Nov. 25 2018; reviewed June 4 2019 / Nov. 19 2019 / June 10 2020; updated Feb. 18 2021; reviewed June 24 2021; reviewed July 9 2022; updated Dec. 1 2022; updated Mar. 1 2023; confirmed Dec. 27 2024

Aspen Hill Montessori is a nut-free environment. Do not send snacks or lunches containing nuts or nut by-products, or they will be removed and disposed of. Our teaching equipment and furniture is used exclusively by the Centre, and is sanitized regularly to ensure a clean environment.

The Centre cannot be held liable for activities that occur in the kitchen or building space during non-school hours. As such, we cannot guarantee the absence of nuts during non-care hours.

If your child has a nut allergy or other serious exposure allergy, please advise staff upon admission so urgent care steps can be registered as part of the Centre's response plan, should allergy response support be needed.

Acknowledgement of this policy occurs in our online Records application. In the case of discrepancy, this offline policy document will apply.

Occurrence / Illness / Injury Reporting

Created July 31 2020; modified Feb. 18 2021; updated June 24 2021; expanded July 21 2021; expanded Jan. 18 2022; reviewed July 9 2022; updated Oct. 5 2022; affirmed Dec. 1 2022; updated Dec. 1 2023; revised Dec. 27 2024

Occurrences / illnesses / injuries include but are not limited to:

- Feeling generally unwell, reported or observed
- Visible illness symptoms
- Bathrooming accidents
- Collision or physical incident between two or more children, intentional or accidental
- Independent injury (child trips, falls, etc.)
- Slips and falls
- Bumps, finger pinches
- Temporarily misplaced child / cannot find child
- Choking
- Allergic reaction
- Serious emotional or psychological upset / potential upset (swearing, discussing inappropriate topics at the Centre (horror, violence, guns, sex), sexualized commentary or exposure actions, inappropriate bathrooming exposure, inappropriate bathrooming talk, violence, bullying actions)

For any occurrences, injuries or illness, no matter how minor, staff must advise their co-teachers in the classroom as well as an Administrator within 10 minutes of occurrence via two-way radio, phone, in-person or text depending on the seriousness of the occurrence.

Very minor items (food spills on clothing, bathrooming accidents, hangnail, bump or trip with no visible marks and no First Aid) are shared at the child's regular pickup time and / or via the app and / or via a phone call as determined suitable by the campus administrator.

For any notable occurrence / illness / injury outside of normal operations, an administrator will provide an informational call home. We will advise if pickup is required or if we will monitor and advise depending on the child's ability to participate in care. If pickup is requested, we do require that parents come as soon as possible within the 30 minute time window.

For any occurrence where minor First Aid is applied (ice pack, Band-Aid) or a visible mark / potential impact to the child occurs, staff document their experience using an Occurrence Form with the assistance and guidance of a Senior Administrator. We will include the time and date of the occurrence, and the time and date that the form was completed. Every situation is reviewed by the Administration Team and notes added to the child's file are kept with the Centre. Parents will be requested to review and initial an Occurrence Form specific to their child.

For any significant occurrence where medical services are accessed, we will call 911 FIRST if required. Then an Administrator will contact parents by phone using the information provided on their Parent Contact Form. Parents will be requested to review and initial an Occurrence Form specific to their child. The Administration Team will also complete an Incident Reporting Form and submit to Provincial Childcare Licensing. The following incidents must be reported as per law:

- An emergency evacuation that is unplanned
- Unexpected program closure
- An intruder on the program's premises

- A serious illness or injury to a child that requires the Centre to request emergency services and/or requires the child to remain in the hospital overnight.
- An error in the administration of medication by a program
- An unexpected absence of a child from the program on a day they are registered to attend (ie. a child who does not attend the program, and the parents cannot be reached to confirm the absence)
- A child removed from the program by a non-custodial parent or guardian
- An allegation of physical, sexual, emotional abuse and/or neglect of a child by a staff member or volunteer
- A child left on the premises unattended

If a child is ill, an Illness Form will be completed by the campus administrator to assist in tracking for AHS purposes. These forms are kept with a child's file.

Acknowledgement of this policy occurs in our Staff Contracts and in our Online Application System. In the case of discrepancy, this offline policy document will apply.

Optional Programming / Special Interest Classes

Added Feb. 9 2025; updated Mar. 12 2025

Optional parent-paid programming (called Special Interest Classes within AHM) at an additional parent-payable fee may be offered from time-to-time by the Centre, within service hours. Optional programming is not required to be part of our Centres, and preference is not given to families who choose optional programs. Fees may vary depending on the provider and topic, as well as age group. All AHM optional programs and fees charged are on file with the Province.

For more information on programs currently offered, timing and fees, please contact admissions@aspenhillmontessori.ca.

Acknowledgement of this policy occurs in our online Child Records application. In the case of discrepancy, this offline policy document will apply.

Outdoor Clothing

Updated Feb. 18 2021; updated June 24 2021; reviewed Jan. 18 2022; updated July 9 2022; affirmed Dec. 1 2022; updated Feb. 7 2023; updated Dec. 1 2023; updated Dec. 27 2024

Children may be outside for a minimum of 30 minutes each day to upwards of 1 hour at a time, depending on the conditions and the activities. Please see our Weather and Outdoor Experiences Policy for more information. As such, **it is critical that all children arrive with the outdoor clothing needed for each day at all times.**

Please avoid clothing that is intended for style and not function. Good shops (online or in person) to purchase true outdoor clothing from include:

- Mountain Warehouse (online and in-store)
- Mountain Equipment Co-Op
- Atmosphere
- Camper's Village
- Great Outdoors Junior Outfitters (Calgary store)
- Patagonia
- Sport Chek

All outdoor clothing must be clearly labelled with a **clear, large family identifier** / clothing label to prevent mixed up items.

