



Where your child will learn *and feel loved.*®

THE MALVERN SCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK

The Malvern School is dedicated to educating young children through diverse and innovative programming. When choosing The Malvern School, families' expectations are met through our commitment to providing the finest curriculum and staff, all in a nurturing environment. At The Malvern School your child will learn and feel loved.

Reviewed and Revised August 2023

WELCOME TO THE MALVERN SCHOOL

Dear Parents,

Childhood is a unique and exciting stage of life. During the early years, your child's skills are emerging and growing. The Malvern School has developed a program where our teachers provide developmentally appropriate activities to enhance your child's individual skill level in all areas of development.

The Malvern School's philosophy combines a developmentally appropriate program with state of the art equipment, an educated staff, and a safe and nurturing physical environment, in order to provide a learning environment in which your child can meet his/her full potential.

The educational goal of The Malvern School is to provide a developmentally appropriate curriculum that enhances your child's cognitive, physical, social and emotional skills, while fostering a love of learning. In addition, the teachers will challenge your child by providing a culturally diverse, ever-changing learning environment in which he/she will have opportunities to function independently and make choices.

As a parent, you know your child best; we encourage you to contact the school about any questions or concerns you might have. Please review the Daily Profile sheet, sent via Tadpoles, which highlights your child's activities each day. If there is anything we can do to make your child's experiences more meaningful, please let us know.

We are looking forward to working with you and your child and sharing in his/her growth and development. At The Malvern School, your child will learn and feel loved.

Sincerely,

The Director Team

Editor's Note: The term "parent" is used throughout to represent the primary individual(s) responsible for the child's care.

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

The Malvern School's philosophy is to offer children with all abilities a high quality, developmentally appropriate program, with individualized interaction between the children and the staff in a warm and caring environment.

Our program is based on standards set by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) to help children of all ages and abilities reach their fullest potential. Based on the child's age and developmental level, each child will partake in activities aimed at developing and enhancing fine and gross motor skills; multicultural awareness; social and emotional development; self-help skills; language development; music and movement; computer skills and arts and crafts.

The lead teaching staff is college-educated, and they encourage children to discover the best in themselves. Our staff appreciates the uniqueness of each child and recognizes that what works for one child does not necessarily work for another. In their efforts to develop the whole child, the staff continues to challenge the children by providing age appropriate interactive activities in a stimulating learning environment. As part of our staff development program, we provide ongoing training to keep staff aware of current child development practices.

At The Malvern School, we have two custom designed rooms, the Fascination Station and the Discovery Room, where children have unlimited opportunities to see, touch and do through hands-on learning stations. The learning stations focus on sensory exploration, art experiences, reading, manipulative play and dramatic play. Our Fascination Station is a favorite among older Infants and Toddlers, while Preschool through After School children enjoy our Discovery Room.

We believe that parents are an integral part of our program and have a direct impact on their children's successful learning experiences and sense of security within the school. Upon enrollment, parents are asked to complete a Profile Sheet in order for the staff to ensure a smooth transition into our program. These Profile sheets are updated regularly to ensure a child's ever-changing needs, interests and growth opportunities are documented. Parents are provided with a multitude of opportunities to participate in the program and socialize with other families in the school community.

In our efforts to continually provide a high quality program, Quality Standards Review validators conduct annual reviews. During the Quality Standards Review, our validators assess the overall program, concentrating on the health and safety, educational program, appearance, staff development and administrative management of the school. We realize that feedback from parents and staff plays an instrumental role in the quality of our program. Therefore, parents and staff receive surveys to complete as part of our continued effort to meet parent, children and staff needs.

When you add up all the features listed above, The Malvern School's Philosophy for early childhood education provides a high quality, developmentally appropriate program in which children of all ages and abilities develop acceptance, respect, caring and encouragement each day.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Malvern School is a private child development center founded in 1998. We are licensed by the Department of Children and Families - Office of Licensing (OOL).

The Malvern School is open year round, Monday through Friday. Our hours of operation may vary per location. Please see a Director for the specific hours of your center. We offer full-time programs as well as part-time schedules in select classrooms. You will be asked to specify your child's hours at the time of enrollment. A school-closing schedule is provided below.

The Malvern School is closed on the following days during the **2023-2024** school year:

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| * September 1, 2023 | Teacher In-Service Day |
| * September 4, 2023 | Labor Day |
| * November 23 & 24, 2023 | Thanksgiving Break |
| * December 25, 2023- January 1, 2024 | Winter Break |
| * February 19, 2024 | Teacher In-Service/Closing at 12:45pm |
| * March 29, 2024 | Spring Break |
| * May 27, 2024 | Memorial Day |
| * July 4, 2024 | Independence Day |
| * August 30, 2024 | Teacher In-Service Day |

There is no refund or a reduced tuition rate for holidays, illnesses, vacation, inclement weather days, natural disasters, acts of God, government or medically directed/ordered closure or quarantine, or other events outside the control of The Malvern School. We will make every effort to open the school; however, in the event of extremely inclement weather or dangerous driving conditions, we may be forced to close the school. Based on restrictions put in place by the state and local government, we may need to adjust our operating schedule. Families will be alerted of needed operational schedule changes via the Tadpoles Communication system.

