Armenian Sisters Academy

TODDLER
LEARNING
CENTER
at the Armenian Sisters Academy

TLC Parent Handbook

ARMENIAN SISTERS ACADEMY
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The Academy is an affiliate member of the

AMERICAN MONTESSORI SOCIETY
PENNSYLVANIA ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS
and is accredited by the
MIDDLE STATES ASSOCIATION OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

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2026-2027

Dear Families,

We welcome you to the Armenian Sisters Academy Toddler Learning Center. This parent handbook will serve to communicate our policies and goals for the coming year.

It is important to us that we continue to build collaborative, supportive relationships with families. Please feel free to speak with Sister Emma (Principal) or our TLC Teachers for further clarification on the policies and additional information in this handbook.

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Armenian Sisters Academy Toddler Care Center does not discriminate in providing services to children and their families based on race, religion, cultural heritage, political beliefs, national origin, marital status, or sexual orientation.

Ages:
12 months – 3 yrs.

Hours: Monday – Friday

8:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

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1. Goals

The Armenian Sisters Academy Toddler Learning Center (TLC) is committed to providing a conducive learning environment that supports personal development. We understand that each child is unique and different, and we strive to provide your child with a kind, loving, and engaging environment that stimulates his or her complete growth. Early childhood education is seen as the underlying foundation for overall success, and the Armenian Sisters Academy's qualified staff members are committed to providing a meaningful experience for your child every day.

It is the goal of our Toddler Learning Center to provide high quality care and education in a safe, nurturing environment to the children and families we serve. We offer a curriculum that engages children actively in the learning process and provides a variety of strength based learning experiences. Children focus on friendship development, social skill development, and cooperative group learning. Our aim of education in the Toddler Learning Center is the development of all aspects of the child: intellectual, social, and emotional.

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2. Admission

The Armenian Sisters Academy TLC admits children on an open-enrollment basis, subject to availability. Children must be 12 months old and close to walking to enroll. Before a child is admitted, parents are required to fill out an Enrollment Packet containing the following forms required by the PA Dept. of Early Education and Care:

- Application
- Enrollment Agreement
- Emergency Parental Consent Form
- Medication Log
- Child Health Report
- Copy of the child's Immunization Record

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3. Tuition/Billing

Parents will also be asked to sign a contract for the school year and to leave a deposit equal to one month of tuition to secure a spot in our Center. The deposit will be applied to the second month's tuition. Current tuition rates are on the ASA website.

- All tuition payments must be made through Smart Tuition. Please log on to https://parent.**smarttuition**.com and set up an account. There is a $56 Smart Tuition fee due with the first month's tuition payment.

- $150 PTC (Parent Teacher Council) dues per family payable with the first month's tuition payment. PTC dues help cover the cost of the 2016 Yearbook, teachers' Christmas and appreciation gifts, and two tickets to POSH (annual auction) among other activities and programs.

- $50 Insurance fee is due with the first month's tuition payment.

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4. Discipline & Behavior Management

At the Armenian Sisters Academy Toddler Learning Center, there are basic rules for the health and safety of the children. We arrange the environment and offer a variety of age-appropriate activities based on the interests of the children. We tailor our expectations to fit the developmental levels of the children to minimize frustrations and inappropriate behavior.

Our approach to discipline and behavior management is to resolve behavioral concerns using modeling, redirection, and positive

reinforcement. We reinforce positive behavior through attention, praise, and recognition. Parents are encouraged to discuss any questions about classroom and behavior management with the teachers, principal or vice principal.

When necessary, we work with parents to resolve behavioral issues. If the behavior concern cannot be resolved, we reserve the right to dismiss or suspend a child. We ask that any child with an IEP or IFSP provide copies of information to the teachers.