Please note that open-toed shoes and slingback shoes (i.e. Crocs) are not allowed on campus at any time for safety, even during warm weather.

Please look ahead to the forecast and make sure that your child has more than is needed to keep them warm, dry and happy at care. If you would like ideas or suggestions on how to acquire outdoor clothing on a budget, please let us know via office@aspenhillmontessori.ca.



Fall gear

REQUIRED:

- Sturdy, easy to put on outdoor runners or hikers that elastic/stretch laces / Velcro on (NO SHOELACES PLEASE for speed getting outside!)
 - o Please make sure your child can get them on and off themselves easily.



- Waterproof rain boots or snow boots
 - o Wear these or your outdoor runners to and from care EVERY DAY depending on the weather. If it is even slightly wet from the night before, or looking chilly, wear boots!



- Waterproof rain coat (lined or unlined) – best slightly big so a polar fleece jacket can fit underneath



- Water-resistant soft-shell or polar fleece coat



- Waterproof rain pants (rubberized, elastic cuffs and waistband, loose enough to get on easily over uniform – can be lined or unlined)
 - o 'all in one' rain suits are great if your child knows how to put them on independently.



- Waterproof snow mitts



- Lightweight knit toque / beanie - if your child struggles to keep it on, consider a hat balaclava!



Winter gear

REQUIRED:

- SOREL style winter boots rated to at least -30 degrees C; - 40 is better
 - o NO 'Bog' brand boots please - not warm enough
 - o WalMart winter boots can work, as long as they have a degree rating for the cold



- Pull on or bib snow pants – a bit of extra room is best for easy on and off
 - o **Please avoid 'all in one' jumpsuit-style snowsuits for children unless they know how to put them on themselves.**



- Warm snow coat with a simple hood – go for one with an easy-to handle zipper for better independence and learning, even for Bambini children!
 - o Avoid fur on the hood, they freeze up around faces
 - o Look for a weather rating on the coat – should be at least -20 degrees
 - o Look for water and wind resistant



- Polar fleece coat that fits under the winter coat as a layer



- Waterproof snow mitts that have a long cuff for tucking into coat sleeves
 - o **Please have 2-3 pairs at home in case of a lost mitt, wet mitts, or dirty mitts.**
 - o NO gloves, 'stretch mini mitts', knit mitts, or inexpensive character / cartoon brand mitts
 - o Look for a degree rating on the mitts
 - o Ski mitts are ideal.



- Heavier toque / beanie
 - o Aim for something lined, such as a wool toque lined with polar fleece; balaclava is ideal



- Neck toque
 - o Polar fleece are best – Canada Olympic Park shop sells many of them all year-round!
 - o NO SCARVES! These present a choking hazard



Parent Participation

Added Nov. 2019; updated June 2020; revised July 31 2020; reviewed Feb. 18 2021; updated June 24 2021; updated July 9 2022; affirmed Dec. 1 2022; updated Mar. 1 2023; updated Dec. 1 2023; revised Dec. 27 2024

There are many ways to participate throughout the year, depending on current health regulations.

In-class volunteering

- Watch for e-mails to come home about opportunities to participate in class activities. Parents and legal guardians must have a current Calgary Police Check with vulnerable sector to participate in class volunteering (dated within the last 3 years). Please submit police checks to office@aspenhillmontessori.ca with your child's campus, name and student ID.

Parent-teacher interviews

- Occur in ~November and ~April each year as per our published calendar. Watch for online registration and goal setting forms to go home in advance of the dates. Interviews may be in person or by ZOOM.

Participation on social media

- Follow our classroom activities on Facebook and Instagram channels.

Philanthropic opportunities

- Donate your used books, craft supplies, and toys – we leverage them in our summer programs. Please ask us about which items we can accept used if you are cleaning out your closet at home!
- Help us purchase exciting extension items for the class or playground – ask to find out current needs.
- Purchase books for our Centre – an ongoing wish list is available on request
- Cheque writing– donate an amount that you prefer to the Centre

This document is provided for information only; it does not need to be acknowledged to be a member of our student body.

Photography and Tours

Reviewed and updated Oct. 1 2018; June 4 2019; revised Nov. 19 2019; updated June 10 2020; updated July 31 2020; reviewed Feb. 18 2021; updated June 24 2021; reviewed Jan. 18 2022; updated July 9 2022; updated Dec. 1 2022; updated Mar. 1 2023; updated Dec. 1 2023; updated Jan. 1 2024; updated Dec. 27 2024; updated Feb. 9 2025

Academic/Practicum Photography

Added Nov. 19 2019; revised June 10 2020; updated Mar. 1 2023; confirmed Dec. 1 2023; updated Jan. 1 2024; revised Dec. 27 2024

Teachers and practicum students take photos of children at care to showcase to parents how their child operates in the classroom environment. These photos become part of a closed Centre system or used in academic settings by practicum students to complete learning, and are only available to administration, teachers/practicum students, and registered parents/guardians of the child. These photos are taken regardless of the Centre's Image Release, as they are not available for the public. By default, all students and staff may participate in these photos, with understanding that on use faces are covered by icons.

Marketing Photography

revised Nov. 19 2019; updated June 10 2020; updated July 9 2022; confirmed Dec. 1 2023

From time to time, there will be photos taken by hired professionals and / or staff of key Centre activities and events to showcase our work on social media accounts and to prospective parents. If you are willing to have your child be featured as part of our Centre family, you must acknowledge such in an Image Release form, held on record with the Centre for the duration of attendance. This is done as part of your application in our online system. If you decline for your child to participate, you agree that your child may be removed from group photos and / or have their face hidden if a picture including them is featured online. You can change your child's Image Release status at any time.