ATTENDANCE

A parent should notify The Malvern School by 9:00 AM whenever a child will not be attending on a scheduled day. Teachers attempt to wait until everyone has arrived before starting their activities, so timely notification is greatly appreciated. Also, a Director should be notified if a child is ill. This enables the staff to keep track of any illness that may occur at the school as well as handle any required precautions. Updates to your child's attendance for the day can be made via phone, email, or through the Tadpoles app.

PARKING AND SPEED LIMIT

The speed limit through the parking lot is 5 mph. Parent parking is located at the front of the building. No parking is permitted in the fire lanes. This space is reserved for emergency vehicles only. All vehicles should be turned off – idling is not permitted. For the safety of all, children must have a hand held in the parking lot at all times. Children will enter through the front door. Entrance/Exit is not permitted through the playground gates.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Upon arrival and departure each day, children are to be escorted to their designated classroom or their assigned area of the school and dropped off with a supervising staff member. Please notify a supervising staff member directly when you are ready to leave your child under their supervision. Also, please notify a staff member when you are removing your child from their supervision. Children are required by law to be under adult supervision at all times. Once a parent removes a child from the supervising staff member or prior to him/her being dropped off, it is the responsibility of the parent or person picking up or dropping off the child to supervise him/her. If you or your child requires any special assistance with regard to drop-off or pick-up due to disability, please speak with a Director, and we will make appropriate arrangements.

Children attending the morning program should be settled and ready to start their day by 9 AM. Late arrivals may make your child's transition into the classroom more difficult as his/her classmates will already be involved in the day's activities.

RELEASE OF CHILDREN

The Malvern School maintains a strict policy regarding the individuals to whom we will release a child. The enrollment forms require at least three individuals to whom the child may be released either on a regular or emergency basis. In addition, parents are asked to specify a password for the release of a child.

If a non-custodial parent is not included among those persons authorized by the custodial parent to pick up the child, please inform the Directors. Each child may only be released to his/her parents(s) or person(s) authorized by the parents to take the child from the center and to assume responsibility for the child in an emergency if the parents cannot be reached. If a custody order denying or limiting access to the child is in effect, we must be provided with a copy, which we will keep in the child's file, and we will comply with the terms of the order. This information will remain confidential and will be shared with staff members only as required to meet the needs of the child.

Advance written notice is required for an individual to be authorized to pick up a child. In the case of an emergency, a Director may be notified by phone as to the name, address, phone number, and brief physical description of the person who will be picking up the child. The Director will then call the parent back to verify this authorization has come

directly from a parent. Once this individual arrives at the school, a photo ID and the password will be needed before the child is released.

Should an unauthorized individual arrive to pick up a child, a parent or emergency contact person will be immediately notified via phone call. If a Director is unable to reach a parent or emergency contact person, the child will not be released. Should an authorized person become uncooperative with the school's policies regarding the release of a child, the local police will be notified.

The Malvern School will not release a child to any parent, relative, or other authorized adult who appears to be impaired physically, emotionally, or by the use of drugs or alcohol. Should this situation occur, another parent, guardian, or emergency contact person will be contacted to pick up the child.

ACCESS CONTROL SYSTEM AND PARENT ACCESS

In order to provide a secure setting for the children and staff at The Malvern School, an access control system has been installed. Each family is assigned a unique four-digit code to access the building.

In the event that someone other than a parent/legal guardian needs to pick up your child, they will need to use the intercom located at the front door. An authorized Malvern School staff member will greet them and upon following the proper security features, will allow them access into the building. Under no circumstances should you give your access code to an unauthorized user. The Malvern School uses a password / identification system in addition to the access control security system.

Please do not hold the front door for any individual at any time. Each family/staff member must enter their unique code to gain access to the building.

EXPERIENCING SCHOOL FOR THE FIRST TIME

When a child first starts school he/she may feel a little nervous, especially if it is their first school experience. Some ideas that may help the child adjust to school include bringing a favorite stuffed animal for nap, a family photo, etc. Please feel free to call at any time to check on how your child is doing throughout the day.

STUDENT FILES

Each child enrolled in The Malvern School must have an up-to-date school file with all state and Malvern School required forms. This file is confidential, is only accessed by Directors and state licensing representatives, and will be shared with other staff members only as required to meet the needs of the child. In an emergency, access to vital health information may be given to a child's emergency contact persons.

The Application for Admission and Enrollment Agreement forms must be filled out annually. These forms are required by licensing with all fields completed, including addresses and telephone numbers. In addition, emergency contact information should be reviewed by the parent every 6 months or upon any change in addresses, etc. Medical records are required to be updated every 6 months for children under two years of age and annually thereafter, or whenever the child's immunization status changes. In addition, parents are required to complete a Child Profile Sheet upon enrollment and update every 6 months.

The Malvern School assesses and prepares reports on each child's developmental progress several times a year. The purpose of this process is to identify the skills and abilities of each child, enabling the teachers to develop plans and activities that will help them each reach their full potential in all developmental areas. Additionally, some children require services from specialized support staff, which would be determined in conjunction with parents. Screening and assessment information by Malvern School personnel, or outside agencies, will be shared only with parents, unless a written approval from the parent is provided.

