

PARENT HANDBOOK

2025-2026

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Mission Statement

DVMS is a partnership of its teaching staff, parents and administration.

- ❖ Providing the highest quality Montessori education for all children enrolled;
- ❖ Supporting the development of a professional, skilled and nurturing staff;
- ❖ Encouraging the involvement and participation of its families.

Vision Statement

To provide exceptional Montessori education, nurture community, and offer diverse academic, social and cultural programs that help build the foundation for life-long learning.

Parent Education

Parents are welcome on campus at any time and encouraged to observe as often as possible as long as it is not disruptive to their children. As part of the ongoing educational process and goal for families to further understand the Montessori philosophy and appreciate the quality of our programs, all families are highly encouraged to have at least one parent observe for a minimum of one half hour in a morning program between October and May annually as part of the Enrollment Agreement. Observations begin at 9:30 in the two's classrooms and all five Preschool/Kindergarten classes, and end at 11:00. Please do not bring siblings to this observation. If observing in your child's classroom would be disruptive, please observe in another class except for infants and toddlers. Contact the office at 283-6036 to schedule a visit and check in with administrative staff at the end of your visit to get credit for completing this requirement.

DVMS also invites and encourages all parents to attend annually scheduled Education and Information nights.

2025-2026 Teaching Staff

INFANT TODDLER PROGRAMS (3 months – 3.5 Years of Age):

Infant/Young Toddler Sunflower Room	Lisa Lesley Christina Sands	Ayesha Jahid Catherine Fernandez Victoria Zuniga
Older Toddler Poppy Room	Jessica Luty Deanna Ferrari	Jaquelyn Delacruz Sophia Aliaga
2 – 3.5 year Twos - Half Day Buttercup Room	Pearl Bell	Zoe Goldeen Alma Sanchez
2 – 3.5 year Twos - Full Day Wildflower Room	Danielle Toliver	Larisa Zhrebnekov Demi Mason
Violet Room	Shawna Comiskey Carly Grote	Deepa Medikonda Lexi Hurd

PRESCHOOL/KINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS (2.9 - 6 Years of Age):

Honeysuckle	Sophia Rowles Paula Ruiz	Matti Haghighi Genenvieve Knight
Daisy	Jessica Martin Brittney Braselton	Courtney Mathews Ashley Seaver
Jasmine	Kylee Koch Karen Carbonell	Uma Lokavarapu
Petunia	Lana Burmenko	Sridevi Samudrala Vivien Louie
Outdoor Classroom & Movement Extended Care	Heather Sieger Lexi Hurd	Ashley Seaver Katie Moreno

School History and Goals

DIABLO VALLEY MONTESSORI SCHOOL, INC. founded in 1965 is a non-profit, non-discriminatory organization maintained by a Board of Directors and a professional staff. We have grown from a single class of twenty preschool children in a rented facility to a two acre campus serving up to 150 families.

The goals of Diablo Valley Montessori School, Inc. are to:

- Offer the community the educational alternative of the highest standard of Montessori education and child care, following the principles and philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori.
- Build for each child a strong foundation of practical and academic skills for a lifetime of independent learning.
- Strengthen each child's self-confidence and courage to be creative by offering freedom of self-expression in a structured environment.
- Meet the individual developmental needs of each child through the prepared environment.
- Help each child to realize his/her full potential as a responsible world citizen.
- Promote the continued development and training of the school's administrative, educational and extended care staff.

We are proud of our Head Teachers who are Montessori trained and skilled in the use of the Montessori didactic materials. Several also hold other teaching credentials and degrees.

DVMS admissions policies are non-discriminatory. All prospective students who can actively participate in our programs are welcome.

Montessori Preschool/Kindergarten classroom activities are enhanced by field trips, Movement Program, and our unique Outdoor Classroom.

When the American Montessori Society evaluated DVMS and its staff, they included in their accreditation report that DVMS exhibited excellence in teaching staff, excellence in parent participation, and continued emphasis on maintaining that excellence to better the school.

As a Full Member AMS school, we follow both the AMS curriculum and standard state curriculum. DVMS has an outstanding reputation locally in both the Montessori and Early Childhood community.

Program Descriptions and Hours

Movement to another program is based on a child's readiness and space availability.

INFANT/YOUNG TODDLER PROGRAM: Sunflower Class (3 months – to 20 months)

Monday - Friday; 8:00am – 5:00pm

This program provides a safe, loving, respectful environment for infants and young toddlers. It is designed to enhance the development of very young children by allowing them the freedom to explore the physical world, interact with other children, and experience a positive sense of self-esteem. Materials and activities are carefully chosen to allow each child to develop at his/her own rate. The teacher/child ratio is 1:3.

OLDER TODDLER PROGRAM: Poppy Class (18 months to 2.5 years)

Monday - Friday; 8:00am – 5:00pm

This program continues the development of the Infant/Young toddler in a specifically prepared environment, allowing for personal experience, growth, and social development. The teacher-child ratio is 1:4.

TWO's PREP PROGRAM: Wildflower, Violet, and Buttercup (2 years to 3.5 years)

Monday - Friday; 8:00am – 5:00pm or 5-day 8:30am – 11:30am (*child must be 2 years old by the first day of the academic year*)

This program has all the characteristics of the infant program, but broadens its focus developmentally. It provides the older toddler an opportunity to explore the world outside the home, providing a gentle transition between the home and school. The teacher-child ratio varies between 1:4 and 1:6.

PRESCHOOL/KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM (2.9 years to 6 years)

Monday - Friday; Choice of: 8:45am – 11:45am; 8:45am – 4:00pm

This program is designed to meet the developmental needs of children 2.9 years by the beginning of the academic year in August to six years old. It's richly prepared environment offers children the opportunity to develop at their own rate; expanding their knowledge from concrete, hands-on experiences, to the next stage in their cognitive development which will involve more abstract thinking. The curriculum covers the skills needed for daily living, sensorial explorations, math, language, cultural subjects, and both the natural and physical sciences. Art, music, movement, socialization and outdoor play are also integrated to make this a program that nurtures the whole child. In addition to all this there are field trips, a unique Outdoor Classroom, and Movement Class.

OUTDOOR CLASSROOM (2.9 years to 6 years)

The Outdoor Classroom runs August through May and emphasizes subjects such as science, gardening, art, creative play and gross motor skills. All children enrolled in preschool/kindergarten programs attend Outdoor Classroom once a week.

Extended Care Policies – Preschool/Kindergarten Program

Diablo Valley Montessori School's Extended Care Program is designed to meet the needs of families choosing to supplement their child's Preschool/Kindergarten Half Day or Full Day classroom program with before or after school care on a regular basis. It is open on days when school is in session. It operates on a reduced schedule during winter and spring break, and closes on national holidays, teacher in-service days, and twice a year for cleaning and repairs.

