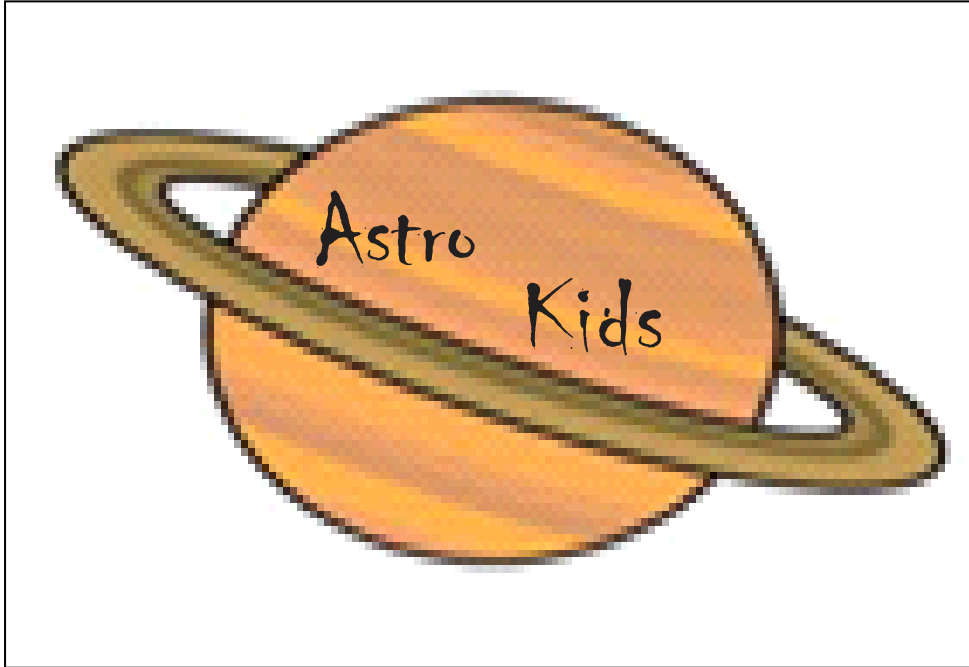




PARENT POLICY HANDBOOK

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INTRODUCTION:

Please read the school regulations carefully so that the general running of the school is understood by all.

We undertake to provide a safe and loving environment for your child and cherish him/her as an individual.

Our mission is to provide a combined Montessori and Departmental education that celebrates the individual gifts of each child. Nurture a passion for learning strong principles and equip them for academic excellence.

➤ PARENT TIP

Research shows the most successful students (and people!) are those whose loved ones are involved in their daily lives and education!

1.) Fee conditions & Payments:

- School fees are to be paid by the first day of each month.
- We reserve the right to deny admittance to any child whose tuition is not paid on the due date.
- Interest will be charged on all overdue fees.
- Proof of direct deposits must be submitted to the school
- One month's fees (non-refundable deposit) is due in order to secure your child's position at the school
- A terms written notice (four month's) or a full terms fees in lieu of notice is required if you wish to withdraw your child from the school.

➤ The Pre-School offers the following programs:

✓	Grade R – Half day	08:00 – 12:30/13:00
✓	Grade 0 – Half day	08:00 – 12:30
✓	Grade 00 – Half day full Time	08:00 – 12:30
✓	Grade 00 – Half day -3 x per week	08:00 – 12:30
✓	Islamic Classes	13:00 – 14:00
✓	Structured After Care	12:30 – 17:00

- Our school runs as per the Government prescribed 4 terms.
- Please note: School is closed the day before each term begins, in order for teachers to prep for the upcoming term.
- Children are to be dropped off by **7:45**. A late arrival causes a child to miss part of the work cycle and is also extremely disruptive for the class. If your child is late, please do not chat to the teacher/ assistants as they are busy with the children.
- The half day program finishes at 12:30pm, please note that your child needs to be collected by no later than 1:45pm, any time after that we will be charging a **casual fee of R50 per day**.
- A **R500 fee** will be charged to children on a full day package should the child be collected after 17:30. This amount will be invoiced directly to you.
- If somebody else is collecting your child, please notify us in advance as we will not release your child until we have made contact with a parent.
- Please notify the school before 08H00 if your child is unable to attend school.