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

In keeping with state regulations and in the best interest of each student and family, The Malvern School maintains strict guidelines for confidentiality. At no time will teachers or Directors discuss any behaviors, concerns, incidents, or answer questions regarding an individual child, except your own. Each parent at The Malvern School has the right to protect the privacy of their child, including declining permission for their child to be photographed. Therefore, no photos, names, or information about children, families, or Malvern employees is to be made public via internet or other electronic methods. Images of Malvern School customers, employees, or functions are not to be shared or broadcast in any manner, except by specific permission of management. Many events are held at the school and parents' desire to record these is understandable; however, because not all children have permission to be photographed/recorded, public posting or sharing of group photos or video on electronic media is prohibited.

In order to allow our staff to "leave work at work", they are discouraged from engaging in socializing or social networking with our customers. We ask our parents to respect this policy and limit communication with company employees to that which concerns your child's school experience. Questions or concerns should be addressed during school hours.

REGISTRATION FEE

An initial registration fee of \$100.00 is payable upon enrollment, with a \$100.00 re-registration fee due each September when the child is re-enrolled for the upcoming school year. In addition, in order to reserve a space in the program, we require a non-refundable deposit of \$450 which is applied to the first month's tuition. The Malvern School has the right to delay or cancel a child's start date. Because we transition children based on development, The Malvern School cannot guarantee a specific start date for any registered child.

At the time of enrollment, all families are required to provide credit card information and sign the Credit Card on File Form. This policy is in place and used in the event of an unpaid tuition balance.

TUITION PAYMENTS AND FEES

Tuition is paid on a monthly basis and is due on or before the first of each month. The tuition mailbox is located outside of the Directors' office. Payment may be made via check or credit card. The Malvern School does not accept cash payments. Checks should be payable to "The Malvern School". If tuition is not paid by the close of business on the 5th of the month, a late fee of \$25.00 will be assessed. An additional fee of \$25 will be assessed for each week past the 5th that tuition is not received. If tuition remains unpaid in full by the end of the month, The Malvern School will no longer be able to provide services to your family until the balance is paid. There will be a \$25.00 fee for any checks returned by the bank. This fee is due at the time of notification. Please contact the Executive Director if payment difficulties are anticipated so alternative arrangements may be made.

There is no refund or a reduced tuition rate for holidays, illnesses, vacation, inclement weather days, natural disasters, acts of God, government or medically directed/ordered closure or quarantine, or other events outside the control of The Malvern School.

In the event a family takes a leave from school, including for the summer, the child is considered "withdrawn" and his/her space in the program is forfeited, and may be filled. In order to guarantee a spot in the program to return within 30 days, a registration fee and deposit will be charged. The Malvern School cannot guarantee a space for your child if this registration fee and deposit are not remitted prior to your leave. See Executive Director for details.

A late fee will be assessed for any children not picked up before the school's regular closing time. The charge will be \$15.00 for a 15-minute period. An additional \$5.00 per 5-minute period will be charged thereafter. In the event that a child is still at the school after closing and we have not heard from a parent, we will take the following steps in this order:

1. Attempt to reach a parent or guardian at home or work.
2. Call those listed as Emergency Contact individuals
3. Call the local police

Consistent lateness after closing will be cause for the child's dismissal from The Malvern School.

ADDITIONAL DAYS/HOURS

Switching of scheduled days is not permitted; this includes requests to make up days due to holiday schedules. Additional days, half day or full day, may be added for a specified charge. Please consult a Director for fees. Parents are required to provide the Directors at least 48 hours' notice if they would like to bring their child for an additional day. Please keep in mind that additional days are offered based on enrollment and may not always be available. Last minute requests will be considered only if sufficient space and staff are available to adequately meet the needs of the additional child. If you need to request a permanent schedule change, a two-week written notice is required.

For any children enrolled in the half-day program the scheduled pick up time is 1:00 PM. There will also be a late pick up fee assessed for those children picked up after 1:00 PM. The charge will be \$15.00 for a 15-minute period.

Children who are enrolled in The Malvern School After School Program may come to the school for a full day when their public/private school is not in session (i.e. in service days, inclement weather, school holidays, etc.). Parents should discuss these extra days with a Director as soon as possible to ensure space. There will be an additional charge for these days.

INCLUSION POLICY

The Malvern School is committed to providing developmentally appropriate early learning and development experiences that support the full access and participation of every child enrolled in our school. In their efforts to develop the whole child, the staff continues to challenge the children by providing age appropriate interactive activities in a stimulating learning environment. We believe that each child is unique and work in partnership with families and other professionals involved with the child to provide the support every child needs to reach their full potential.

Enrollment Process

The Malvern School strives to provide services to children and families interested in our program. During the Enrollment Process we will assess each child to determine if our program and facilities can meet that child's needs. A waiting list may be maintained, and children will be accepted from the list on a first come first served basis. During the Enrollment process we recommend that families do the following:

- Tour our school
- Complete Child Profile Form
- Visit with child/Getting to know you meeting is encouraged

Inclusive Environment

Early childhood educators at The Malvern School use developmentally appropriate practices and consider the unique needs of all children when planning lessons and activities. Staff will make every attempt to make adaptations or modifications necessary to meet the individual needs of the children. Schedules, routines and activities are flexible and early childhood educators will work with therapists, special educators and other professionals to integrate individual accommodations, modifications and strategies into classroom routines and activities. Any adaptations will be reviewed with families and other professionals supporting the child.