Reservation Policy

Extended Care reservations must be made in advance. All enrollment packets contain an Extended Care Reservation Form. This form is also available in Brightwheel. **Cancellation of or changes in scheduled blocks must be in writing and received by the office by the 20th of the month to apply to the following month.**

To request "drop-in" care, email or telephone the office 24 hours in advance. Drop-ins are accepted on a space available basis.

Pricing Policy

"Drop-in" care for the Pre-school/Kindergarten program is billed at an hourly rate of \$25.25 per hour, or any fraction thereof, if you make arrangements in advance. **If you are more than 5 minutes late beyond your scheduled block without notifying the office or extended care staff prior to your scheduled pick up time, you will be charged the hourly drop in rate or \$1.00 per minute, whichever is greater. (This also applies if on campus but late picking up child).**

Our Preschool/Kindergarten Extended Care program closes at 5:30pm. The 5 minute grace period **does not apply** for pick-ups past 5:30 pm and the charges are the same as if you did not notify the office.

Board of Directors

The Diablo Valley Montessori School Board of Directors is the school's ruling body. The Board sets policy for the school, approves the budget, reviews the financial statements, is responsible for major fundraising, and generally performs what is necessary to further the school's best interest. Members serve two year terms, with an option to extend to three years, and vacancies are filled through recommendations of the staff and the existing Board members.

The Board has several standing committees and occasional ad-hoc committees. Parents are encouraged to become active in the school by being members of these committees.

The following is a list of standing committees presently established by the Board of Directors:

1. Executive Committee
2. Finance Committee
3. Governance and Succession Committee
4. Long Range Planning Committee

The Board meets at 7:30 pm on a bi-monthly calendar. These meetings are open to all parents and we encourage your attendance. Meetings are held at the DVMS campus.

2025-2026 Board of Directors:

- ❖ Erin Ebe, **President**
- ❖ Emily Morgan, **Vice President**
- ❖ Noah Starr, **Secretary**
- ❖ Gowri Rao, **Treasurer**
- ❖ Harpreet Hansra, **Long Range Planning**
- ❖ Danielle Clements, **Auction**
- ❖ Grace Kammeyer – Koenig, **Member at Large**
- ❖ Alex Teece, **Member at Large**
- ❖ Kate Langon, **Member at Large**
- ❖ Alphonsine Viry, **Member at Large**
- ❖ Jennifer Lacey, **Member at Large**
- ❖ Jayne Martin, **Head of School**

Parents' Club

Parents of enrolled children are automatically members of the Diablo Valley Montessori School Parents' Club. All parents are encouraged to attend the Parents' Club meetings and take part in their activities.

The main goals of the Parents' Club are to provide family and social events for all of the DVMS community. Throughout the school year, the Parents' club hosts several social events for DVMS families such the New Parent Wine and Cheese and Parents' Night Out. The Parents' Club coordinates Classroom Room Parents through the Room Parent Coordinator. Room Parents work with head teachers to coordinate classroom activities such as field trips and parties.

The consumption of alcohol at DVMS events where children are present is prohibited. This applies to both on-campus and off-campus events.

2025-2026 Committee:

- ❖ **President**
- ❖ **Yearbook**

Gwyn Binder
Ashley Slonim (Barsi)

A Respectful Community

As a school founded on Montessori principles, we believe that every person deserves to be treated with respect. DVMS expects students to demonstrate kindness, grace, and courtesy toward fellow students, parents, teachers, staff, and visitors to the school. Furthermore, DVMS expects parents, teachers, staff, and visitors to the school to model respectful behavior at all times. It should be understood that any behavior intended to abuse or intimidate another will lead to a request to leave the school.

Parent Communication and Participation

At DVMS, the staff and parents are partners. Parents are invited to participate in a variety of ways. The staff uses several methods of communication to keep families informed.

PARENT TEACHER COMMUNICATION

Communication between parents and the school is crucial for facilitating an effective partnership. Email is our primary source of communication. You may email teachers directly and/or use the classroom email address. You may also send a message to the classroom team via Brightwheel. This ensures all members of a child's teaching team are fully informed.

If there is an immediate need to speak with your child's teacher, please call the office at 925-283-6036 and your call will be transferred to the classroom. Likewise if there is a need to contact parents during the school day, teachers and office staff will call parents or designated emergency contacts.

We ask that parents respect personal boundaries with teachers. Texting with teachers on their personal phones is not acceptable. Brightwheel messaging allows for quick messages to your classroom team.

WEDNESDAY NEWSLETTERS

Each Wednesday a school newsletter is sent to parents via email and Brightwheel. We expect all families to read this newsletter as it is our primary source for providing news and information. It is each family's responsibility to update the office with the correct email address for parents.

CLASSROOM NEWSLETTERS

Once a month each class sends a newsletter via email to parents. Information about the classroom events, volunteer opportunities, and upcoming events are just a few items mentioned in these important communications.

OBSERVATION/VISITATION POLICY

Parents and all interested parties are encouraged to visit and observe classes in session. Observations are scheduled beginning in October. Call the office to set up an appointment for classroom observations.

PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES

Twice a year (fall and spring) parents are expected to attend a parent-teacher conference. These meetings offer an opportunity to exchange information about your child and are vital to the partnership with DVMS. Written reports follow each of the in person meetings.

Additional conferences may be scheduled at the request of parents or teachers.

PARENT EDUCATION

DVMS views parent education as a valuable part of our program. Throughout the year, parents are encouraged to attend workshops about Montessori curriculum and child development. Participation is strongly encouraged.

FAMILY SITUATIONS

We are here to serve each child and will be able to do a better job if we are kept informed about any change in your family situation such as pregnancy, birth of a sibling, separations, divorce, business trips, moving, death of a family member or friend, death of a pet, house guests, or any other unusual circumstances.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Families are welcome to photograph or film their children during school events for personal enjoyment. As a courtesy to other families and for safety reasons, we ask that images of children outside of your family not be posted to social media or other platforms without permission from the other families.

PARENT ISSUE/CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCEDURES

At DVMS we believe that issues should be resolved confidentially and with care. We believe that staff and parents should model the grace, courtesy, and conflict resolution behavior we want our children to learn. It is our hope to work together constructively and respectfully to do the very best for our children. When problems arise, resolution should take the following steps:

1. If you have a question regarding your child or the school, ask their Head Teacher. Teachers are your first resource to answer your questions and resolve difficulties.
2. If the Head Teacher is unable to resolve the issue, please address your question to the Head of School.