2.) Sick Policy:

- A sick child or a child showing signs of illness may not be brought to school until he/she has fully recovered.
- Should your child be on any medication such as antibiotics, please keep him/ her at home.
- Should your child be absent due to a contagious or infectious illness, please notify the school immediately.
- The children are taught to wash their hands after: using the bathroom, wiping their nose, before eating and whenever they are coughed or sneezed upon.
- Should your child be on medication please note that the school staff are not permitted to administer any medication to the children.

➤ *Healthy is happy so let's try our best to keep our school that way!*

❖ Symptoms requiring removal of child from school:

- ✓ **Fever:** Fever is defined as having a temperature of 37,8 degrees celcius or higher (a child needs to be fever free for a minimum of 24 hours before returning to school, that means the child is fever free without the aid of fever reducing substance-eg Panado.)
- ✓ **Fever AND sore throat,** rash, vomiting, diarrhoea, earache, irritability, or confusion.
- ✓ **Diarrhoea:** runny, watery, bloody stools, or 2 or more loose stools within last hours.
- ✓ **Vomiting:** 2 or more times in a 24 hour period. Note: please do not bring your child if they have vomited in the night.
- ✓ **Breathing** trouble, sore throat, swollen glands, loss of voice, hacking or continuous coughing.
- ✓ **Runny nose** (other than clear), draining eyes or ears.
- ✓ **Frequent** scratching of body or scalp, lice, rash, or any other spots that resemble childhood diseases, including ringworm.
- ✓ **Child is irritable,** continuously crying, or requires more attention than we can provide without hurting the health, safety or well-being of the other children in our care.

Note: If you are not sure whether or not it is okay to bring your child, please call ahead to ask us. We may require a doctor's decision as to whether or not the child is contagious. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

3.) Injuries / Medical Emergencies

- Please note that our educators are First Aid Compliant, however we are not medical practitioners and cannot administer medication of any sort required by a learner.
- In case of any injury or medical emergency occurring during school hours we will assist with First Aid and comply by the laws stipulated and governed by the National Health and Safety Act of South Africa, of which we will stabilize the learner and will be contacting the Parent/Guardian to collect the learner and take them to seek appropriate and further medical attention if and where necessary.
- In a critical/dire medical situation, please bear in mind that there may not be time to refer to the child's medical records and if the Parent/Guardian cannot be reached, The school, therefore, reserves the right to utilise the most effective medical services available
- The Parent hereby indemnifies and agrees to hold harmless, Astro Kids Nursery School Board of Directors, the School, its Principal and Staff as well as their authorised agents and/or representatives, against any and all claims, costs or expenses, howsoever arising, including legal costs, arising out of injury, loss or damage suffered as a result of any activities during the enrolment of the Pupil at the School.

4.) Snack Time / Lunch Time:

- Please provide your child with a healthy snack and Label his/her lunch box and juice bottle. No cakes, biscuits, sweets, chocolates or fizzy drinks allowed.
- The school takes no responsibility for lost juice bottles and lunchboxes. The children are encouraged to look after their belongings.
- **Ideas for your child's lunchbox:**
 - ✓ Sticks of carrot, celery or cucumber
 - ✓ Dried fruit (raisins, peaches, mango)
 - ✓ Little sausages, chicken strips / pops, slices of biltong, sticks of cheese, boiled eggs
 - ✓ Muesli/Seed bars
 - ✓ Sandwiches (cut in 4 quarters)

5.) Reports / Communication:

- **First term** – Parent/ child activity written report (Grade R)
 - **Second term** – Parent/ child activity written report Grade R / Verbal report Grade 0/00
 - **Third term** - Parent/ child activity written report Grade R / Verbal report Grade 0/00
 - **Fourth term** - Detailed written report on your child's progress throughout the year. (Entire School)
- We believe that communication is essential and thus encourage every family to speak to their child's teacher whenever a problem arises, or something occurs in the child's life that may be significant.
- Astro Kids Nursery has a strong focus on maintaining regular communication with our parents by means of: Whats-app, e-mail, and termly parent meetings
- Monthly newsletters giving you insight into school events, and fundraisers

6.) Curriculum:

- **We offer two programmes at our school:**
 - ✓ Pre Grade R: 3 – 5 years
 - ✓ Grade R: 5 - 6 years old
- **Our curriculum spans across the following areas:**
 - ✓ **Art, Music & Movement:** consists of exploring different techniques and styles of art, music and movement. Montessori students are encouraged to express their feelings, experiences, and ideas through art, music and movement. Fine motor, gross motor, auditory discrimination and self expression skills are also refined.
 - ✓ **Geography:** helps children understand our relationship to the Earth: how we meet our basic needs (shelter, food, clothing, transportation, defence, ornamentation, and self-expression) under varying geographic conditions
 - ✓ **History:** provides students with many opportunities to explore various concepts including how the world began, the story of life on Earth and the emergence of the earliest humans. Students also learn about the development of civilizations and about the universal needs of all humans.
 - ✓ **Language arts:** The process of learning how to read should be as simple as learning how to speak. Montessori makes use of various presentations which are fun and interactive but most importantly educates the children in all aspects of language.
 - ✓ **Maths:** offers a clear and logical strategy for helping students understand and develop a sound foundation in mathematics. Learning comes more easily when they work with concrete educational materials that graphically show what is taking place.
 - ✓ **Practical life:** is designed to help children develop concentration, coordination, independence and a sense of order, as well as develop their fine and gross motor skills, as they engage in real world activities such as dressing frames, cutting fruit, pegging and threading.

✓ **Sensorial:** is designed to help children focus their attention on the physical world, exploring with each individual sense as well as all senses combined. Some of the skills learnt include refining size, identifying and grading colours and tactile activities.

✓ **Science:** Science in Montessori is known for introducing children to advanced topics in the early years, from how the world began to basic principles of zoology, botany, chemistry, physics, and astronomy.

- The children participate in a **morning work period**.
- The morning work period allows children the freedom to choose activities of their choice which in turn gives the teachers insight as to specific sensitive periods your children are experiencing at that time. The benefits of a work period are:
- Children are genuinely interested in the work that they have chosen hence they are engaged and fully absorbed in the activity at hand.
- The classroom environment is quiet and organized and the teachers are able to observe as well as assist the children as they work.
- **The morning work period times are as follows:**
- ✓ 08:00 – 08:30
- **Individual teaching time:** Individual and small group sessions are done on a daily basis to ensure each and every child is covering all the necessary areas of work and are developing at the age appropriate time. These individual / small group sessions allow the teacher to focus on areas where the child may be struggling as well as areas where the child may be advanced.
- **School readiness books** are also a part of our curriculum and are introduced to the children during the pre-primary phase. The curriculum covers foundations in maths, language and life skills in order to ensure the children are well prepared to integrate into a traditional schooling environment.

7.) Clothing:

- Children should be dressed in their school uniforms, as this encourages unity, equality and discipline.
- The school will not be held responsible for clothes that become torn, misplaced or soiled.
- Please mark all clothing items and shoes clearly.
- A spare set of clothing must be handed in at the beginning of the year as this will be kept at school in case of emergencies.
- Please supply a sun hat for your child that will be kept at school.

8.) Birthdays:

- These are celebration days and we would like to make it extra special for your child.
- On the day of your child's birthday, you are asked to bring party packs.
- If possible on the day of your child's birthday, we ask that you donate a book for our book corner. This book will be inscribed with your child's name and will be presented at the birthday ring.
- **Please note:** Parents who do not celebrate birthdays the above is not compulsory, however the child and class is made aware of their birthday as this forms part of the curriculum.

9.) Toys:

- NO toys are allowed at school, this is a distraction to the children and causes strife amongst them.

10.) Vital Information:

- Please keep us informed of any change of address, telephone numbers and change of legal guardianship.

11.) Waste Materials:

Please help us with any of the following waste materials for our art activities:

- Paper, cardboard, bubble wrap, buttons, ribbon, material, lace, wool, pipe cleaners, foam chips, ice cream containers, yoghurt cups, crepe paper and confetti.

12.) School Equipment:

- If bits of our school materials come home in suitcases or pockets, please return them. The Montessori materials are very costly and it is important that the materials are complete.