In order to provide the best quality of care to each child, we may limit enrollment of children with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). At each school location, the number of children with an IEP should not exceed 10% of the current enrollment of children ages 3 and above.

The Malvern School also welcomes children regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability and/or religion. Bullying and harassment are prohibited at The Malvern School.

Additional Supports Process

- Conference with parents to share relevant documentation
- Implement formalized screening tool – Ages & Stages (completed by parents and staff) and/or Clay Screening Tool
- Make recommendations
- Provide families with contact information for appropriate agencies
- Gather additional documentation – Developmental reports, logs, behavior forms

- Reach out for additional supports (CONNECT Hotline, Early Learning Resource Center, Technical Assistance, etc.)

It is our goal to work with every family to ensure each child's success in our program. If we determine the placement is not successful, alternate care recommendations will be made.

Resources

- Early Intervention and Intermediate Unit referral forms
- Resource binder located in school foyer
- Parent Handbook

Confidentiality

In keeping with state regulations and in the best interest of each student and family, The Malvern School maintains strict guidelines for confidentiality. Confidentiality applies to all verbal and written information about potential, enrolling and previously enrolled children and their families. At no time will teachers or Directors discuss any behaviors, concerns, incidents, or answer questions regarding an individual child, except your own. Each parent at The Malvern School has the right to protect the privacy of their child. All staff will be trained on the need for confidentiality and will be expected to fulfill their obligation to respect the protection of privacy. No information will be released about a child and the parent/legal guardian during enrollment or transition to another receiving program or school without first receiving the written permission of the parent/guardian. This excludes the responsibility held by early childhood educators as mandated reporters of suspected child abuse and neglect as outlined in Pennsylvania/New Jersey law or when information is subpoenaed by the court.

Family Centered Practices

The Malvern School acknowledges and respects the priorities each family has for their child. Families are encouraged to collaborate with staff to ensure that each child has an opportunity for optimum success. The Malvern School communicates with each family daily and has regular meetings to discuss the child's successes and challenges.

Parent Responsibilities:

Infant – Pre-Kindergarten Children

- Update paperwork (Emergency Contact, Enrollment Agreement, Child Profile) every 6 months
- Parents must provide school with copy of Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs) and Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and updates within 14 days of completion
- School's staff is part of all IFSP and IEP Meetings
- Parents need to notify the school in advance if they are bringing anyone additional to the IFSP/IEP meetings (Advocates/legal representation)
- Inform school of any medications the child may be taking and any changes
- Sign Consent to Share Information form

School Age Children (Kindergarten – 2nd grade)

- Parents must provide school with copy of IEPs and updates
- Notify school when there is an IEP meeting and provide any updated documents within 14 days of completion
- Inform school of any medications the child may be taking and any changes

Professional Development and Support for Staff

Training and support is provided to ensure that all staff are comfortable, confident and competent to meet the developmental and educational needs of all children. The Malvern School will promote an integrated system of high-quality professional development to support the inclusion of young children with all abilities and their families.

Collaboration with Other Professionals

Many children with disabilities or other special needs are supported by developmental and educational professionals such as therapists, teacher and health professionals. The Malvern School welcomes collaboration with those professionals and works with them to assure the child's success. The Malvern School requires the teacher's participation in Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSP) and Individualized Education Programs (IEP). The Malvern School will work collaboratively with the support professionals and the child's teacher to determine the best strategies to support the child in the group setting. Due to licensing restrictions at this time, outside support services may not be present at school.

WITHDRAWAL/EXPULSION POLICY

A 30-day written notice is required for withdrawing your child for any reason. If the required notice is not given, parents will be charged for that entire month's tuition. If 30-day written notice is given, any additional tuition will be refunded within thirty days of the withdrawal less any outstanding charges for late fees, field trip costs, etc.

Unfortunately, there are sometimes we must ask that a child be removed from our program. We do everything possible to prevent this from happening and prevent any reasons it may need to occur. However, it is possible that it may be necessary for The Malvern School to suspend services to your family. These causes may be parent or child related and includes, but is not limited to the following:

Parental Issues:

- *Failure to pay/habitual late payments
- *Failure to complete required forms
- *Habitual tardiness when picking up
- *Verbal abuse to staff

Child Issues:

- *Uncontrollable tantrums/angry outbursts
- *Bullying or hurting other children or staff
- *Threatening other children
- *Failure to adjust after a reasonable amount of time

Families will not be asked to leave the center in response to: a parent reporting a situation of abuse, a complaint to the licensing office, or questioning of policies or procedures.