3. If the concern continues to be unresolved, you may fill out a DVMS Formal Complaint/Incident Form (see appendix A). It will be reviewed by the Head of School and the President of the Board of Directors.

EMERGENCY TEXT ALERT

In the event of an emergency such as severe weather, power outage, or immediate need for facility repair, a text message will be sent to all parents via Brightwheel alerting them of the situation and action taken. If needed, parents may be asked to have their child picked up as soon as possible.

BY-LAWS AND POLICIES:

DVMS By-Laws, Policy and Procedure Manual, and Board Meeting Minutes are available for review in the office.

General Policies and Regulations

APPLICATION AND REGISTRATION FEES

In order to be considered for admission, a non-refundable application fee must accompany each child's application. Upon acceptance to DVMS the signed acceptance letter along with the annual non-refundable registration fee, a non-refundable deposit equal to one installment of the annual tuition and a one- time Emergency food/supply fee is required. A child is not considered accepted to DVMS until all forms and fees are received.

TUITION

Tuition installments are due on the first of each month. Payment must be received in the office (3390 Deer Hill Road, Lafayette, California 94549) by the 10th of each month. If not received, accounts shall automatically be assessed a \$35.00 late fee. When mailing payments, sufficient time for delivery should be allowed. Payments must be in the office by the above dates and shall be date stamped upon receipt. If a child's last name is different from the name on the payment, it must be noted. A \$25 charge will be levied on all returned checks. An ongoing unpaid balance may result in dismissal. Any fees incurred by DVMS to collect unpaid balances will be paid by the delinquent account holder.

Academic programs are invoiced in ten equal installments August through May. Twelve month programs are invoiced in 12 equal installments August through July. The annual work hour deposit, capital maintenance/facilities fee, Yearbook, and Teacher Appreciation fees are invoiced in August or the first month of a child's attendance.

FORMS

All forms (immunization, emergency, physicians report, etc.) must be submitted **prior** to the child's first day of school. **No child will be allowed on campus without all forms completed and submitted to the office.**

LATE PICK UP FEES

If you will be late picking up your child, please notify the office, so we can let your child's teacher know and assure your child that all is OK.

- If you know you will be late and notify the office, you will be charged the drop in rate of \$25.25 per hour for pre-school/kindergarten classes.
- If you are late and did not notify the office in advance of your scheduled pick up time, you will be charged the drop in rate or \$1.00 every minute once the total late charge surpasses the drop in rate. For example, if you are 10 minutes late you will be charged \$25.25 the drop in rate. If you are 25 minutes late, you will be charged, \$26.00, \$1 per minute.
- Our Infant Toddler Program closes at 5:00 pm. The 5 minute grace period **does not apply** for pick-ups past 5:00 pm and the charges are the same as if you did not notify the office.
- Our campus closes at 5:30 pm for the Preschool/Kindergarten Extended Care. The 5-minute grace period **does not apply** for pick-ups past 5:30 pm and the charges are the same as if you did not notify the office.
- Late charges will be reflected in the following month's statement.

Program Pick up times:

- Buttercup (1/2 day twos) 11:30 am
*please note, if a family has a child in Buttercup and PreK/K Half Day, pick up time for the Buttercup child is still 11:30 am
- Preschool/Kindergarten AM Half Day: 11:55 am (end of carpool)
- Preschool/Kindergarten Full Day: 4:00 pm
- Preschool/Kindergarten PM Extended Care: 5:30 pm*
- Infant Toddler House: 5:00 pm*

*** There is no 5-minute grace period after 5:00 pm (Infant Toddler), 5:30 pm (PreK/K Extended Care).**

DVMS CALENDAR

The DVMS school calendar is posted on the home page of the website. It is the responsibility of families to note school holidays and closures.

DVMS observes all federal holidays plus Thanksgiving week and Winter Break. Preschool/Kindergarten and Buttercup programs are closed for Spring Break. Extended care may be available on a limited basis during Winter and Spring Breaks.

During Parent-Teacher Conference weeks, all children, (except the Sunflower classroom) are dismissed mid-day. Extended care is available on a limited basis.

WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

If a parent chooses to withdraw a child from school or any program during the school year, 30 days advance notice must be given in writing to the DVMS Office. If notification has not been made, tuition installments, work hours and any outstanding extended care or school tuition will be charged. **Please note: Deposits are rolled over to the next school year after reenrollment is submitted, therefore if a family withdraws from the school after submitting reenrollment, their deposit is forfeited.**

At times there may be circumstances when DVMS may ask a child/family to leave the school. We will do everything possible to prevent this situation by ensuring communication with families when issues first arise. All attempts will be made to resolve any issues between DVMS and the family, including documentation of communications, meetings with the Head of School, and review of the DVMS Formal Complaint/Incident from by the President of the DVMS Board of Directors. In the unfortunate event that adverse conditions between DVMS and the family continue, notice will be given to the parents to remove the child from the school.

Reasons for dismissal from DVMS include, (but not limited to):

- The child is at risk of causing serious injury to others/themselves
- Parent threatens physical, intimidating actions, or verbal abuse towards staff
- Parent fails to comply with health, safety, and licensing protocols
- Failure to pay tuition or habitual late payments
- Habitual tardiness when picking up a child
- Failure to comply with any policy stated in the Parent Handbook

WORK HOURS

All families are required to pay a work hour deposit which is refunded or credited to their account when the family's work hours are completed upon written request. A family may choose to forfeit their work hours deposit instead of contributing time. The idea of each family contributing work hours goes back to the inception of the school. It encourages parent participation, allows the children to witness their parent's involvement and contribution to their school, and provides opportunities for parents to meet one another and to feel a part of the larger school community. Additionally, work hours help defray school expenses. Work hour forms are included in the enrollment packets and available in Brightwheel and on the website. Available work hours may be posted in newsletters and classroom communications.

Some of the ways work hours are typically completed are:

- CLASSROOM PROJECTS:** Periodically a teacher needs something made, sewn or repaired.
- CAMPUS MAINTENANCE:** Periodically campus work parties are scheduled, but there are also gardening, painting, and cleaning jobs available throughout the school year.
- SPECIAL EVENTS:** Work hours are credited for involvement in pre-approved school events (ex. Auction)
- ROOM PARENTS:** Room Parents help the teachers with special classroom activities, parties and field trips. They are important members of the school's community and help support all school events.
- FIELD TRIPS (PreK/K only):** Parents to volunteer to drive and chaperone a PreK/K Field trip will be given credit for the time. Please note, parents must drive and chaperone at least one child other than their own child. Drivers need to submit their insurance information and copy of a valid driver's license at least one week in advance of a field trip. Drivers' licenses will be subject to a back ground check through DVMS's insurance company.
- BOARD OF DIRECTORS and COMMITTEES:** The Board consists of nine to fifteen members, who, with the Head of School, set policies, approve budgets, and work on long range planning. They meet bi-monthly. Board committees meet as needed.

