



SUNNY SIDE

MONTESSORI PRE-SCHOOL

 PALMYRA 

Parent's Handbook

2022

*Welcome to the Sunny Side family!*

# Welcome

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Dearest parent(s)

We are so excited to have your little one and yourself joining our Sunny Side Montessori Palmyra family.

The following information should be beneficial to you throughout your time at Sunny Side. Please read through this booklet and keep it as a reference.

As staff we recognise that family and home are the first and most significant influence in a child's life. It is our hope to collaborate with the parent(s) to ensure that your child is provided with the best possible education. We will be keeping in contact with you all year long through daily conversations, communication booklet, newsletters, parent advisory meetings and parent/teacher conferences.

If at any time you have questions or concerns, please contact the school and we will assist as best we can.

Once again, we express our warmest welcome and thank you for your support and cooperation in building brighter young minds.

We look forward to a wonderful journey together!

Yours sincerely

Debbie

# Philosophy

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Sunny Side strives to provide quality education that incorporates independence, creativity and student-focused learning within a safe and homely environment. We aim to develop the right foundational skills for children to reach their full potential.

# Terms, Conditions and Procedures

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## *Parental involvement*

The parent is the child's first and most important role model. For this reason, parents are encouraged to be involved in school activities and the Montessori way of life. Sunny Side is dedicated to providing quality Montessori education for children and we would love parents to share in that vision. We encourage parents to implement our Montessori methods at home. Should parents want or need any tips or ideas on how to implement these methods at home, the Sunny Side staff will be happy to assist.

For divorced or separated parents, both will be informed of your child's progress as well as other school-related matters.

## *Assessments*

Purpose of assessment:

- To support learning and the individual child and to identify the child's interests and needs
- To describe the development progress and learning of children and to communicate with families
- To evaluate our programme, monitor trends and plan programme improvements
- To maintain programme and teaching accountability

Progress reports are issued in June and December. Should parents wish to discuss your child's progress, a meeting can be arranged.

## *Previous school reports*

Parents are requested to please provide copies of your child's midyear and year-end reports from their previous school. This helps our teaching staff to not only be aware of any particular areas of interest your child has already enjoyed in a classroom, but also where we may be able to provide your child with additional support.

## *Eco-Conscious Schooling*

The house which makes our Palmyra location our school home is very fortunately equipped with solar panels which charge cell batteries that feed a PV (photovoltaic) Inverter. This solar system supports our full electrical needs, reducing our dependence on the electrical grid. Eco-insulation in the ceiling keeps the house cool in the summer and warmer in the winter. There is a solar geyser for further energy efficiency, and the lighting is mostly LED and compact fluorescent, further reducing energy consumption. In addition, our geyser is also solar powered. Our wonderful garden is fully irrigated by a well point and 14,500 litres of water-saving rain catchment tanks.

With such a wonderful eco-conscious foundation, we strive to educate our Sunny Side children on the benefits of reusing, recycling and conserving for our environment, and how we can all reduce our footprint on the earth. Through various lesson plans geared around an eco-conscious mindset, and through utilizing as many recyclable items as possible in our crafts and daily activities, we hope to instill an eco-conscious approach in our schooling.

## ***Illness Policy and health of children***

The Sunny Side Montessori staff are encouraged to improve and advance their knowledge and training on maintaining a healthy environment, identifying illness, preventing the spread of diseases as well as promoting universal health precaution.

Our primary objectives are to ensure that the child is as comfortable as possible and to prevent various infectious illnesses from spreading throughout the school. Should your child attend classes, he/she will be expected to participate in the program, including any outdoor activities.

If a child is not well upon arrival for school or becomes ill during the day, parents will be expected to pick him/her up within 30 minutes of being informed. Should your child be showing any signs of illness, please refrain from sending them to school. Should your child exhibit the following symptoms, alternative arrangements should be made for the day: high fever, bad or constant cough, bronchitis, sore throat, green mucous or snot, vomiting, diarrhea, influenza, undiagnosed skin rash, swollen glands, conjunctivitis (pink eye), chickenpox, measles, mumps, or any other contagious or communicable diseases, infestations such as lice, ringworm or scabies.