Per-Child Photos

revised Nov. 19 2019; updated June 10 2020; updated July 9 2022; revised Dec. 1 2023

We provide the option of annual photos of your child through a professional photo vendor. Photo sessions are done on-site in October and June to capture unique poses that capture your child's personality and provide a wonderful memory for years to come. We will take your child's photo unless you specifically decline via office@aspenhillmontessori.ca. The photography session is provided free of charge; any photos you choose to order are at your investment. Pricing is provided after the shoot.

Open Houses

Revised Dec. 1 2023

Open houses are conducted in evenings in late fall and early winter every year for parents. We do not provide personal tours within the care day to reduce distraction for students and ensure control of exposure to strangers.

Acknowledgement of this policy occurs in our online application. In the case of discrepancy, this offline policy document will apply.

Program Review and Improvement

Added Dec. 10 2019; updated June 10 2020; updated July 31 2020; modified Feb. 18 2021; updated June 24 2021; updated July 9 2022; affirmed Dec. 1 2022; updated Mar. 1 2023; updated Dec. 1 2023; revised Feb. 21 2024; confirmed Dec. 27 2024

Aspen Hill Montessori aims to continuously improve and grow to meet the needs, ideas and expectations of our community, staff, parents and attendees.

Staff members and parents of current children are invited to provide feedback on their experience with the Centre, as well as their thoughts around overall Centre programming, at minimum once a year through a formal survey. The survey may be distributed electronically through a tool such as Google Forms. Parents can also provide face to face feedback about their child / family experience during parent-teacher interviews in fall and spring each year.

Community members are invited to participate in a survey once per year to evaluate how our engagement with them has been, and where we could improve our relationship.

Questions for our surveys are developed using recommendations on best practices for Centres from across Canada, Provincial Childcare Licensing, and consultation with the Centre ownership group.

Of course, we welcome informal feedback at any time of the year. Parents, community members and staff have the following avenues open to them to communicate with the Centre:

- E-mail to the Centre through office@aspenhillmontessori.ca
- Talking to a teacher or administrator through a scheduled meeting
- Phoning in to a senior administrator at 403-607-1880 during regular business hours

Feedback that is gathered is analyzed as a collective whole and provided to the administration / ownership group of the Centre for consideration. Where possible, we take feedback into consideration as we plan for future growth of the Centre, including investment of time, money and resources.

This policy is provided for information only; acknowledgment is not required.

Significant Injuries and Returning to Care

Created Feb. 21 2023; updated Mar. 1 2023; updated Dec. 1 2023; confirmed Dec. 27 2024

Students may acquire temporary injuries while outside of care that affect their ability to participate independently and safely in care. These are called 'significant injuries'. These injuries may include but are not limited to deep cuts, stitches, broken / fractured bones, twisted wrists or ankles, concussions, burns, temporarily covered eyes, infections that affect balance, etc. *Please note, permanent or long-term (2 months++ impairments) that are caused by an event, such as being permanently in a wheelchair, are not covered by this policy and are handled one-on-one with affected families.*

We understand that you may wish your child to return to care, to ensure value for your fees paid and to maintain regularity of your child's schedule. However, injuries like these can make it difficult or impossible for a child to return safely to care. For example, if they cannot use their wrist, it will drastically limit the ability to work safely in class (carrying materials, pulling out chairs, balancing to sit down, etc.). A child who is on crutches may stumble on stairs and further injure a leg. A child who has one eye covered may have balance affected, and may mis-step outdoors or tumble off a footstool, increasing the recovery time / adding to the injury.

It is critical to reach out to office@aspenhillmontessori.ca when your child has experienced a significant injury, BEFORE they return to care, so we can create an appropriate return plan together. **Aspen Hill administration reserves the right to refuse care to children who arrive at care with a significant injury without a return plan in place. It is also at the Centre's discretion to determine what it considers a significant injury.**

If your child has incurred a significant injury, your doctor will provide direction on how / when / if your child can return to care. Aspen Hill requires a **detailed** and **personalized** note from your child's medical team to assist us in determining when your child can return, the activities they can safely do, and specific indications of what they cannot do. *Please note, Aspen Hill follows the most cautious approach provided by physicians (i.e. if they suggest returning to care in 1-3 weeks, we will follow the 3 week recommendation).* Further instructions on the medical note will be provided by Administration as we set up a return-to-care plan with your family.

Important things to note around significant injury situations:

- The younger the child, the more likely it is that they will not be allowed to return to care until they are fully healed with a doctor's note to confirm.
- Aspen Hill is a group care facility. As such, administration and teachers cannot provide one-on-one support constantly throughout the day to an injured child.
- Injured students must be able to move independently around the facility with their class, which includes using the bathroom independently, going up and down stairs, and putting on / taking off outdoor clothing with support.
 - If the family wants to provide an aide for the child to allow them to return to care safely, the aide must be over 18, and must have a Calgary Police Check with vulnerable sector before assisting in the facility.
- Injured children cannot remain in class during outdoor / gym play due to supervision requirements. We can have them sit on a seat outdoors and observe play/have them sit and observe gym time, but we would need their full cooperation under parents' direction to listen to the teachers about remaining seated.

- If your child returns to care before the injury is fully healed, even with a supporting doctor's note:
 - the Centre reserves the right to require that your family sign a waiver that disclaims Aspen Hill from liability if the injury is made worse by the child returning to care, AND
 - if your child is in pain or discomfort due to the injury, you will be called to pick your child up within 30 minutes.

While your child is waiting to return to care, we would be happy to set up weekly ZOOM calls with their class, if the child is interested / willing, to have them join for virtual carpet time. We are also happy to send at-home, parent-supported activities to try if they are interested.