The Head of School, school staff, members of the Board, Committee Chair Persons, and the Parents Club Executive Committee are empowered to designate donated time as work hours. You must keep track of your own hours on the form and ask the person authorizing you to sign your work hours form. When you have completed all of the hours turn your signed form into the office for your refund. **Partial hours less than the 15 hour requirement are not credited.** Your fee will be credited to your account within two weeks. All requests for refunds must be received by July 31, 2026.

SIGNING IN AND OUT

Parents must sign their children in and out of school each day using their assigned PIN. Each adult has their own unique PIN that cannot be shared or given to others. Children may be signed-in/out at the check in table by the office, at the gates during morning drop off, or in the office. Children enrolled in the Sunflower, Poppy, Wildflower, or Violet classroom will proceed directly to the classroom and be signed in at the classroom door. Children will be signed out for the day at the table by the office or in their classroom.

If arriving late, parents must first park and then proceed to the office to sign their child in for the day. The office staff will escort your child to class. No child may be dropped off at the gate and left to walk unescorted to a classroom. If a child is not signed in for the day, the parent will be called and will need to return to school to officially sign the child in. Refusal to follow the signing in and out procedures will result in dismissal. Upon departure each parent or carpool driver will sign out using their assigned PIN. **Community Care Licensing stipulates that all parents and guardians are legally required to sign their children in and out each day.** For the safety of our children, please follow these mandated procedures.

ARRIVAL TIME

Children should arrive for school no later than 9:00 AM. Occasionally, there may be a need to arrive late to school. Please keep in mind that children thrive on consistency and that our classrooms have a routine so that children may receive the best educational experience we can offer. Late arrivals jeopardize the experience for the entire class as teachers must often interrupt lessons in order to welcome and help the late comer separate from their parent. More importantly, it can be very difficult for a child to assimilate into school if they arrive too late. Therefore, we respectfully request that children in all programs arrive no later than 10:30 AM.

In the event of a medical or other specialist appointment that may require a drop off later than 10:30am, approval from your child's classroom team is required at least 24 hours in advance.

All Buttercup and Preschool/Kindergarten children arriving after morning carpool must be escorted to the office and signed in. An office staff member will take the child to their classroom.

DISMISSAL TIME (Preschool/Kindergarten Program)

***If you are running late** please call the office to let us know! We will most likely have your child wait in the office for you in this case.

Early pick-ups, especially during nap and rest times, are highly disruptive for the children and the classroom environment. When children leave at different times throughout the day, it interrupts lessons and requires teachers to step away from their work repeatedly.

We completely understand that occasional early pick-ups for unavoidable reasons like doctor or dental appointments may happen. If this is the case, please notify the office in advance.

If you have a recurring need for early pick-up (for example, weekly swim lessons), let us know as soon as possible so we can plan accordingly. We ask for at least 24 hours' notice for any schedule adjustments.

Please note: Once your child leaves early, they may not return to the classroom for the remainder of the day, though they are welcome to return for extracurricular activities outside of class time.

Thank you for helping us maintain a peaceful and productive environment for all our children and teachers!

CAR POOL POLICIES

Car pool numbers will be given to all parents of children in half day Pre-School/Kindergarten classes during the first week of school. If persons other than those designated on the carpool forms pick up children from school, written permission must be given to the classroom teacher or DVMS office in the morning.

CAR SEAT LAW:

Protect your child – it's the law. Children under the age of eight years (unless measuring 4'9"), must be in an approved child car seat. You may be cited for a violation of the child car seat law. If you are cited, your automobile insurance rates could go up and you may not be able to drive on class field trips. Call your local California Highway Patrol office for more information. The number is 646-4980.

PARENT CONCERNS

Parents are encouraged to communicate their concerns or questions directly with the person responsible for the area of their concern. If the concern is not resolved they should speak directly to the Head of School. If the concern continues to be unresolved you may fill out a DVMS Formal Complain/Incident Form. (See appendix A)

Health Policies

DVMS follows guidance from Contra Costa Health, California Department of Public Health, the CDC, and Child Care Licensing to ensure the health and safety of the entire community.

WHEN SHOULD YOUR CHILD STAY HOME?

We need to ensure a healthy school year for each child and family. In general, a child should stay home, or go home, when any new illness or symptom appears which prevents them from participating meaningfully in school activities and/or results in a need for care that is greater than staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children.

We ask that you keep your child home from school in the morning if you feel that they are coming down with something. A child must be fever free and no vomiting for 24 hours before sending him/her to school, and there should be no cough, runny nose, or other contagious conditions. Additionally, a child needs to stay home from school for 24 hours when starting any antibiotic medication to allow it to work and to refurbish the energy required to participate in a group setting.

A child may return to DVMS when they meet all of the following conditions:

1. Symptoms are improving, the child is feeling better and they can meaningfully participate in daily activities at school
2. Staff can meet the child's needs without compromising the health and safety of other children and staff
3. They have been fever-free without medication for at least 24 hours
4. No vomiting and/or diarrhea for at least 24 hours
5. The contagious period for specific communicable diseases has passed

WHEN WILL WE ASK THAT A CHILD BE TAKEN HOME?

If your child exhibits signs of illness, you will receive a phone call. It is expected that a parent, or other authorized pick up collect the child from DVMS no more than 30 minutes after the first message.

The Health Department established the following criteria, by which we are governed, to determine when a child should be sent home from school:

- Temperature: Exceeding 100.4, armpit or forehead, (99.4 infant toddlers)
- Persistent heavy wet cough with breathlessness or noisy breathing
- Severe headache requiring child to lie down for relief
- Persistent or severe earache, stomach ache or multiple episodes of diarrhea

- Vomiting
- Severe fall with significant apparent damage to head or limbs
- Significant increase in urination with or without pain
- Evidence for a contagious condition; head lice, impetigo, pink eye
- Persistent discomfort: severe itching from rash, runny nose, or **anything which makes the child uncomfortable and unable to participate in school activities.**

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES:

Parents must report to the office any contagious diseases which their children contract. A note will be sent home to all of the appropriate families warning parents to look for possible symptoms. Communicable diseases include: Hand, Foot and Mouth, Pink Eye, Head Lice, Fifth Disease, Strep Throat, RSV, Impetigo, Chicken Pox, Flu, Measles, Ringworm.