As per health regulations, in order for a child to attend or return to school after illness, the following conditions must be met:

- A child must be free from fever, vomiting or diarrhea (without symptoms) for a full 24 hours.
- A child prescribed an antibiotic for a current contagious bacterial infection must take the prescription for a full 24-hour course before returning to school.
- If a child was excluded because of a contagious illness, a doctor's note stating that the child is no longer contagious is required prior to readmission.
- A child must be able to comfortably participate in all usual school activities, including outdoor activities.

The final decision whether the child may attend or is to be excluded from the program is made by the Principal.

## ***Medication***

Should a child require daily administering of medication for chronic conditions, this will need to be discussed and arranged with the Principal.

Staff cannot administer medication without written permission from a doctor. Cold, flu, allergy medications or vitamins and minerals will NOT be administered by the school.

Sunny Side will maintain records and registers pertaining to the storage and use of chronic medicines. All health-related information communicated and discussed between parents and teachers will remain confidential.

## ***Allergies***

Parents of children with allergies or special needs must inform the Principal should the child require any special care.

## ***Cleanliness and Hygiene***

We strive to ensure that the school environment is kept safe and is hygienic for children in order to prevent the transfer of any communicable disease.

The school is kept extremely clean and hygienic. Inside and outside areas are clean and well-maintained. The floors and walls are easy to clean and are cleaned frequently. The floors are composed of materials that are safe for children to work and play on.

Tables are washed after each activity, before and after lunch and snack. Silverware, plates, cups, eating and drinks utensils are all washed after use. The water station is cleaned and sanitized daily. Mats and carpets are sanitized monthly. All classroom surfaces are cleaned and sanitized daily. Hand washing occurs after messy activities, before and after sensory play, before eating and after toileting. Toys and dress-up clothing are washed when necessary.

There is an adequate supply of towels and cleaning agents. All cleaning agents are appropriately labeled and are stored safely and securely and are out of reach from children.

## ***Accidents and Emergencies***

All our staff members are trained in basic and Paediatric First Aid and a full First Aid kit is available at the school. Should there be any accidents or injuries requiring more than basic first aid, parents or their emergency contacts, in the event the parent(s) cannot be reached, will be contacted immediately and asked to collect their child. In the case of an emergency, the paramedics will first be contacted, after which the parent(s) will then be notified immediately.

Parents must arrange to collect a sick or injured child within half an hour of being informed of illness or injury.

Parents are to ensure that all emergency contacts and numbers provided to the school are indeed correct and up to date.

## ***Notification of changes***

It is the responsibility of the parent(s) to immediately notify the school of any changes in information provided on the enrollment form e.g. change in address, contact number, medical and personal details. It is essential that the parent(s) submit these changes in writing to the teacher. Changes should be made as they occur.

## *Plans for emergencies & Fire Drill*

As a precaution, an emergency plan is in place to protect children and staff from risk of fire, accidents and/or other possible hazards.

Emergency procedures and the relevant contact information are visibly displayed in the school.

Our emergency procedures are kept up-to-date and reviewed periodically. These procedures are taught to all staff members. They are also tested and reviewed regularly.

We schedule a fire drill once per term in order to prepare for an emergency evacuation and to ensure that children are aware of these emergency procedures.

Our classrooms are fitted with hand-held fire extinguishers.

## *Clothing, toys and valuables*

**Please** ensure that your child is dressed in clothing that is comfortable and correctly sized. Tight clothing is restrictive and uncomfortable for the child. Also, it is advised NOT to wear their best clothing. Children should not feel they have to avoid certain activities due to their concern about damaging or soiling such clothing as many of the activities we provide can be messy.

**Clothing should be manageable** i.e. easy to put on and take off e.g. NO BELTS, NO JUMPSUITS, instead wear Velcro or slip-on shoes and tracksuit pants. This is of particular relevance if your child is currently toilet training. The clothing should be manageable **by your child**.