13.) Extra costs:

- Educational talks
- Fundraisers
- Class photographs
- Extra-murals

14.) Starting School:

- Children can become a little overwhelmed when starting school however, they usually settle in within 2-3 weeks. Should your little one be extremely anxious we will gradually get him/her comfortable in the school environment by coming in for longer periods of time each day until fully relaxed and happy.

❖ PARENT TIP ON SEPARATION

It can be difficult for parents and young children to separate at the beginning of the school year. We have found that a short and positive good-bye and on-time arrival is easiest for the child. Prolonged good-byes and late arrivals often make the separation more difficult. Your children will pick up on your nonverbal messages. Feel free to utilize the classroom teachers after class hours for suggestions if transition becomes a concern. A call to the school for reassurance that your child has settled in and is adjusting well is encouraged.

15.) Applying Montessori in your home:

- Whenever you can, arrange your home so that the child can manage for himself. Make his table and chair low enough, his toys shelves easily accessible, his clothing equipped with fasteners he can operate, his clothes rods the right height, etc.
- Don't do anything for him that he can do for himself. "Any unnecessary aid is a hindrance to learning," said Maria Montessori.
- Teach your child with real things. Take the time to show him how to handle materials and equipment carefully, and he will be capable of far more than you realize.
- When you want to teach your pre-schooler a new activity or skill, plan it out first as a programmed teaching exercise. Break it down into small precise steps. Ask yourself, "What points of interest does this activity hold for my child? How can error be controlled by the activity itself? How can I isolate a single learning element I want my youngster to absorb?"
- When teaching a small child, slow down your movements. Use as few words as possible. Let your movements guide your youngster's eye to what he is to learn.

16.) First Aid:

- We teach all the children never to touch someone else's blood -We always use gloves to treat any wounds -All cuts must be covered with plasters
- All teachers are first aid trained

17.) Sexual curiosity:

- At some time and at various age levels we may have one sexual episode.
- The policy is:
 - ✓ To distract the child and watch for further episodes
 - ✓ To inform the parents of the offenders
 - ✓ To give the 'sex talk' : parts of your body covered by your swimming costume are private and no-one may touch or look at them (except Mom, Dad, Doctor, Nanny)
 - ✓ There are good secrets and bad secrets If someone tries to touch you in a private place, shout NO, NO, NO and tell an adult that looks after you.
 - ✓ For all the staff to be aware so they can be extra vigilant of those particular children and quickly distract or discuss with them if need be. We advise parents never to over-react.

18.) Siblings:

- If you would like a sibling to be enrolled at the school, please fill in the application form together with the non-refundable deposit fee long before they are due to come to school to ensure a space is secured, you will then apply for a sibling discount on the second child.

19.) The children's general ground rules:

- Respect for others – you may not hurt (this includes hitting/kicking/biting/pinching/bullying) another child or disturb another child when working.
- Respect for self – you may not do things that may endanger your safety.
- Respect for equipment – you must use the equipment with care and return it to its place ready for someone else to use.
- You must be shown how to work with the equipment before it becomes available for choice.
- We have regular "grace and courtesy" groups. These groups demonstrate positive social behaviour which helps the children adapt to life in a group and learn socially acceptable behaviour.

20.) The Montessori concept:

- The child is considered as a whole. The physical, emotional, social, moral and cognitive needs are inseparable and equally important. Learning takes place through the senses. Children learn by manipulating the Montessori materials and interacting with others.
- Learning occurs in a loving, co-operative and nurturing atmosphere, to foster competent, confident, independent and responsible children who are lifelong learners.
- Our program is designed to help each of our students discover and develop his or her unique talents and possibilities. We treat each as a unique individual learner. We know that no two students will learn at the same pace, nor will they necessarily learn best from the same teaching methods, and our goal is to be flexible and creative in addressing each student as a unique individual.

21.) In our Montessori environment:

- Each child learns at his/her own pace
- Through observations we direct the child's daily activities based on their needs, strengths and developmental stages.
- The Montessori program develops a positive attitude towards school and gives the child a sense of security, sense of order, curiosity, concentration, persistence, ability to make decisions, a sense of independence and self-confidence

©The school reserves the right to change anything in this document should the need arise.

Signature of Parent / Legal Guardian:	
Date:	
Place:	
Witness:	