We follow a positive Child Guidance Policy, found on page 15 in this manual. If a child's behavior becomes unmanageable, we may need to take measures such as suspending services for a short period or permanently. We make every effort to provide a safe and happy environment for all of the children, and are always assessing our classrooms, strategies, and schedules, to ensure all children are engaged and have minimal opportunities for problem behavior. In the event a child is exhibiting these behaviors with frequency, the following actions may be taken to prevent/rectify the issue:

- Staff will try to redirect the child from negative behaviors
- Staff will reassess the environment, daily schedule, activities and supervision
- Staff will use positive methods and language while guiding children
- Staff will praise and model appropriate behaviors/actions
- Staff will provide children with verbal warnings
- Staff will document the behaviors (date, time, description of incident), collect data and set goals for the children
- Staff will provide parents with reports that note the disruptive behaviors
- Staff will request a conference to discuss plans to promote positive behaviors
- Staff will implement any action plans discussed/developed during conference

Parents will be notified of any problems and a conference will be scheduled, if needed, to try to resolve the situation. The school will make every effort to refer you to written resources, agencies or organizations that can provide specialized help, if necessary. If support services are granted, The Malvern School will work in conjunction with all service staff to support implementation of the Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs) and Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). If remedial actions have not shown improvement, the child's parent/guardian will be notified verbally and in writing about the child's behavior warranting an expulsion. The expulsion could be temporary or permanent depending on the cause. If temporary, you will be informed of the length of time your child must be absent based upon the circumstances, and what behavior and/or support changes are required to merit a return to the school. In any case of disenrollment, you will be given a maximum two-week notice in order to find alternate care arrangements. The only exception would be in the event of extreme circumstances such as potentially dangerous behavior by a child or parent, which would warrant immediate expulsion of a child from the center.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

The Malvern School will make every reasonable attempt to open on time and remain open during inclement weather. However, in cases of extreme weather and dangerous road conditions, it may be necessary for the school to close for the day or delay the opening time. Based on restrictions put in place by the state and local government, we may need to adjust our operating schedule. Emails and text alerts will be sent via our Tadpoles Communication System. Should parents be prevented by weather conditions from reaching the facility to pick up their children, closing staff members will care for the children and maintain proper staff-child ratios until such time as the parents can safely pick up their children.

Should the building require emergency evacuation, the staff-child ratios will be maintained, and the children will be evacuated to a nearby-specified location. Each staff member responsible for a group of children will carry emergency contact information and class attendance records with him/her to the new site. Parents will be contacted by telephone as to the location of the children, or by radio broadcast if phone transmission is not possible.

HEALTH POLICIES

The health of all children and staff attending The Malvern School is very important. By monitoring each child’s health status, teachers are able to maintain a healthy environment for the entire class. Any child or staff member who is ill should not attend school. It is the parent’s responsibility to ensure that their child is free from the symptoms or illness listed below in order to attend school for the day.

Some examples of symptoms or illnesses that require exclusion from the program include (but are not limited to):

1. Severe pain or discomfort, especially in joints, abdomen, or ears.
2. 2 or more episodes in a 24-hour period of vomiting or diarrhea.
3. Severe sore throat or coughing.
4. Temperature of 100.4 degrees or above
5. Jaundice (yellow) skin or eyes.
6. Red eyes with discharge.
7. Infected untreated skin patches/lesions or severe itching of body/scalp.
8. Difficulty in breathing or rapid breathing.
9. Undiagnosed skin rashes (excluding diaper rash) lasting more than 24 hours.
10. Swollen joints visibly enlarged lymph nodes, or stiff neck.
11. Blood/pus from ears, skin, urine, stool.
12. Unusual behavior characterized by listlessness, loss of normal appetite, or confusion.
13. Symptoms of chicken pox, impetigo, lice, scabies, strep throat or COVID-19.

If a child becomes ill during the day, a parent will be contacted immediately and required to pick up the child. The child will be given the opportunity to rest until the designated person arrives. If the child cannot be picked up within 30 minutes by the parent, we ask that alternate arrangements be made. If we are unable to reach a parent within 30 minutes, the emergency contacts will be called. Children who are sent home due to illness will not be readmitted to school until he/she has been symptom free for a minimum of a 24-hour period, and fever-free without medication. The exception to this would be that the child was seen by a licensed health care provider and they have indicated in writing that the child poses no health threat to others and is able to participate in all school activities.

For the single symptoms of: cough, shortness of breath, or new loss of taste/smell, written notice from their licensed health care provider stating that the child/staff member is able to participate in all school activities will be required in order to return to school. If a child/staff member has two or more of the following symptoms: fever, chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue or congestion/runny nose, written notice from their licensed health care provider stating that the child/staff member is able to participate in all school activities will be required in order to return to school. This exclusionary period may be extended by the school if requested by local health authorities.

The Malvern School is required to file a report with the Department of Health within 24 hours for certain communicable diseases so that control measures may be taken. Parents and staff are reminded to notify The Malvern School within 24 hours if a child or family member has developed a known or suspected communicable disease. If a child has not been fully immunized for some of these diseases (due to age, medical condition, or religious reason) he/she will be excluded from the school during an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease as directed by the State Health Department.

Examples of “reportable diseases” include (but are not limited to):

Respiratory Illnesses

Chicken Pox*
 German Measles
 Hemophilus Influenzae
 Measles
 Meningococcus
 Mumps
 Tuberculosis
 Whooping Cough

Gastrointestinal Illnesses

Campylobacter
 Escherichia coli
 Giardia Lamblia
 Hepatitis A
 Salmonella
 Shigella

Contact Illnesses

Impetigo
 Lice
 Scabies

COVID-19

Strep Throat (not required to report to state)

*Chicken Pox – a note from doctor is not required to re-admit. A note from the parent is required, stating that at least 6 days have elapsed since the onset of the rash, and that all sores have dried and crusted.