Thank you for understanding that all tuition fees remain non-refundable/non-transferrable and must continue to be paid as per your care contract during your child's absence due to significant injury.

Acknowledgement of this policy occurs in our online Records application. In the case of discrepancy, this offline policy document will apply.

Schedule Changes

Added Dec. 10 2019; updated Jan. 15 2020; updated June 10 2020; reviewed Feb. 18 2021; updated June 24 2021; updated Jan. 18 2022; revised July 9 2022; updated Dec. 1 2022; updated Mar. 1 2023; updated Dec. 1 2023; updated Dec. 27 2024; revised Feb. 9 2025; removed Mar. 12 2025

This policy has been removed as of Mar. 12 2025, as all students attend the same schedule of core care.

Student Assessments

Added Dec. 2 2020; updated Feb. 18 2021 and June 24 2021; updated Jan. 18 2022; updated July 9 2022; updated Dec. 1 2022; expanded July 31 2023; updated Dec. 1 2023; reformatted Feb. 21 2024; revised Dec. 27 2024

Aspen Hill Montessori observes children in our care on an ongoing basis. Our observations are done to note the child's development socially, emotionally, academically, and physically, as well as to see how else we can meet the needs of the child's safety, development, and engagement.

Methods may include:

- Observation of a child's activities in the care room, gym or outdoor spaces during interaction with others (other children or staff)
- Observation of a child's engagement in various self-directed Montessori activities
- Observation of a child's ability to meet age-appropriate and safe interaction within the flow of a classroom day
- One-on-one activities between a student and teacher and observations of engagement and response during these activities
- Observation of the movement of the group and participation of a child within the group
- Small group and individual question-and-response opportunities; group games; collaborative participation lessons with opportunities to share knowledge

Observation interactions are always appropriate to the student's age, developmental and cultural background; are constructive; and focus on what a student can do. This information is used by teachers to be informed about, to reflect upon and to initiate activities that enhance their students' learning. In a Montessori environment, students are involved in their own assessment on a daily basis. This gives them internal motivation and responsibility for their own learning.

'Tests' (isolated, timed events where each child is expected to perform a series of activities to 'pass' or 'fail') are not part of the assessment methods at Aspen Hill. Our education activities focus on a broad range of outcomes across the social, emotional, and academic perspectives of the whole child.

Solution-focused observations

Revised July 31 2023; updated Dec. 1 2023; revised Dec. 27 2024

Educators / administrators are encouraged to share ideas between each other, and between classrooms, to ensure the experience for all children is beneficial, safe, and growth-oriented. Educators share neutral to positive observations weekly in an online application, that parents can connect to.

At times, educators may notice patterns of behaviour or differences in learning style that require additional support for a child's growth and development, safety in care, and / or the safety of others in care around the child. Educators will observe for up to two weeks, and involve other senior educators and / or administrators on ideas for solutions to manage or resolve the behaviors. If educators have identified a challenge area for your child's learning or care that extends beyond the two-week period, you will be notified that additional observation or supports are needed.

A meeting will be offered in-person or via ZOOM. During this meeting, a plan will be developed with your support as to how best to support your child and resolve noted behaviours. Based on the outcome of these observations, different plans or approaches may be put in place to support the best outcome for all children in mind, and are unique to each situation. Plans may continue to evolve based on ongoing

observations as we determine what works best. If a parent is willing and / or the situation requires, external support from third-party specialists may be made available to continue the observations and / or support from a specialist level.

At no time are early childhood educators or administrators that work directly for Aspen Hill authorized or permitted to label, diagnose or define a child's unique learning needs, unless parents have previously identified and provided that diagnosis via an outside medical source.

Please refer to our Best Interest of the Child policy for more information.

Communicating observations

Expanded July 31 2023; confirmed Dec. 27 2024

Communication regarding observations in class take place in a wide variety of ways at Aspen Hill Montessori, including:

- Photos and observations in our online sharing platform
- Two parent-teacher conferences per learning season
- Meeting at the door with parents
- Meeting by ZOOM with parents
- Additional parent-teacher conferences as requested or required

Report cards

Revised July 31 2023; revised Dec. 27 2024

Aspen Hill Montessori does not produce report cards.

References and recommendations

Revised July 31 2023; updated Dec. 1 2023; revised Dec. 27 2024

We are happy to support references / recommendations for children that have:

- attended care consistently with us with minimal absences for at least 3 months
- been able to adjust to care and participate safely at an age-appropriate level

If you are applying to a private school, most will have a reference or recommendation form / questionnaire that they will provide. A senior administrator is happy to complete this with your child's most recent teacher in confidence to the Centre, and return it directly to the school you are applying to - simply e-mail the form / link to the form to admissions@aspenhillmontessori.ca. Please note, there is a 7 business day turn-around for all requests.

If the school you are applying to requires/requests a reference or recommendation letter, please submit the request directly to admissions@aspenhillmontessori.ca OR let us know the school you are applying to. Please note, there is a 7 business day turn-around for all letter-based requests.

Educators are not permitted to provide direct personal recommendations or references for children.

Acknowledgement of this policy occurs in our online Records application. In the case of discrepancy, this offline policy document will apply.

Summer Care (July + Aug)

Created Feb. 5 2024; updated Dec. 27 2024; revised Feb. 9 2025

Our learning season is September of the current year through August of the following year. Students who are continuing into the following learning season are required to remain registered for both July and August, and simply update their desired optional programming at noted times throughout the year.

Children who will be over 6 as of July 1 are not eligible to attend our summer programs, and automatically will be withdrawn from care with our Centre as of the end of June.

Eligibility

Children who are currently enrolled in our programs are prioritized for care in summer. If space remains, children who are new to Aspen Hill and enrolled for fall may be invited to start care sooner, based on parent interest.