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5. Parent-Teacher Communication

- **Classroom Notebook –** Your child's daily activities and information can be found in your child's classroom notebook, which is located on top of your child's cubby in the classroom. Please take the time to look over the notebook at the end of each day.
- **School e-newsletters –** A school-wide newsletter is sent out once a month.
- **Parent – Teacher Communications**: Each family will have a conference scheduled with the teacher in February. Yearly Progress Reports are written and shared with parents at the conference. A signed copy (by parents) will be kept in the child's folder at school.
- Additional conferences can be scheduled at the request of parents or teachers. Our teachers urge you to discuss any special concerns or questions that you may have about the class or your child.
- Please be sure to inform the teachers if something has happened that may affect your child during his or her school day. Events such as a relative visiting, a new baby expected, an impending move, etc., can change a child's behavior at school. If the teachers are aware of significant events in your child's life, they can better understand your child and the changes in his/her behavior.
- It is also important that you communicate to teachers any special fears your child may have, such as animals, clowns, etc., because of the variety of things that are encountered in the classroom. If the teachers are alerted to special fears, they can avoid the encounter or prepare the child for the event.

6. Parent Engagement

We encourage parents to contribute to their school by assisting with special projects and sharing their time and talents. There are various events throughout the year that parents can help in the classroom or at the school, such as the Easter egg hunt, book fair, birthday celebrations as well as many other occasions.

Any contributions of time, talent, energy, class snacks, or donations of new and used toys and equipment are always gratefully received. We plan fundraising projects throughout each year. The success of our fundraisers depends on parent participation, and we welcome your suggestions for future projects. If you would like to contribute additional time and energy to our fundraising efforts, please contact a member of our PTC (Parent Teacher Council). Volunteers are always welcome.

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7. Arrival and Departure

All children must be escorted to their classroom by a parent or designated adult. All children must be signed in and out daily by a parent or authorized representative when arriving and departing from school. No child will be released to anyone other than his/her parent without prior written authorization from the parent. When coming for a sick child or in an emergency, park the car and come to the school lobby.

8. Rules for vehicles while on school grounds

Because the safety of our children is of paramount concern to us, we require all parents to adhere to the following rules of the road while on campus:

- All vehicles must obey the 10-mile/hour speed limit <u>at all times</u> while on school property.
- Parents are asked to park in designated parking spaces only.
- While on school grounds, pedestrians always have the right of way.
- <u>Vehicle ignitions MUST be turned off, and the keys removed, while parked on school grounds.</u>
- Children (including siblings) may NOT be left unattended in a vehicle at any time or for any reason.

9. Inclement Weather

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS
When inclement weather is expected:

- The school will send out **"blast alerts"** regarding dismissal changes.
- All registered families will receive an Option C text about closings.
- Listen to KYW [1060 am radio] or visit www.KYW1060.com, our school number is Montgomery County 414.

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10. Toys from Home

Children are asked not to bring toys from home. The only "toys" from home that should come in are stuffed animals for nap time.

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11. Clothing

Clothing for your child should be simple, comfortable, washable, and easy for your child to manage. Your child should be able to fully participate in all activities and not worry about keeping their clothing clean or tripping over loose clothing on the climber outside. Please have your child wear or bring appropriate warm clothing. Remember that children sit on the ground and ride bikes (cold metal seats), and it is important that they keep the trunks of their bodies warm (attention girls with dresses).

The following items are required to be kept at school for your child:

- A plastic shoebox or zip gallon bag containing 2 extra sets of seasonally appropriate clothing (including pants, shirt, underwear, and socks) all labeled with your child's name to be left in their inside cubby.

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12. Toileting

All children wash their hands with soap and running water after going to the bathroom and before snacks, meals, or handling food. Staff members also wash their hands with soap and running water after assisting children with toileting or toileting themselves. Individual paper towels are used to dry hands.

Clothing soiled by feces, urine, vomit, or blood is bagged in sealed plastic bags and stored apart from other items for the parent to take home to launder.

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13. Health Care Policy

Each child is required by the PA Department of Public Welfare to be in good health, to have an annual physical examination, and to be fully immunized. If your child has a chronic illness we ask that you and your child's doctor share as much information as possible to ensure that we can do our best to monitor your child's health needs while in school. We encourage parents, with the written permission of their health practitioner, to train staff in the implementation of their child's individual health care plan.