All parents will be notified in writing if a communicable disease has been reported. The Malvern School follows the reporting guidelines established by NJ Department of Health and the American Academy of Pediatrics. A copy of these guidelines is available for you to review in the Directors' office.

We appreciate your cooperation with The Malvern School's health policies. By establishing and maintaining a healthy environment, and reasonable health policies, all of our children and staff will benefit.

MEDICATION POLICIES/PROCEDURES

In the event that a child requires medication during school hours, The Malvern School requires the parent/guardian to follow these guidelines:

- Medication (prescription or nonprescription) may be accepted only in an original container.
- Prescription medication must include written instructions from the individual who prescribed the medicine. Instructions for administration contained on a prescription label are acceptable.
- The label of a medication container shall identify the first and last name of the child for whom the medication is intended. This should be on the prescription label or written on the nonprescription container. Medications shall be administered to only the child whose name appears on the container.
- A doctor's note is required for administering over the counter medication to a child under two years of age.
- All medications need to be taken home daily.
- Medications must be stored in the medicine container located in the locked cabinet in the kitchens (and infant room). Refrigerated medicines can be stored in the medicine containers in the refrigerator.
- Be sure to provide a measuring spoon or measuring cup for all liquid medication.
- Medications cannot be administered "as needed." Specific dates and times must be listed on the Medication Log.
- Fever reducers will not be permitted.

In order for The Malvern School staff to administer medication to your child, ALL of the above listed guidelines must be met. Also, the parent / guardian must fill out the following **form**:

Medication Log – blank forms are available at drop off and via email. This form must be filled out, completely, by the parent / guardian at the beginning of a cycle of medication. We are happy to assist you with completing the form, so please ask a teacher/director for assistance if needed. When complete, the form should be given to your child's teacher or a Director. The parent must review and initial the form each morning, signifying the child is to receive the medication that day. The staff will complete their portion of the form each day, upon giving the medication.

For children requiring special medications (Epi-Pens) due to potentially life-threatening allergies, parents must complete the packet which includes Guidelines and Authorizations for Children with Life Threatening Allergies. This packet can be acquired from your Directors and, when completed, should be returned, along with the medication, to either Director. Medication(s) will be stored, along with copies of required forms, in the child's classroom in a marked bag, and will be taken outside and on excursions with the child.

Sunscreens and diaper ointments need to have authorization forms, which cover an extended period of time. School staff will make these available to you when needed. Of course, feel free to ask for either of these if needed.

Insect repellent: Unless advised by public health authorities, it is not our policy to apply insect repellents to children. However, in the event a parent requests it (no children under 2 months), you should complete a Creams/Lotions Authorization Form. The product must contain a concentration of 30% DEET or less depending on your child's age and may not be applied more than once per day.

HANDWASHING

As you know, we wash hands frequently throughout the day. Here is a list of standard times that hands will be washed.

Times Adults are to Wash Hands:

- When first arriving at school, and when starting in a room
- After toileting or diapering
- After wiping noses (or handling other body fluids)
- Before/after meals and snacks
- Before/after sensory play
- When returning from outside play
- Before and after computer usage
- Before and after Specialty Room usage
- Before and after feeding a child
- Before and after giving medication
- After cleaning or handling trash
- After applying sunscreen to a child
- After handling a face covering/mask

Times Children are to Wash Hands with assistance if needed:

- When you first arrive at school
- When entering a new classroom
- After toileting or diapering
- After wiping noses (or handling other body fluids)
- Before/after meals and snacks
- Before/after sensory play
- When returning from outside play
- Before and after computer usage
- Before and after using the Specialty Rooms
- After handling another individual's face covering/mask

ACCIDENTS AND INJURY

Should a child become injured at school, the parents will be notified in the form of a written accident report. The parent is given the original copy and is asked to sign a copy indicating that he/she has been notified. The signed copy should be returned to the office where it will be kept in the child's file. If another child is involved in the accident, please do not ask the child's name. We respect the privacy of all families and know that your family expects the same privacy and confidentiality. If the injury is serious, a parent will be notified by phone at the time the accident occurs.

In the event that the child should need to be transported via ambulance to the nearest hospital or emergency room facility, a parent will be contacted to meet an accompanying staff member at that facility. It is extremely important that emergency contact information is correct and up to date. Emergency contacts should be no more than a 30-minute drive from the school's location. A child cannot be transported for emergency care, or receive emergency care at school, unless the waivers for emergency care have been signed and are in the child's file. These waivers are included in the enrollment packet.

BITING POLICY

Even in the best childcare program, biting may occur periodically in infant and toddler rooms, and sometimes even among preschoolers. While this is a scary, very frustrating, and very stressful situation for children, parents, and staff, it is an unfortunate, natural phenomenon. There are no quick and easy solutions.