Children must be current or upcoming AHM students to participate. From time to time, a public summer offering may be made - please check with admissions@aspenhillmontessori.ca to inquire.

Acknowledgement of this policy occurs in our online Child Records application. In the case of discrepancy, this offline policy document will apply.

Supervision and Observation

Reviewed and updated Nov. 15 2018; reviewed June 4 2019; updated Nov. 19 2019; reviewed June 10 2020; updated Feb. 18 2021; updated June 24 2021; expanded June 29 2021; updated Jan. 18 2022; expanded July 9 2022; affirmed Dec. 1 2022, revised June 15 2023; updated Dec. 1 2023; confirmed Dec. 27 2024; updated Feb. 9 2025

Every child at Aspen Hill Montessori is actively supervised. This involves training staff members on active supervision techniques, and following up regularly with staff throughout the day to observe that staff are always in a position to observe each child, respond to individual needs, and support children as necessary.

All staff members must complete and clear a Calgary Police Criminal Check Record including vulnerable sector categories within 6 months of starting at the Centre, or within 8 weeks of employment. Educators must hold an Alberta Childcare Certification, and must carry valid First Aid certification.

The ratio of adults to children as per Alberta Licensing is a minimum of 1:3 for children under 12 months; 1:4 for children under 19 months; 1:6 for ages 19 months – under 3 years; 1:8 for ages 3-4.5; and 1:10 for ages 4.5 +.

Supervision of children - indoors/transitions

Updated Feb. 18 2021; updated June 24 2021; expanded July 9 2022; expanded June 15 2023; expanded Dec. 1 2023; confirmed Dec. 27 2024

Our supervision tactics include:

- Engaging each student regularly throughout the day
- Having face-to-name recognition of children in our classrooms and school
- Arranging the classroom to enable close monitoring of children
- Accounting for the number of children entering the classroom at start times and referencing attendance records throughout the day at key points of entry / exit into class
- Providing an appropriate ratio for supervision of teachers to students as per Alberta Provincial Childcare Licensing
- Ensuring that doors to any upper floors and outside rooms are secured and / or monitored
- Educating children about the importance of informing staff members before leaving the classroom space to the bathroom, and supervising children with float staff while in the bathrooms to provide assistance as needed
- Visibility and accessibility in areas in which the children are engaged in activity and lessons, including calling for an additional staff member when necessary
- Being alert to and aware of the potential for incidents and injury throughout the classrooms
- Ensuring that no child or group of children are left alone at any time throughout the day without an educator being present
- Supervising children's daily arrival and departure from the Centre and being aware of the person who has authority to collect a child
- Ensuring that direct-to-teacher handoff is done when moving a child from entry to classroom (making verbal and eye contact)
- Evaluating supervision practices regularly

Supervision of children - outdoors/transitions

Updated June 4 2019; revised June 10 2020; updated Feb. 18 2021; revised July 9 2022; modified Dec. 1 2022; confirmed Dec. 1 2023; confirmed Dec. 27 2024

Children are lined up at their classroom / learning space exit door before they go outside and lined up at the appropriate entrance on their return to the classroom. Staff perform head counts out loud and communicate with verbal exchange to ensure all children are present before departing from the learning area to an outdoor destination.

Children may have outdoor experiences inside a fenced play space or in open areas on the property depending on the campus. In spaces that are fenced, staff spread out throughout the space and are assigned to supervise small groups of children so every child has a direct set of eyes on them. In spaces that are not fenced, staff will spread out on an outer boundary around the children group and ensure that children do not leave the perimeter.

Staff are expected to be actively supervising at all times while children are outdoors, and while staff are in ratio. Active supervision means:

- staff are equally spread out throughout the playground / play space, and are not next to each other
- staff are engaged in play with children
- staff that are not engaged in play with children are facing in to the play space, with their backs to the least number of children, and are circulating throughout the entire space regularly
- staff regularly alternate participation with scanning the play space for potential concerns / anticipating children's behavior that may need support
- staff are not in conversation with each other
- cell phones cannot be out and in-use unless a staff member is quickly (less than 3 seconds) capturing a photo of a child for observations
- staff routinely do headcounts of the children they are accountable for in the play space
- staff look for 'hot spots' or 'busy spots' of play, as well as anticipating behavior or groupings that could potentially lead to injury, and position themselves near those points

Children are encouraged to explore safe risky play to help them expand their physical abilities and vocabulary. Risky play is done with safety in mind and is focused on climbing, balancing and experimenting with materials that are available, or on natural playground items that may be in place.

Depending on the campus, older children (3+) may use non-traditional loose parts outdoor to encourage experimentation and creative thinking. These can include sanded wood planks, milk crates, fabric, plastic pots, PVC piping, dryer hoses, and more. Loose part use is supervised.

If you are picking your child up from our outside areas at day's end, please be sure to make contact with the teachers to let them know that you are leaving with your child. Please note that once the transfer of responsibility is made from teacher to parent, the Centre is no longer responsible to supervise your child. Please depart the outdoor play area promptly upon pickup.

Supervision and response approach for children deemed to be a 'run risk' during transitions to and from outside play

Added June 29 2021; updated Jan. 18 2022; updated July 9 2022; confirmed Dec. 1 2023; confirmed Dec. 27 2024

Ensuring the safety of all children in our care during transitions to and from the outdoors is an important part of our Centre mandate.

At the start of every learning season, staff are provided training about strategies for successful transition times involving the outdoors and other areas of our Centres. Training includes how to better prevent and then stop children safely who may dart or run from staff due to challenges coping with transition times. In-person training is provided with demonstrations as part of the staff orientation, as well as sharing articles with best practices from industry. We also share the negative physical consequences that can occur to children when best practices are not followed. Staff must sign a policy confirmation stating that they understand the preventative strategies in place, and that they commit to implementing them.