A child suspected of having a contagious disease needs to be seen by a physician. A doctor's note is required in order for the child to return to DVMS.

COVID 19

Guidelines for the treatment of COVID 19 have evolved since 2020. It is no longer an illness that requires specialized attention, rather caution and treatment in line with any other major respiratory illness.

If a child or staff member tests positive for COVID the following actions will be taken:

1. The individual will stay home until symptoms are mild and improving AND they are fever-free without medication for at least 24 hours.
2. When the child/staff member returns to DVMS, they will wear a well-fitting mask while indoors for 5 days after testing positive. (Day 0 is the symptom onset date or date of positive test). If there are two sequential negative tests, the mask may be removed sooner than 5 days.
3. Consultation with a healthcare provider is strongly recommended for treatment options

Close contacts of a positive COVID 19 case will:

1. Monitor for symptoms for 10 days after exposure
2. If symptoms develop, mask and test right away

ALLERGIES

It is essential that you inform the school of your child's allergies so that we do not mistake those symptoms for something of a contagious nature.

POLICY ON ADMINISTERING MEDICATION AT SCHOOL

The school will administer medication only if the following guidelines are followed:

1. All medication to be administered by the school must be accompanied a Parent Consent for the Administration of Medicine Form (LIC 9221). See Appendix D.
2. All medications must be sent in original containers.
3. Do not place medication in a child's lunch box. All medications must be given directly to the child's head teacher.
4. If a child must be given regular medication during school hours throughout the school year, a note from the prescribing physician detailing dosage and schedule should be kept on file.

FIRST AID

If during the course of the school day your child was treated for anything other than a minor cut, bump, or bruise, you will be notified either by the teacher directly or by a note. Children in Extended Care will have the notes placed in their lunch box or backpack. Each class has a complete first aid kit.

INJURIES REQUIRING MEDICAL OR DENTAL TREATMENT

If your child has been injured at school and requires medical or dental treatment you will be called immediately. In the event we cannot reach you or any of the other people you have designated on your EMERGENCY FORM, we will contact your child's physician/dentist and provide transportation to their offices or to the hospital. Please inform us immediately of any changes to the information on your Emergency Form.

General Health Guidelines

Temperatures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A child with an axially (armpit) exceeding 100.4, (99.4 for infants), temperature must be kept at home. • A child with a mildly elevated temperature who is acting sick and needs one-to-one attention should be kept home. • A normal temperature must be stable for 24 hours without the use of medication to control it before a child is returned to care.
Excessively Runny Noses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A child with an excessively runny nose needs to be kept home (often this is the beginning and most communicable stage of an upper respiratory infection).
Vomiting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If vomiting occurs a child must be kept at home for 24 hours after the vomiting stops and normal eating habits are resumed.
Diarrhea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A child with diarrhea must be kept home for 24 hours after the last diarrhea (and cannot be on Pedialyte) and normal eating has resumed. • If a child has two consecutive incidents of diarrhea while at the center we will call the parents to inform them: The child will need to be taken home and kept at home for 24 hours after the last incidence of diarrhea. • Note: Parents should keep the center staff informed if their child has had any new food or medication which may result in diarrhea.
Coughs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a child has a persistent heavy wet cough with breathlessness or noisy breathing the child needs to be kept at home.
Rash	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any unrecognizable rash will need to be examined by a physician. A doctor's note is required in order for the child to return to the center.

Pain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a child is in pain and needs parental attention the child should be kept at home.
Unable to Participate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a child is too uncomfortable to be able to participate and/or needs constant one to one attention the child should be kept at home.
On New Medication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A child needs to remain at home for 24 hours when starting any new medication. Please note that in the Infant/Toddler House there is an exception to this policy if continuing another series of an antibiotic for a recurring episode.

Food and Nutrition

BREAKFAST:

Please eat breakfast at home.

LUNCH:

We ask that lunches be nutritionally balanced and that foods high in sugar, fat and salt be avoided. Do not include candy in lunches or snacks. All food must be ready to eat. We are unable to prepare foods.

SNACKS SERVED AT SCHOOL:

Snacks are prepared and served each day in each classroom. In accordance with state law, two food groups will be included in each snack.

SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS:

If your child has dietary restrictions, please inform the head teacher so that accommodations can be made.

PARTY TREATS FROM HOME:

Simple, natural food treats, low in sugar and free of artificial additives are ideal for any class time celebrations. Please consult with your child's head teacher in advance to schedule a celebration.

Clothing

One of our goals is to foster the independence that young children so fiercely desire and which makes liberty possible. Please help by dressing your child in clothing appropriate for school. Clothing should be comfortable, easy for the child to put on or remove, with no complicated fasteners. It should be rugged and washable. Label all items with your child's name. Keep in mind that the children engage in active outdoor play, at times with sand or water, and will use paint, clay, etc. It inhibits the child and their ability to learn if they are anxious about keeping clothes clean. Expensive dresses, jumpsuits, jewelry, watches, sunglasses, shoes that will slip off during running, etc., are not appropriate for school. **Flip flops, Crocs, and all sandals without back straps should not be worn to school.** Cowboy boots and high top tennis shoes are especially difficult for most children to put on and are discouraged. In contrast, Velcro fasteners are practical and easy for children.

Clothing often influences the child's mode of operation and social interaction for the day. Young children are very likely to act like the clothing in which they dress. This draws the child away from the kind of special experiences and cooperative play that are available at school. Please help your child focus on work/play unrelated to television super-heroes, princesses and other like characters by leaving their hero/heroine attire at home.

Likewise clothing and head adornments can be distracting, such as excessive embellishments, tulle, jewelry, and character headbands, impede a child's ability to concentrate. We ask that those types of clothing and accessories not be worn at school.

On rainy days, dress your child in a raincoat and hat. Umbrellas need to stay at home.

Toilet Mastery (Preschool/Kindergarten Programs)

Children in the Preschool/Kindergarten program must be independent with their toileting routine
An independent child:

- Is able to go to the bathroom for urination or bowel movements on their own. The includes but is not limited to removing clothing, wiping themselves, putting clothes back on, and washing and drying their hands
- Child must be able to recognize and initiate the need to go to the toilet
- Wears regular underwear, not pull ups or training pants
- Is able to postpone going if waiting for someone else who is in the bathroom

Some accidents may happen as a child transitions into a new class. By definition "accidents" are unusual incidents that happen infrequently. Children will need an extra set of clothes at DVMS for this reason. In these instances teachers will help children change their clothes, encouraging independence as much as possible. Practicing this active participation and self care by the child is important to transfer success to the classroom. DVMS teachers will not wipe children's bottoms.