Biting may occur for a variety of reasons including the simple sensory exploration of babies, seeking to be noticed, or the intense desire for a toy. Repeated biting becomes a pattern of learned behavior that is often hard to extinguish

because it does achieve results. We will do our best to provide a safe setting where no child needs to hurt another to achieve his/her desires.

We try to make every effort to extinguish the behavior quickly and balance our commitment to the family of the biting child with that of the other families. Only after we feel we have made every effort to make the program work for the child do we consider asking a family to withdraw a child from the program.

OUTDOOR POLICY

An important part of The Malvern School's program is to provide for daily outdoor time. Health experts stress the importance of fresh air, and the negative consequences of children spending too much time in closed, indoor settings. If a child is well enough to attend school, we also feel they are well enough to go outside. Children are expected to go outside every day except in the event of extreme weather conditions which present a health risk (heat index, freezing temperatures, poor air quality, etc.), as informed by public health authorities. Children will go outside when temperatures do not pose a significant health risk, such as temperatures with wind chills below zero or a heat index above 90 degrees. Outdoor times may be shortened or eliminated when the temperature is close to/outside this range.

As a general rule, we do not allow a child to stay indoors while his/her classroom is outside. Each class group visits the playground area as a separate group. The playground climber and toys are disinfected between each group.

Since going outdoors is part of the daily program please remember to dress your child in appropriate clothing. Please send your child in securely fitting shoes. No open-toed shoes/flip flops/croc-like footwear are allowed. We will do our best to frequently remind you when your child is lacking something (a hat, gloves, etc.). We know that things like these tend to disappear, too, so we will do our best to keep your child's belongings in his/her possession. The program depends on children arriving with all the proper clothing for a full, active day, indoors and out.

ITEMS TO BRING TO SCHOOL

INFANTS: We provide each full time infant with his/her own crib and mattress. The parent must provide the following labeled items:

- at least 2 crib sheets (port-a-crib size)
- sleep sack, if desired and child is unable to pull up in the crib (swaddlers and blankets are not permitted)
- 2 – 3 complete changes of clothing for the appropriate season
- diapers and wipes
- several bibs/burp cloths
- pacifiers, if desired (pacifier straps/attachment devices are not permitted)
- all food, drink and utensils required to serve food
- sweater or sweatshirt and hat

Parents may also provide a mobile should they desire, which may be used until the child is able to pull her/himself up in the crib. Parents are responsible for washing the crib linens at least once a week. Diaper creams and powders are considered medication and therefore must be accompanied by The Malvern School's Authorization form. (See Medication Policy/Procedure). All food, bottles, and clothing should be labeled with the child's first and last names. Bottles and caps will need to be re-labeled frequently because of washing them. All utensils, bowls, cups, etc. must also be provided by the parent and labeled with child's name. Bottles must be filled at home. Refrigeration will be provided for storing food and bottles. For maximum safety, bumper pads, soft items such as quilts/comforters, pillows, incline supports, and stuffed toys are not permitted in cribs. All infants, unless otherwise ordered by a physician, are placed on their backs to sleep. We do not allow infants to sleep in swings or other seats, as a crib is the safest place for them to rest. We ask for your assistance in encouraging this at home.

TODDLERS AND PRESCHOOLERS: Please provide the following labeled items:

- 2 complete changes of clothing including underwear, socks, and shoes
- a smock or oversized shirt for messy activities
- meals provided daily in a labeled lunch box/bag
- diapers and wipes, and/or extra sets of underwear if "in training"
- a child-sized sleeping bag for nap time (this will be placed on a resting mat provided by The Malvern School) and a favorite sleep toy or blanket

Extra clothing should be provided as the seasons change and as the child grows. The most appropriate school shoes are rubber-soled, closed-toe shoes such as sneakers for running, climbing, and playing outdoors. Weather appropriate clothing is also needed daily as every effort is made to have some outdoor playtime, even in the snow. Additional sets of clothing and appropriate underwear especially when the child is “potty training” are needed. Sleeping bags are sent home on a weekly basis to be laundered.

TOYS FROM HOME

Toys from home will not be accepted or requested at this time. All nap items will be sent home weekly to be laundered. Spare clothes may be stored in a zip close bag and remain at school if unused.

REST TIME

All children under the age of four are required to lie quietly on their sleeping bags for approximately 30 – 45 minutes. Please see a Director if you would like to discuss accommodations for older children to nap. A relaxing environment is created for the children with quiet music being played and dimmed lights. Those children who do not fall asleep during the initial quiet time are given the opportunity to select quiet activities such as books or puzzles to occupy themselves while their classmates rest.

Although we make every effort to meet each child’s individual rest needs, it is difficult to guarantee a specific length of nap, or wake-up time. A child’s rest needs vary with activity level, sleep patterns the night before, etc. It is equally difficult and not part of our program to keep a child awake if he/she wants to sleep.

MEALS AND SNACKS

The Malvern School has found that many parents prefer to provide lunches for their children. This allows a parent to send a meal that conforms to their child’s individual food preferences. Parents must provide any bowls, and/or cups. We do provide disposable plates and utensils. For all ages, all bibs, bottles, cups, bowls, utensils, etc. brought from home must be taken home daily to ensure proper sterilization. The Department of Health does not allow us to wash and store these items. Children enrolled in the morning preschool program are encouraged to join their class for lunch allowing for socialization.