Illness in toddler care settings is very difficult to manage. We understand that parents depend on us to provide care for their children, please understand that we are not equipped to care for children when they are ill. The well-being of the individual child is our main concern but the health of other children and the staff is also a concern. Parents may differ in their assessments of what constitutes illness, so this policy attempts to develop a consistent standard of wellness. The teachers, principal, and vice-principal will make final decisions about whether or not a child is well enough to attend the Toddler Learning Center.

Please observe your child carefully and remember that your child has the potential for infecting many other children, staff, and parents. The day at school is demanding on children's stamina and children who are not feeling well will have a difficult time enjoying the day. Sometimes a day at home to rest will be a great help for a child who is not quite him/herself. We ask that you notify the school by 9:00 am if your child will be out sick.

Children must be able to fully participate in all activities of the day including outdoor play in order to attend school. The teachers, principal,

and vice-principal reserve the right to send your child home if in their judgment your child is contagious to other children or too ill or uncomfortable to be at school. You will be informed immediately of the decision and are expected to pick up your child or make arrangements for someone else to pick up your child. If we cannot reach you we will contact your emergency designee. Your child will be isolated from the other children and kept isolated until your arrival.

The following list details many of the signs and symptoms which indicate that your child should remain at home and for which the staff will send your child home.

- Abdominal Pain which is persistent and continues for two or more hours.
- Severe cold with fever – much sneezing and nose drainage, severe tiredness or irritability, complaints of aches or pain (earache or sore throat)
- Severe headache
- Strep throat
- Vomiting
- Bronchitis or persistent cough
- Chickenpox
- Conjunctivitis “pink eye”
- Diarrhea
- Fever of 99.5 degrees or higher (armpit or ear) in the morning. A child must have a normal temp for 24 hours before returning to school.
- Head lice – The child may return when all signs of lice/nits are absent for 24 hours.
- Herpes simplex
- Impetigo
- Pinworms
- Rashes

Parents will be notified when there is an infectious disease at the school. In some cases of more virulent diseases, a memo will be sent to all parents and staff in the school with details about symptoms and treatment.

Please do not medicate your child with aspirin, cough syrup, etc. before sending them to school. We find that when the meds wear off in 2-3

hours, we have an ill and unhappy child on our hands. A child who is ill enough to need these medications should be at home.

Hand washing is the first line of defense against disease. We are vigilant with both children and adults that hands are washed before eating or cooking, after toileting, handling body secretions, and after cleaning. Please remember to have your child wash their hands before entering the classroom in the morning.

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14. Medication

Administration of Medication: If a child is no longer ill but needs medication to complete a prescribed dosage, we will administer the prescription. To do so, we need the following:

- **For non-prescription medication:** A written order from the physician stating the name of the medication, the dosage to be given, as well as parental permission. A parent needs to fill out an authorization form. A physician may give a standing order for medication, valid for 1 year from the date signed. An attempt will be made to contact the parent before the medication is administered unless the need is urgent or permission has been given in the morning by the parent. Non-prescription medication includes Tylenol, cough expectorant, nose drops, etc. We cannot administer any of these medications without a doctor's note.

- **Prescription medication**: The pharmacy label on the prescription container will suffice as a physician's order but parental permission will be needed as well.

- **Authorization for medication form**: Medication forms can be obtained from a teacher or Director. The form must show the date, name of the medication, dosage, time to be administered, and the number of days administration is to continue and must be signed by a parent or guardian.

All medication must be given to a teacher along with instructions. Never leave medication in your child's cubby or lunch box. Please bring a measuring utensil with the medication. All medication containers will be returned to the parent when no longer needed, empty, and/or when the medication has expired.

15. Emergency and Non-Emergency Medical Procedures

In case of minor accident or injury:

1. Staff will administer first aid to the child
2. The child's parents or physician will be called, if necessary.
3. If any treatment is administered, no matter how minor, an injury report will be filled out by the teacher. One copy will be placed in the child's file.
4. The teacher will log the injury

In case of serious illness or accident:

1. The staff will immediately call 911.
2. Emergency First Aid will be administered by a staff member if necessary. All permanent staff is required to be first aid certified and re-certified every two years.
3. The parent will be called and asked to meet the child and teachers at the hospital. If unreachable we may call the child's physician.
4. An adult must accompany the child to the hospital
5. The teachers will bring the child's authorization and consent form to the hospital.
6. The staff will continue to attempt to contact parents
7. The incident will be documented in writing and placed in the child's file.