Children are NOT permitted to wear high-heeled shoes, jewelry, watches, sunglasses or tattoos to school.

**All items of clothing, lunch boxes and water bottles should be clearly marked with your child's name.**

To avoid conflict, we ask that toys and valuables from home **not** be brought into the school. Our classroom materials and supplies are selected for their developmental and educational merit. If toys are brought in from home, the child's focus changes. Also, staff will not accept responsibility for any personal toys and valuables that are broken, lost or damaged in any way. Should children come to school with toys and valuables, they will be handed back to the parent(s) to take home.

## *School outings*

School outings will be held during the course of the school year. Parents will be informed in due time in order for arrangement to be made.

## ***Donations***

Sunny Side will gladly accept donations of old books and educational toys. We also encourage parents to bring scrap paper as well as any recyclable goods such as jars, bottle caps, boxes, tins, etc. These items will be used for crafts at school.

## ***Indemnity***

All precautions have been made to provide a safe and secure environment and to ensure the safety of the children. The school and its staff, however, cannot be held responsible for the following:

- Any costs incurred due to injuries, damage or loss whatsoever, which occurred at the school or while under the school's supervision;
- Any other event or circumstance occurring, or failing to occur, upon, in, or about the school or the school's premises, whether or not the school could otherwise have been held liable for such occurrences or failure thereof, and the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) indemnifies the school against all liability to members of the parent's/legal guardian's household, in consequence of any such matter as is referred above.

Although care is taken to ensure that children with special dietary requirements do not eat incorrect food items, the school and or its staff cannot be held liable for the said child eating such food items, or the consequence thereof; or food items that are inappropriate at school or while under the school's supervision.

## ***School hours of operation***

- Drop off (*all children*) : 08h00 – 08h45
- Regular school day pick-up : 12h00 – 12h30
- Extended Day Programme pick-up : 14h00

The school will be closed on public holidays and school holidays. Sunny Side will provide parents with the school terms before the new year begins.

## ***Drop off / Pick-up***

Parents are requested to say goodbye rather quickly in the morning. They should verbalise that they will be collecting their child later in the day. Should the child become emotional the teacher may take the child aside to reassure them while the parent(s) are leaving.

Please note that parent(s) are not allowed into the classroom during the school day. A parent's presence in the classroom during school may disrupt the flow of work. The teacher will keep the parent(s) informed of the child's day.

Sunny Side has a very strict policy when it comes to the child's safety. The parent(s) must inform the school telephonically on the day if someone other than the parent/guardian or their regular transport person will be collecting the child from school.

Should someone other than the parent/guardian or regular transport person be collecting the child, a photograph of that person, or a copy of that person's I.D. document must be sent via e-mail or message to the school. That person must then also show their I.D. upon arrival and collection of the child.

Parents must inform the school of any delays in the time of collection of a child. The school reserves the right to levy a charge of R50.00 per hour or part thereof for persistent late pick-ups.

Drop off is between 08h00 – 08h45, please do not drop off after 08h45 as it is very disturbing to the children who have started their morning circle and theme discussions.

### ***Meals***

We request that your child bring a healthy snack from home e.g. sandwich, fruit, yoghurt, whole- grain biscuits with suitable fillings, snack bars, vegetable fingers etc. **ONLY WATER** is allowed in water bottles. No juice please.

**PLEASE DO NOT** send your child to school with sugar-filled snacks and/or unhealthy food items e.g. biscuits, juice, sweets, cakes, carbonated drinks, chocolate, crisps etc. If unhealthy items are sent to school, we will send them back home with your child.

Teachers will report any changes in eating habits that the child may have.

### ***Birthdays***

At Sunny Side Montessori Palmyra, birthdays are celebrated with a short celebration at the start of the school morning (08h30 or 08h45) with the parents present. Please bring in a poster with a selection of photographs of your child's favourite activities, family members, pets, or previous birthdays and milestones. We will make a crown with your child leading up to this celebration. This celebration lasts around 15 minutes and concludes with your child walking around the "sun" the number of years they will be turning. Later in the day, following our communal fruit, we will celebrate again small cupcakes or biscuits, or popcorn. Parents can bring this on the morning of the child's birthday and we like to share this celebration with both classes. We will confirm the number of children to cater for.