When accidents are habitual, (more than 3 or 4 times in one week), the child is not considered ready to participate in the Preschool/Kindergarten program. If a child is having consistent toileting difficulties, DVMS reserves the right to set an earlier pick up time than originally contracted upon enrollment. If accidents continue during a shorter day, the child will be asked to stay home until toilet independence is achieved. Parents are still accountable for payment of tuition during this time period as the child's space in the classroom is being held until their return.

DVMS is committed to supporting the children and families with resources and guidance to help a child achieve this milestone. Teachers will be in close contact with parents to discuss shared observations and consider options/solutions to support the child. Working collectively together is essential to a child's best interest and success.

Nap and Rest (Preschool/Kindergarten Programs)

It is the policy of the school and state licensing requirements that all children have an opportunity to nap or rest. A "napping child", or "napper", is defined as a child who takes a nap daily based on their physiological need. All three-year-olds and older children who still require naps will nap in a designated classroom. Once a child naturally wakes up, they will begin an afternoon work period.

Children who do not fall asleep will start the afternoon work period after resting for some time.

Each napping child will be provided with a nap mat and sheet. Parents will need to send a pillowcase with a blanket labeled with the child's name. Sheets and blankets will be sent home in the labeled pillowcase on Fridays for laundering.

If a child physiologically needs a nap but is continually disruptive in the napping room, a change in their schedule may be required, including an earlier pick up time.

All children ages four and up who are in the Full Day and Afternoon programs and express the need to nap or rest will be given a mat to rest on in their classroom. After a rest or nap period they will be able to rejoin the work period.

Discipline

DVMS Staff members use methods of positive discipline, rather than punishment, in responding to children's behavior. Corporal punishment (spanking, hitting, shaking, or pushing) is not only philosophically inappropriate, it is prohibited by law.

We communicate clear limitations, boundaries and guidelines to children. We encourage children to work out conflicts together verbally and we teach them how to do this. Occasionally a child may be removed from a situation in order to redirect their energies. If so the child will always be monitored by an adult.

In cases of recurring problems, every effort will be made to work with the child and his or her family to correct the problem.

Children with Exceptionalities

As soon as a teacher sees indications of exceptionalities, (whether these appear as physical or behavioral) they shall keep careful daily notes on the incidents in which the child is involved and/or the specific circumstances that concern them. A documented record is then available for consideration and discussion. The Head of School shall then be notified and asked to make a special observation of the child.

PROCEDURE FOR CHILDREN WITH EXCEPTIONALITIES

When a head teacher suspects a child has needs beyond that which they can handle, they shall bring this to the attention of the Head of School or level coordinator and the following steps shall be taken:

1. The Head of School or level coordinator shall come to the classroom to observe the child. These observations shall be followed by a consultation between the head teacher and the Head of School or level coordinator.
2. The parents of the child shall then be called in for a conference with the head teacher and the Head of School or level coordinator. They shall be told what observations have been made, what the concerns of the school are and what the recommendations are in this situation.
3. These recommendations shall be reviewed at a designated later date with the Head Teacher, Head of School and parents to ensure that appropriate action has been initiated.
4. Recommendations for professional support and options for evaluations may be provided to the parents.

If, after the aforementioned steps have been completed, the administrator determines that the special needs of the child cannot be met, DVMS may cancel the enrollment agreement with 30 days written notice.

Injurious Behavior

Our policy is to intervene immediately. Children whose behavior is injurious to others are helped to gain control over their behavior, to learn positive ways of dealing with their emotions and impulses, and to learn positive and appropriate choices in difficult situations.

When a child is unusually aggressive, cannot control their impulses, or does not respond to our guidance, we will request a conference to discuss the situation. Obtaining outside professional help may be required. It is our goal that all the children within our environment are comfortable and feel confident in their ability to function within the expectations of a group setting.

It is in the child's best interest to find the most appropriate setting where they can function successfully.

Children who intentionally destroy school equipment or another's possessions, may be asked to pay for a replacement as a consequence of such behavior.

If the Head of School determines that a child or anyone associated with a child compromises the effectiveness of a program or endangers the welfare of another child or a staff member, the Head of School can terminate an enrollment agreement immediately.

Traffic and Parking Regulations

Our use permit and the safety of other drivers and children are dependent upon DVMS parents and staff keeping the following traffic and parking regulations. The license numbers of violators will be recorded and action will be taken if violations continue. Children of drivers violating these regulations may be subject to dismissal from the school.

1. Left-hand turns are not permitted at the crest of the hill into our eastern entrance. Left-hand turns may only be made into the western entrance
2. Exiting is not permitted from our eastern entrance (by the dumpsters).
3. When turning left out of our exit is difficult due to traffic on Deer Hill, please consider turning right. Waiting to turn left can cause gridlock in our parking lot.
4. Left-hand turns are not permitted into the private driveways or streets to the east of the school. Left-hand turns are only permitted at our western driveway.

5. Right hand turns are not permitted into our western entrance. Right hand turns are to be made at the crest of the hill into our eastern entrance.
6. Cars are not permitted to park in the bike lane on Deer Hill Road in front of campus. Passengers may not be loaded or unloaded on the street. **EVER.**
7. Parents are asked to parallel park under the eucalyptus trees in the east parking lot whenever possible except between 11:30 am and 12:00 noon.
8. The designated Disabled parking stall and adjacent cross hatch pattern in front of the Infant/Toddler building is for the exclusive use of anyone with a disabled plaque. Please honor this and be a good role model for your child and fellow parents.
9. No parking is allowed along the edge of the lower lot parallel to Deer Hill Road, where the curb is painted red.
10. West lot parking spaces are intended for parents with children enrolled in one of the infant/toddler building programs between 8:00 am- 9:00 am and between 4:30 pm - 5:00 pm. Parents of children in the other three buildings are encouraged to park in the east lot and escort their child into the classroom. Morning carpool drop-off will continue at both gates for any preschool child.
11. All children arriving after morning carpool must be escorted to the office and signed in. An office staff member will take the child to their classroom

The following actions may be taken whenever there is a violation:

- **Letter to the parent**
- **\$50 fine for a first time offense**
- **\$100 fine for a second time offense**
- **Possible expulsion for additional offenses**

The following actions will be taken whenever there is unauthorized use of disabled parking. CAV code # 22507.8:

- **Letter to the parent and letter to the police department**
- **California Superior Court has determined that the fine is \$421.00 for the first offense.**

PreSchool/ Kindergarten Carpool Procedures

DRIVERS APPROACHING FROM THE EAST:

Morning arrival (8:35 am - 8:55 am)

Turn right into the eastern entrance and proceed to the main gate where your child will be greeted and helped from the car. **Please do not line up prior to 8:35 am and please pull to the right so that the left lane is free for other cars to pass.**

Pick-up (11:40 am - 11:55 am)

Turn right into the eastern entrance and form two lanes. Have your carpool number clearly displayed in the right hand corner of your windshield. This will enable the teachers to have your child ready to be walked to your car when you reach the gate.