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16. Emergency/Evacuation Plan

In case of emergency, we will call 911 or the Upper Merion Police Dept. to obtain information in the case of a natural disaster or another emergency. If evacuation of the building is deemed necessary, we will follow our fire drill procedures. We exit through the back doors of the school towards the playground. One teacher will lead the children to our designated area.

The administration will call 911 to notify authorities of the emergency or to obtain further information. The second teacher will carry the attendance forms on a clipboard along with parent contact information. This teacher will do a sweep of the classrooms and bathrooms before exiting the front door. Assistant teachers will help to reassure children

while ensuring safety. If shelter-in-place is deemed necessary, we will gather the children away from windows.

Missing Children: In the case of missing children, the procedure will be:

1. Immediate thorough search of the premises including all outdoor play areas
2. Notification of Police
3. Notification of family/emergency contacts

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17. Confidentiality and Children's Records

All information contained in a child's record, including personal information, is confidential. Anyone who is not directly involved in the care of your child or affiliated with child care licensing, protective services, or other government agencies will not have access to the records without your written authorization or court order. As a parent or guardian, you can request access to your child's records. We are happy to provide access at any reasonable time to records kept at the center, including the enrollment agreement, incident/accident reports, or progress notes.

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18. Insurance

School Accident Insurance is required for all students at a nominal cost ($50.00 annually). Insurance covers students during school hours and during school-related activities. Claims must be processed through the school office within 30 days.

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19. Part-time make-up days

All part-time students are permitted to “make up” (availability permitting) one (1) day per month for a day missed in that calendar month. Any additional missed days are considered lost days.

Inclement Weather make-up days - All part-time students are permitted to "make up" (availability permitting) one (1) day per month for a day missed due to school closing. If the TLC is open and the child does not attend due to weather the day cannot be made up.

"Make-up" day requests must be submitted in writing 48 hours before the requested date. All requests must be submitted to Legna Santerian at Lsanterian@asaphila.org and be approved by the teachers for the child to attend. You will receive an email back with the decision.

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20. Additional Drop-in Day

Current Part-time TLC Students may attend an additional day (availability permitting) for a $75/day charge. All requests must be submitted 48 hours in advance in writing to Legna Santerian at Lsanterian@asaphila.org and be approved to attend.

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21. Withdrawal, Suspension, or Dismissal

Parents who wish to withdraw their child must give a 60-day written notice before leaving. We reserve the right to suspend or dismiss a child (in our sole discretion) for unsatisfactory or inappropriate behavior, if we do not have adequate expertise or resources for the child's educational, medical, or other needs, for violations of our policies, or if for any reason, we determine it to be in the best interest of the school.

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22. Transition to Montessori

The goal of the Toddler program is to prepare all our children to ultimately transition into the Montessori classroom. Moving to a new classroom involves change for children, parents, and even teachers, who are eager to meet and learn the unique personality and gifts of each child. But the change can be slightly different for different age groups. Here are some things you may notice about the environment of your child's new classroom: the group sizes and ratios, staff communication, and new educational opportunities. At ASA, the transitions from our

Toddler classroom to the Montessori classroom take place two times a year. The transition can take place in September (with the first day of school) and January (with the first day back after the winter break). A child can transition into the Montessori classroom based on their age (children must be three years of age), toilet-training abilities, and social readiness.

The goal of the Montessori preschool experience is to help children help themselves**.** "All by myself" is and ought to be the theme of a toddler's life, and in the right environment, this motivation to be independent becomes the basis of tremendous learning. Montessori preschools, by satisfying the child's need to be independent, help him/her acquire skills of daily living in a careful, step-by-step sequence that sets them up for success and earned self-esteem. Our TLC teachers will work with the Montessori teachers to evaluate whether a child is developmentally, emotionally, and socially ready to make this move.