## ***Stationery and toiletry requirements.***

The following items are required to be provided for each child:

### **Personal items to be kept at school, and replenished as needed:**

- A wide-rimmed sun hat
- Sunscreen
- A change of clothes in case of accidents or spills
  - o Varied for the seasons, ALL ITEMS TO BE LABELED WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME
  - o More than one change of clothes if your child is currently toilet training
- Slippers, to keep in the classroom
- Rain boots, to be kept at school

### **Stationery/supply items to be provided at the start of the school year:**

- 1 box of tissues per term
- 2 packets of wet wipes per term
- 1 box of plasters
- 1 x pack of craft items (any craft items, e.g: googly eyes, buttons, glitter, pom-poms, stickers, etc)

### **For children still in nappies:**

- Minimum 2-3 weeks supply of nappies at a given time (we will advise when replenishments are required)
- 1 pack of nappy bags
- 2 additional packets of wet wipes
- Any other nappy related items you wish us to use (bum creams, powders etc)

## ***Sunny Side Montessori Release Form***

Sunny Side Montessori may take photographs or videos, with the Head of School's approval, to allow parents and other individuals to see what work they do. These photographs may appear on the website, on the Sunny Side Montessori Palmyra Facebook page, the Sunny Side Montessori Palmyra Instagram page, in school-related stories or articles or e-mailed to parents via PDF newsletters. We will also Whatsapp photos of your child and their friends during the course of the school morning.

## ***Tuition fees and termination of contract***

School fees are due, in advance, at the beginning of each month. Should the amount payable not be paid by the 7<sup>th</sup> of the month, payment will be considered overdue. Interest of 25% will be calculated and added to the outstanding overdue invoice. School fees are charged 12 months of the year.

If school fees are not paid by the 7<sup>th</sup> of each month, Sunny Side will request that your child does not return to school until fees are paid in full.

Charges incurred for cash deposits will be added to the parent's account.

**Debit orders are advisable. Fees are the same for all 12 months of the year.**

One full term's notice (3 months) is required, in writing, by the first day of your child's last term at our school. Should the school not be given one full term's notice, the full term's fees become payable in lieu of notice.

Sunny Side Montessori reserves the right to ask parents to remove their child from the school should the child display bad behaviour i.e. persistently violent and/or disruptive towards other children. Sunny Side Montessori also reserves the right to ask parents to remove their child from the school should the parents not adhere to the terms laid out in the Parent's Handbook.

## ***Rules and Regulations***

1. Please telephone the school to inform us if your child is ill.
2. Please stick to the times of dropping your child off and collecting them and please remember the 'drop and go' policy.
3. Please remember to send a copy of the person's I.D. and a photograph of them to school when someone different is collecting your child and that person must bring an I.D. when collecting your child.
4. If you would like to speak to staff about your child's progress or a school-related issue, please arrange an appointment.
5. Please make teachers aware of any changes at home or behaviour issues experienced at home.
6. If school equipment or another child's belongings are found in your child's bag, please return them to school. The equipment is usually expensive and difficult to replace.
7. Please be aware of what is being discussed between adults at school as children are often listening.
8. To ensure the safety of the children, please make sure that the security gate is kept closed after you.
9. No smoking, drugs, alcohol and/or weapons are allowed on the school premises.
10. Please keep personal and private information discussed confidential.
11. The Head of School of Sunny Side Montessori has the right to cancel an application for enrolment if school fees have not been paid, if a child's behaviour is out of control, if there is non-compliance with the terms, conditions and procedures and/or if the child has a physical, mental, behavioral or psychological condition or problem that wasn't disclosed.
12. By signing 'Acknowledgement of Parent's handbook' document, parents understand and agree to the Terms, Conditions and Procedures of Sunny Side Montessori.