NOTE: There is no parking under the eucalyptus trees between 11:30am and 12:00 noon.

Please do not line up prior to 8:35 am or 11:40 am. Doing so prevents parents dropping in our two year old half day class from exiting our lot.

DRIVERS APPROACHING FROM THE WEST:

Morning arrival (8:35 am - 8:55 am)

Turn left into the western driveway (Infant/Toddler Lot) and proceed up the hill toward the infant/toddler house. **Pull to the right so that the left lane is free for other cars to pass.** Your child will be greeted and helped from the car.

Pick-up (11:40 am - 11:55 am)

Turn left into the western driveway and park your car without blocking anyone else. Walk to the pick-up area at the front gate and identify yourself to a carpool teacher.

Hints for smooth traffic flow:

- Go with the flow: respect the one way traffic signs.
- Make space: when lining up for morning drop off, move to the right, making space for cars to pass on your left.
- Make a quick get-a-way: respect the 10 minute parking signs. This is not the time to play with your child on the playground or check your email while sitting in your car.
- When turning left out of our exit is difficult due to traffic on Deer Hill, please consider turning right. Waiting to turn left can cause gridlock in our parking lot.

PreSchool/Kindergarten Field Trips

Field trips for our pre-school/kindergarteners are an important part of a Montessori curriculum. Field trips are generally scheduled to coincide with a particular area of study in the classroom and enhance the children's engagement in the subject. For instance, a trip to a pumpkin farm correlates to a discussion of fall and how and where pumpkins grow, or a trip to a fish store or local aquarium coincides with learning about sea life. Sometimes the destination is a place your own family has visited, but doing so with a child's class may bring more emphasis on learning specific concepts. Field trips are also an opportunity for children to practice listening skills and following directions in a group outside of school or their immediate family. The social aspect of riding with a friend is another important aspect of field trips.

Each teacher along with room parents schedule field trips for the year. The number of trips scheduled will vary from class to class and depend upon class maturity and parent availability. Please keep in mind the following when driving or chaperoning on a field trip:

- Drivers are required to provide a copy of their current Driver's License and complete the Field Trip Acknowledgment form stipulating that they carry sufficient insurance, have a safe driving record, will abide by all current California laws, including the use of cell phones and will assure that children are transported according to California law. (such as use an appropriate safety seat and that no child will be placed in a front seat). DVMS's insurance company will perform a background check on all drivers prior to a field trip.
- Adults serving as chaperones are generally assigned 2 or 3 children to be in charge of for the duration of the trip. In order to give one's full attention to this important job, it is requested that siblings not attend field trips. Occasionally exceptions are made, but must be pre-approved by the teacher and Head of School.
- It is sometimes hard to find enough parents with flexible schedules able to drive on field trips. For this reason and because it is more fun to go with a friend that just with your own Mom/Dad, we ask that drivers be willing to take at least one child other than your own.
- Time spent driving and chaperoning on a field trip can be counted toward the annual work hour requirement as long as the driver is responsible for at least one child not related to them.

Emergency Disaster Plans

DVMS has an Emergency Preparedness Plan that addresses procedures to be followed after an emergency or crisis. The implementation of this plan involves the Board of Directors, Administration, staff, and parents. A copy of the complete plan is available in the office and is updated yearly.

Our facilities have the ability to care for children for 72 hours should the need arise. The school is equipped with blankets, fresh water, first aid kits, flashlights, radios, extra batteries and emergency food. Staff members have taken first aid courses and have been shown where and how to shut off all utilities. Our classes are drilled in fire evacuation and earthquake strategies.

In case of severe earthquake, we will remain on campus waiting for parents to pick up children as quickly as possible. If our buildings become unsafe, we will evacuate to the closest mass care center, determined by emergency personnel at that time. Please confirm our location by checking NIXLE. We strongly suggest you sign up for emergency advisories or alerts at www.nixle.com. If we have evacuated, we will notify you through Brighwheel Alerts. Additionally our location will be posted on the gates or a staff member will remain behind to guide people.

Yearly contact is made with local emergency planning committees to update our information. If there is a need to evacuate the property staff vehicles will be used if possible. The only reasons for evacuation would be unsafe buildings, fire, or chemical contamination. Otherwise, we will remain here where we have resources.

Campus Security

Acts of violence and /or strangers in and around the DVMS campus are potential concerns. DVMS is committed to ensuring the safety of all students, teachers, administrators, and visitors to the facility. Violent acts can be defined as acts in which a person or persons verbally and/or physically threaten or endanger another person's safety. In such circumstances, notification of parents will be carried out in the most expedient manner as each situation warrants.

DVMS is a closed campus. The facility is not available for use outside of school hours without the approval of administration. This includes the use of our playgrounds. The only exceptions are school events or functions. All buildings are equipped with an alarm system that is armed when we are closed. Our students are taught that opening and closing gates are adult "jobs" and students are never allowed to do this themselves. For the safety of your child and all others on our campus, please enforce this with your child.

Please note: The play equipment in the front of the campus is specifically designed and installed for the use of children 3 – 6 years, including the half bucket seats on the swings. None is to be used by infants and toddlers or older children; if you choose otherwise, you use at your own risk. On sunny days, the plastic slides and metal surfaces can retain heat, so no child should ever be allowed to use the play equipment without an adult checking the heat factor first.

If you allow your child to play in a yard, they must be supervised at all times and please make sure your child cleans up any toys used and covers the sandbox.



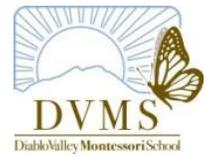
NEVER IN ANY CIRCUMSTANCE SHOULD A CHILD OR CHILDREN BE LEFT IN A VEHICLE UNATTENDED. Each year we seem to have one car broken into and a purse or other item of value stolen by someone driving through our lots or walking along the curb~ we never want this to involve a child.

School Calendar

All openings, closings and special activities are listed on the DVMS Google Calendar which can be accessed from the DVMS Website.

**DVMS FORMAL
COMPLAINT/INCIDENT FORM**

Diablo Valley Montessori School
3390 Deer Hill Road, Lafayette, CA 94549
(925) 283-6036



*** This form is to be used to initiate a formal complaint and will be submitted to DVMS Head of School or DVMS BOD President, only after first going through appropriate channels to resolve your concern.** Parents and staff are encouraged to communicate their concerns or questions directly with the person responsible for the area of concern. If the concern is not resolved please speak directly to the Head of School. If the concern continues to be unresolved complete and submit this form.