We also train and monitor staff on our standard exit and entry approach:

To exit the Centre for outside play, all classes line up inside their exit door. Supervising teachers do a head count. One teacher goes in front of the group to open the door, and the other teacher stays at the back of the group. The children go out in a line. They line up against the outside wall with a teacher in front. The door is locked. They proceed in a line to the fenced play space with one teacher in front, one in back. When they arrive at the play destination, teachers repeat the head count. When play is completed, they reverse this process (head count before departure, staff member at front and back, line up against outside wall, unlock door, enter, lock door, repeat head count.)

The first strategy is prevention. Preventative steps taken to reduce issues during transition times may include, depending on the classroom:

1. Using a 'walking rope' to and from the outdoor fenced play space for all classrooms of children under 3 years of age, and in classrooms where there are children who struggle with transitions or following directions
2. Ensuring that children use the outdoor fenced play space at all times when under 3 years of age, and when over 3 years of age if there are children in the class who struggle with transitions or following directions
3. Playing games with children indoors and outdoors at appropriate ages that help to develop skills in listening and motion control (Red Light, Green Light; What Time is it Mr. Wolf; Simon Says, etc.)
4. Ensuring that adequate, stepped-approach warnings leading to a transition time have been provided (10 minutes, 5 minutes, 1 minute)
5. Securing assistance from an Administrator for opening and closing the entry door to allow teachers to focus on the children during movement outside and in.

From time to time, a child may be noted to struggle with transitions during this process. Struggles may be identified by a child being unwilling to come back inside, be unwilling to hold a teacher's hand / walking rope, or not being willing or able to follow directions on safety-related matters. It may also be noted if a child runs or dart away from a staff member.

Upon noticing concerns, the teachers in the class immediately connect with a Senior Administrator to make them aware of the challenge. The Administrator will review the prevention tactics with staff to

ensure that all strategies are being effectively implemented. Additional staff will also be made available to assist the class during transition times.

A ZOOM meeting would then be set up with parents to share observed behaviour and concerns, and to develop next-step solutions.

Solutions in addition to the prevention tactics above may include:

- Having the child be secured in arms or by hand with a caregiver before a transition is announced / occurs
- Having one caregiver dedicated to ensuring the child's successful transition between indoors and out
- Having the child hold a caregivers' hand at all times when in transition between indoors and outdoors, and in a non-fenced area
- Having the child be carried in-arms until the fenced space is reached
- Walking with the child in a child-safe backpack harness with the parents' permission while in non-fenced spaces
- Transporting the child in a stroller or wagon with the parents' permission while in non-fenced spaces

Solutions would be documented and added to the child's file. Any child that has been a run risk in the past will continue to have solutions applied for the remainder of their current learning season, unless additional consultation with the parents occurs.

Ongoing transition run risks that present a potential for serious harm to self during transitions may require additional measures, up to and including evaluation of suitability for the programs available at Aspen Hill.

Child observations

Updated Nov. 19 2019; reviewed June 10 2020; updated Feb. 18 2021 and June 24 2021; reviewed July 9 2022; updated June 15 2023; confirmed Dec. 1 2023; confirmed Dec. 27 2024; updated Feb. 9 2025

Shared communication is an integral part of providing an optimum experience for your child. We use a mobile app, currently DailyConnect, to share social and emotional observations of your child each week as well as photos of their experience at care.

Academic skills and progress are tracked locally on-site, and are shared during parent-teacher interviews twice each learning season. Generally, the first set of interviews occurs in mid-November, and the second set in April. Interviews are pre-booked and are generally 20 minutes in length. These are usually held in person.

Special meetings outside conferences may also be arranged. Should you need to address a teacher regarding a concern, please email office@aspenhillmontessori.ca so that Administration can set up a meeting. Please do not attempt to engage instructors directly before or after care times, as their attention must remain on the children.

Acknowledgement of this policy occurs in our online Student Records application. In the case of discrepancy, this offline policy document will apply.

Technology

Reviewed and updated Oct. 1 2018; reviewed June 4 2019; reviewed and modified Nov. 19 2019; reviewed and modified June 10 2020; confirmed Feb. 18 2021; reviewed June 24 2021; reviewed Jan. 18 2022; updated Feb. 1 2022; reviewed July 9 2022; updated Dec. 1 2022; updated Mar. 1 2023; confirmed Dec. 1 2023; confirmed Dec. 27 2024; revised Feb. 9 2025; updated Mar. 12 2025

As part of Montessori philosophy, we work to ensure technology is minimized in the teaching of students during our core Montessori programming times of 9AM - 3:30PM.

Between 7:45AM - 8:45AM and 3:45-5:15PM, depending on activities planned, educators are permitted to use short, age-appropriate videos to assist in providing optional Special Interest Club topics (Bambini and Casa only). All videos are submitted for review in advance and are supervised interactively to foster learning and discussion. From time to time, we may also leverage age-appropriate cartoons as part of our planned Casual Days as a treat or occasionally as part of our Summer Program to encourage rest during the hotter times of the day. All shows are pre-screened and supervised during watch times.

If you do not wish for your child to watch any digital presentations or shows, please have your child attend during Montessori hours only (8:45AM arrival - 3:45PM).

We encourage families in our program to supervise all 'screen time' at home to ensure appropriate topics and content.

Children are not permitted to have cell phones, smart watches, walkie-talkies, and other digital toys / tablets / communication devices to care. Items found will be held to return to parents at pick up time.

An online / mobile application is used to communicate information home on a regular schedule about children's academic, social and emotional progress in the classroom.