## ***Sunny Side Montessori Palmyra daily schedule***

Parents can drop children off between 08:00 - 08:30. Children will get a chance to say goodbye to their parents, greet their friends and teachers, pack their bag away, put their fruit in the fruit bowl, put their lunch box and water bottle away. During the work cycle, the children select the work they want to do and move throughout the space guided by their teachers, working either solo, paired with a friend or being presented new work by their teacher.

### **Toddler Class**

08h00 – 08h45	Drop off and begin work in class
08h00 – 10h00	First work cycle in classroom
10h00 – 10h30	Outside play time
10h30 – 11h00 (ish)	Snack
11h00 – 11h45 (ish)	Second work cycle in classroom
11h45 – 12h15	Outside play time with Preschool class
12h15	Communal fruit
12h00 – 12h45	Pick up

### **Preschool Class**

08h00 – 08h45	Drop off and begin work in class
08h00 – 11h30	Three-hour work cycle in classroom*
11h30 – 11h45	Circle time/packing bags/sunscreen
11h45 – 12h15	Outside play time with Toddler class
12h15	Communal fruit
12h30 – 12h45	Pick up
<i>*Snack to be enjoyed as space is available during the 3-hour work cycle</i>	

## ***Consent for Communication***

In order to comply with the PoPI Act (Protection of Personal Information Act South Africa) we need to please get consent from all families to communicate with you via telephone or email. We will never share your personal information with a 3<sup>rd</sup> party.

Please complete the attached consent form and return it to the school to be filed with your child's records. We do require signatures from both parents on this form.

This form will updated as often or frequently as the PoPI Act gets updated by the Government. We will require you to sign new forms each time amendments are made.

## *Social behaviour Policy*

At Sunny Side Montessori we strive to make children feel safe, loved and secure. We encourage children to have a positive attitude towards each other, their parents, the staff, the work cycle and the equipment. We believe that it is important to encourage kindness and respect for one another while fostering a welcoming and open relationship.

If a child behaves in a disrespectful manner the educator will explain this to the child and redirect them to a more suitable activity. If a child continuously misuses the equipment, after being shown how to use it, the teacher will remove the equipment and suggest something else. If a child physically or emotionally causes harm to another child the teacher will immediately intervene and assess the situation. Once the child has calmed down, the educator will ensure that the child apologises for their behaviour and any harm caused.

If a teacher or parent wants to discuss any social issues a meeting will be arranged and the issues can be discussed.

## *Sunny Side Code of Conduct:*

1. We will encourage positivity, kindness, patience and love.
2. We will treat others with respect and dignity.
3. We will not allow bullying, hurting, emotional or physical harm to others.
4. We will not distract or disturb others whilst working.
5. We will not damage school equipment.
6. We will respect other people's religious beliefs, opinions and feelings.
7. We will not use inappropriate language.
8. All the students have the right to feel safe, secure and cared for.

The code of conduct does not provide all the answers but it is a broad outline of behavioural principles, expectations and ideals.

### **Fee structure: 2022**

	Monthly fees: January - December	Total per annum
<b>Toddler class</b> <b>CUBS</b> 08h00 - 12h30	R 3 200 per child	R 38 400 per child
<b>Preschool class</b> <b>FOXES</b> 08h00 - 12h30	R 3 200 per child	R 38 400 per child
<b>Extended Day</b>  12h30 - 14h00 Monday - Thursday	R 75 per day, billed at the end of each month or school term	Based on use, billed at the end of each month or school term
<b>TERMLY FEE PAYMENTS</b>	R9 600 over 4 terms, should you wish to pay on a termly basis. <i>(payable within the first 10 days of each term)</i>	

Please note: Extra murals are an additional fee, and are payable directly to the designated service provider.

**R 2 500 non-refundable placement fee for all new students upon enrolment**

### **Banking Details:**

Bank: **Nedbank**

Account name: **Sunny Side Montessori Palmyra (Pty) Ltd**

Branch code: **198765**

Account number: **1214369065**

Account type: **Current Account**

Reference: **Your child's name**