PART 1

Name of Complainant: _____
Last First Middle Initial

Address: _____
Street City State Zip

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Are you a parent/guardian of a DVMS student? Yes No Other: _____

[If yes] Child's name: _____ Class: _____ DOB: _____

Are you a DVMS employee? Yes No [If yes] Role: _____

PART 2

Date (s) of the event (s) causing the complaint: _____

Person (s) identified as part of or causing the conflict in which this complaint is about. Name (s) _____

Description of Complaint/Incident

*Include the steps you have taken to solve the problem informally.
(Attach additional sheets and documentation, if necessary.)

Please list the names of people with information about the complaint or who have worked with you to try and resolve the issue:

Name: _____ Role: _____

Name: _____ Role: _____

Name: _____ Role: _____

Name: _____ Role: _____

Action Requested/Recommendations for the Future

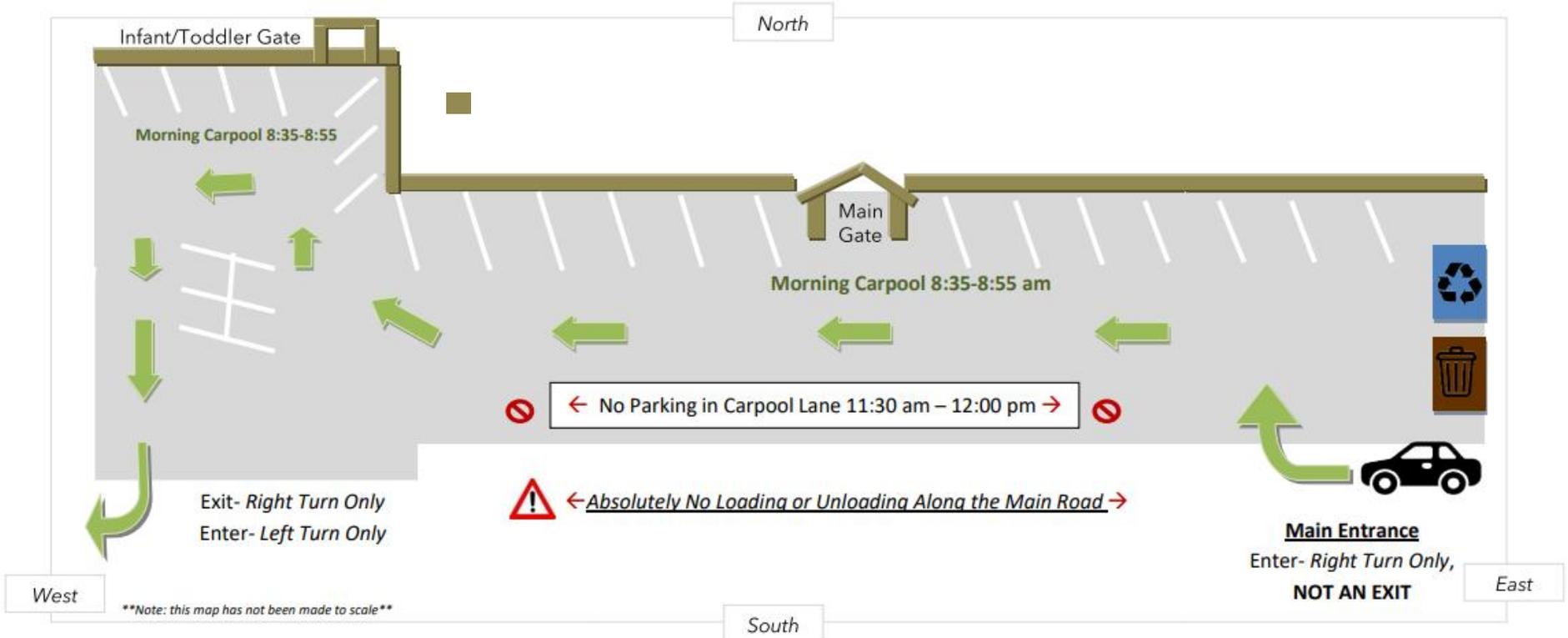
(Attach additional sheets and documentation, if necessary.)

PART 3 - Acknowledgment

I, _____, certify that I have reviewed the information contained on this form and provided a description of
Print Name
the conflict/concern to the best of my knowledge.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Diablo Valley Montessori School – Parking Lot Safety Guide



Parking Lot Guidelines

To help ensure the safety of all staff, students, and families, please adhere to the following guidelines:

- The **main entrance** is located on the east side of campus. Never exit from this spot as it is unsafe to do so.
- **Follow the flow of traffic** and respect the one-way stream of cars.
- **Make space**- when lining up for morning drop-off, move to the right, making space for cars to pass on your left.
- **Please stay in your vehicle during carpool.** This helps the process move more quickly.
- There is **no parallel parking in the Carpool Lane between 11:30 am and 12:00 pm.** Make sure to move your car before 11:30.
- Left turns from the west entrance are not advised! Deer Hill Road is busy and full of fast drivers which makes this turn less safe and tends to hold up others who are trying to leave. So for everyone's safety, **please only exit to your right.**
- **Respect the 10-minute parking signs.** This is not the time to play with your child on the playground or check your email while sitting in your car.
- **NEVER** leave children unattended in a vehicle.

PARENT CONSENT FOR ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATIONS AND MEDICATION CHART

CHILD CARE CENTER NAME:	LICENSE NUMBER:	DATE:
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NOTE: Regulation Section 101221 requires the following information be on file.

PARENT’S INSTRUCTIONS:

- All prescription and nonprescription medications shall be maintained with the child’s name and shall be dated.
- Prescription and nonprescription medications must be stored in the original bottle with unaltered label. Medications requiring refrigeration must be properly stored.
- Prescription and nonprescription medication shall be administered in accordance with the label directions.
- Written consent must be provided from the parent, permitting child care facility personnel to administer medications to the child. Instructions shall not conflict with the prescription label or product label directions.

CHILD’S NAME	DATE OF BIRTH
MEDICATION NAME	DOSAGE

I authorize child care personnel to assist in the administration of medications described above to the child named above for the following medical condition/s:

From _____ to _____ at _____ daily while in attendance.

BEGINNING DATE
ENDING DATE
TIME OF DAY

PARENT’S SIGNATURE:	DATE:
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MEDICATION CHART
Staff Documentation of
Medicine Administration

DATE	TIME GIVEN	STAFF SIGNATURE

Upon completion, return medicine to parent or destroy, and place form in child’s record.

STAFF	DATE
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