Acknowledgement of this policy occurs in our online Student Records application. In the case of discrepancy, this offline policy document will apply.

Toileting at Care

Created Jan. 30 2023; updated Mar. 1 2023; updated Dec. 1 2023; updated Dec. 27 2024

The Centre is pleased to support children registered in the Bambini program with independent toilet learning when they have demonstrated emotional, social and physical readiness at home and at care. *Toilet-learning is not available in our Nido program, and children in our Casa programs must be 100% toileting independently.*

Toilet learning must begin at home. Please advise office@aspenhillmontessori.ca a week before you are hoping to continue toilet learning in care, so that we can consult with the teaching team to confirm that your child is ready to learn at care (see things we look for below). We will also send you appropriate guidance sheets.

We recommend learning on the adult toilet, with a seat insert / step stool, to mimic what the child will experience at care. We find that children who learn on a plastic potty stool / child potty have a harder time transitioning. Please avoid training on 'ladder' toilet seats at home as we cannot replicate this environment in care.

Toilet learning in the Centre is supported within the following considerations of age-appropriate child guidance:

- You must be successfully toilet learning at home, with a consistent decrease in accidents over 4+ days, and willingness from the child to learn
- Your child must show a number of indicators **at care** that they are physically ready to train (pulling at a wet or dirty diaper, hiding to pee or poop, showing interest in others' use of the potty, or copying their behavior; having a dry diaper for a longer-than-usual time; awakening dry from a nap; telling teachers that they're about to go, are going or have just gone in their diaper)
- Your child is willing and able to verbally consent to using the toilet
- Your child shows willingness to begin to assist with pulling their clothing down / up to use the toilet

Please note, we do not use bribes / treats / rewards for toilet learning as per the Montessori approach and appropriate child guidance techniques. We also do not shame or punish children for accidents or misses. All guidance is done neutrally and with support. We cannot place the child on a toilet without their consent.

If your child is having a number of accidents, or if accidents start to increase at one point during training (regression), the Centre reserves the right to require that the child wear PullUps or thick trainer underwear (https://www.amazon.ca/Training-Absorbent-Toddler-Underwear-Baby/dp/B083YW9BJ4/ref=asc_df_B083YW9BJ4/) until a pattern of non-accident days (3+ days in a row) emerges, for the health and cleanliness of the classroom setting.

Please note that your child may train at different rates for bowel movements or urinating - until consistency is seen for both, again, we reserve the right to require that your child wear PullUps / trainer underwear until a pattern of non-accident days (3+ days in a row) emerges for BOTH bathrooming types. Again, this is for the health and cleanliness of the classroom setting.

There may be times when your child regresses during toilet learning, and becomes visibly emotionally upset in the Centre around toileting. Please note, if your child does not consent to trying / using the toilet with gentle reminders and encouragement, teachers cannot force the child to sit / cannot physically place the child on the toilet as per appropriate child guidance. In these situations, we will reach out to discuss the situation / pause the toilet learning in the Centre. *The Centre reserves the right to request that your child continue in diapers while in the Bambini program until such time that your child is willing to positively participate in and consent to use the toilet.*

Casa children experiencing toileting concerns

Children enrolled in our Casa programs must be 100% toileting independently for at least 2 months prior to program placement.

From time to time, children in the Casa program may experience temporary toileting regression. This is usually presented as more frequent than usual toileting accidents when a child was previously trained. Administration will reach out to establish a plan with parents, assuming support of the child, to resolve concerns. Until consistency is seen for both, again, we reserve the right to require that your child wear PullUps / trainer underwear until a pattern of non-accident days (3+ days in a row) emerges for BOTH bathrooming types. Again, this is for the health and cleanliness of the classroom setting.

Our Casa classrooms are not able to accommodate children long-term who are not able to toilet independently or who have numerous accidents (more than three) per week. If a Casa child's toileting cannot be resolved within a 30-day period, Administration will connect to discuss alternatives to program placement.

Acknowledgement of this policy occurs in our online Records application. In the case of discrepancy, this offline policy document will apply.

Transportation

Reviewed and updated July 2018; reviewed June 4 2019/Nov. 19 2019; reviewed June 10 2020; Feb. 18 2021; June 24 2021; updated Jan. 18 2022; reviewed July 9 2022; modified Dec. 1 2022; updated Mar. 1 2023; confirmed Dec. 1 2023; revised Dec. 27 2024

We do not provide core transportation for our students to and from our facilities. Each family is responsible to ensure that they have safe and reliable means to convey their children. If an alternative provider will be picking up your child, they must be on our approved pick up list, and may be expected to show ID at the door.

Please note that the speed limit in all of our parking lots is 5KM / hr. Careful driving is essential to prevent accidents.

For children that are part of our Advanced Senior Casa/Senior Casa programs, transportation will be provided to and from field trips if offered. Separate permission forms will go home in these instances. All current transportation approaches and policies in place by Alberta Education as well as related to group transportation of children under Alberta Traffic and Road laws will be followed.

Acknowledgement of this policy occurs in our online Student Records application. In the case of discrepancy, this offline policy document will apply.

Unforeseen Large-Scale Events

Created May 1 2020; updated June 1 2020; updated July 31 2020; updated Feb. 18 2021; reviewed June 24 2021; updated Jan. 18 2022; updated July 9 2022; affirmed Dec. 1 2022; updated Dec. 1 2023; confirmed Dec. 27 2024

Unforeseen, large-scale events may occur during the current learning season. These events would affect at minimum the entire structure that the Centre is located in, and at most potentially the entire continent and / or world. Examples of unforeseen large-scale events can include but are not limited to:

- Disease / pandemic
- Health emergency (fatality, serious injury, tainted water, sewage backup, etc.)
- Fire / explosion
- War
- Natural disaster (tornado, flood, windstorm, earthquake, etc.)
- Change in land ownership / sudden lease cancellation of a space the Centre occupies

In the event of an unforeseen large-scale event occurring, the Centre and every family's priority must be focused on following direction from the appropriate authorities (Provincial Licensing, Alberta Health Services, the City of Calgary, the Province of Alberta, Federal Canadian Government, etc.). The Centre will endeavor to the best of its ability to provide communication to registered families regarding next steps specific to the Centre. However, in the event of unforeseen large-scale events, registered families acknowledge that communications may not be possible in a timely manner. Communications will be transmitted by e-mail, posted at the location if possible, and / or through the Centre's phone voice mail.

Registered families and staff acknowledge that the Centre will not be equipped to provide immediate information requests, especially regarding refunds and withdrawals, and will not respond to requests for such. As information becomes available, and the Aspen Hill Montessori Administration Team is able to form next steps, information will be communicated to families and staff. **Until other notice is provided, the Centre's standard policies will continue to apply.**

Regardless of the above, the Administration Team commits to working with all registered families and staff and the appropriate authorities as best able to provide equitable resolutions considering the reality at the time of the unforeseen event.

Acknowledgement of this policy occurs in our online Student Records application. In the case of discrepancy, this offline policy document will apply.

Weather and Outdoor Experiences

Re-added and updated August 7 2019; reviewed Nov. 19 2019; revised June 10 2020; updated July 31 2020; updated Feb. 18 2021; reviewed June 24 2021; updated Jan. 18 2022; updated July 10 2022; affirmed Dec. 1 2022; updated Mar. 1 2023, updated Dec. 1 2023; reviewed Dec. 27 2024

Children and staff who attend / support Aspen Hill Montessori programs will have outdoor time each day. Time outside per instance can range from 20 minutes to 1 hour. The Centre uses Environment Canada as our weather resource for official decisions: https://weather.gc.ca/city/pages/ab-52_metric_e.html

Although infrequent, outdoor time may be limited in length or cancelled for temperatures below -18 degrees Celsius including wind chill, above 28 degrees Celsius, or where conditions render any beneficial activity pointless or high-risk. *However, it is important to understand that AHM campuses are not limited by temperature as per Alberta Childcare Licensing and Alberta Health Services.* Administrators at each campus review the individual microclimates in our play spaces immediately prior to going outside to make final decisions. The best interest of the children and the likelihood of ability to conduct beneficial learning activities will always be considered (for example, shaded activities and drinking plenty of water for hot days; shelter from wind and exposure to sun where possible for cold days). The age group of your child's program will also be considered (Nido and Junior Bambini children may not go out on days where Senior Casa children do.) If you choose to keep your child at home on cold or hot days, please advise absent@aspenhillmontessori.ca.

We are unable to accommodate requests (even with a medical note) to have a child routinely refrain from outdoor activities as we do not have staff to support one-to-one supervision. Children attending care are expected to be well enough to participate in all activities. If your child is unable to be outdoors due to recovering from illness, please keep them at home until they are well enough to fully participate.

If your child has a sun/cold exposure condition (rash, chest congestion, etc.) that is supported by a medical note and emergency plan, we are happy to support by dressing your child in layers of clothing / specialized clothing and / or non-medicated creams you provide that allows them to fully participate in care. You are also welcome to provide a private-pay aide to remain with your child indoors during outdoor times. If assistive supports are unavailable for their specific condition or if preference is for them not to be outdoors regardless of supports available, please talk to our Admissions team to plan forward for ending care (see our Refunds and Withdrawals Policy for more information).

If a child is reported ill while at care and is waiting for pickup, they will remain with an administrator inside until they are claimed.

All children and staff attending and supporting our programs are expected to have appropriate outdoor clothing on-site at all times. **Please see the separate Outdoor Clothing Kit List for a complete description of required items.**

Acknowledgement of this policy occurs in our online Student Records application. In the case of discrepancy, this offline policy document will apply.

Wondering More? Resources and Links

Confirmed Feb. 18 2021, June 24 2021; updated July 9 2022; affirmed Dec. 1 2022; updated Mar. 1 2023; confirmed Dec. 1 2023; expanded Dec. 27 2024; updated Feb. 9 2025

We encourage our families and parents to reach out for ideas, assistance, and support in raising your family! We're here to support each other and ensure that you have a successful experience as a parent. If you are experiencing difficulties or have questions about anything relating to raising your student, please reach out in confidence. Additional community partners are available in our online parent portal via www.aspenhillmontessori.ca.

Child care questions

Childcare Connect – for questions about finding childcare, Affordability Grant, childcare or provincial regulations....1-844-644-5165

Health questions

Alberta Health Services Environmental Public Health - the division that supports childcares, for questions on health standards in childcare: <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/eph/eph.aspx>

Health Link Alberta – nurse assistance for basic health questions: Dial 811 on any phone

Alberta Children's Hospital – 2888 Shaganappi Trail NW, 24 hour emergency care

Help finding a family doctor: <http://search.cpsa.ca/physiciansearch>

Priority allergens in children: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/food-nutrition/food-safety/food-allergies-intolerances/food-allergies.html>

Aspen Pediatric Speech Support - for assistance with ESL or speech delays:

<http://www.aspenpediatricsspeech.com/>

Westside Child Psychology - for assistance with behavior concerns, delays:

<https://www.westsidechildpsychology.com/>

Family questions

Family Violence Information Line

403-310-1818

Gambling Helpline

1-866-332-2322

Mental Health Crisis Line

1-877-303-2642

Smoker's Help Line

1-866-332-2322

Parenting classes and support through Families Matter: <https://familiesmatter.ca/our-programs/>

This information is provided as a service to parents, and does not form a part of school policy.