The Malvern School provides morning and afternoon snacks on a daily basis. These snacks are organic. At each snack period, two food groups are offered. Each month, parents will be issued a snack menu via email.

Infant parents must send prepared bottles of breast milk or formula clearly labeled with the child’s first and last name and the date. Please note that children cannot be given “cow’s milk” until they are at least 12 months of age. Arrangements may be made for those mothers who wish to come to the school to breast feed their infants. Instructions regarding a feeding schedule established by the parent must be provided and updated as necessary. Infant bottles will be heated in hot water for 5 minutes, gently mixed, and temperature tested before feeding. Any contents remaining after feeding will be discarded from the bottle. Any remaining foods and bottles must be taken home nightly.

For infants under six months, we will give fruit juice or solid foods if provided with a note from the family and medical professional. Based on early childhood recommendations for infants, we ask that you limit fruit juice to be given at school to no more than 4 oz a day.

As solid foods are introduced, parents are requested to bring labeled jars or small containers of food. The Health Department also asks that all food, whether commercially prepared or home cooked, be proportioned out in clean and sanitized containers complete with the date and a label. Perishable food will be placed in the refrigerator upon arrival at school. We recommend that perishable food be transported in an insulated cooler. Any infant foods that require heating in a microwave should be sent in a microwave-safe container.

Toddler and Older Classrooms:

Breakfast We encourage families to serve their children breakfast at home whenever possible. If breakfast is to be served at school, all items should be in a separate bag labeled with “breakfast” and the child’s name.

Lunch We suggest sandwiches, yogurt, fruit, crackers, cheese, etc. Please try to include a well-balanced meal, as well as a beverage. If a beverage is not provided, the child will be given water. Please try to avoid lunches that contain excessive amounts of sugar, artificial flavorings, preservatives, and caffeine. Lunches should be ready to serve (fruit peeled, items cut, etc.) Items requiring refrigeration should be labeled with the child's full name and date and placed in the refrigerator upon arrival. Please place only perishable items in the refrigerator.

Each child will be encouraged to eat a well-balanced meal that the parent has provided. If a child refuses certain foods, he/she will not be forced to finish the meal. All children's meals will be documented each day with the type of food the child consumes, and how much. Please review the daily profile report, which includes a section about lunch, for details about how your child ate.

Due to concerns about choking, for children under four, we cannot allow: whole grapes, hot dogs (whole or sliced in rounds), meat on the bone, nuts, popcorn, raw peas, hard pretzel nuggets, chunks of raw carrots, or large pieces of meat.

The Malvern School reserves the right to implement food restrictions throughout the school due to critical dietary conditions such as severe food allergies. Our schools are peanut and tree nut sensitive. We ask that families refrain from sending peanut and nut products into school at any time.

From time to time, families provide a special treat to celebrate their child's birthday. If a family wishes to share a treat with the class, please contact the Director to make arrangements. All special treats will need to be pre-packaged, store-prepared items. If you prefer that your child forego eating family-provided special treats, please contact the Director.

FIELD TRIPS / SPECIAL VISITORS

Periodic field trips for children 4 years and older will be planned to provide the children exposure to learning experiences in our local community. Prior to each trip, information regarding the date, time, cost, location, chaperones, etc. will be sent home. The permission slip must be signed and returned by the requested date in order for the child to attend the field trip.

Occasionally, special visitors are planned for the children. Children of all ages will participate in the event if it is developmentally appropriate. Special visitor information can be found on your monthly school calendar.

In the summer, our camp program typically includes a variety of trips (children over 4), visitors, and special events. To enable us to offer these fun activities, a summer activity fee is assessed to all children (except infants). Information about any planned events and fees will be distributed in the spring.

CHILD GUIDANCE POLICY

The Malvern School's approach to child guidance and discipline is to teach children about pro-social behaviors and to help children learn to monitor their own behavior. The staff present and model age-appropriate guidelines and use thoughtful communication to encourage children to express their feelings.

When working with children of all ages, quality interactions are a driving force for the emotional well-being, social competence and intellectual growth of a child. Interactions focus on warmth, respect, and positivity while being responsive and individualized to a child's needs. Quality interactions create the foundation for a cohesive community. At The Malvern School, positive guidance encompasses how we speak to and physically treat the children each and every day.

The school environment is based on quality interactions and guided choices. Within this developmentally-appropriate setting, challenging behaviors can still occur. A system of positive guidance strategies provides tools needed to address any behavior challenges through teaching and promotes their social and emotional development. When discipline is used to teach children to monitor their own behaviors, they learn to help each other, encourage each other, develop communication skills, their judgment and wisdom, and create a sense of belonging. Disagreements between children are handled privately, with children participating in the solution (as age-appropriate). Re-direction is the primary strategy for classroom management.

We want every child to have successful experiences at The Malvern School and partner with families to address any behavior challenges. If necessary, school staff may ask for a conference in order to develop an individualized plan aimed at resolving behavior issues. Specialized services and behavior plans may be in place for individual children to assist in successful participation into the classroom setting. These plans/services will be reviewed and approved by the designated specialist team and parent/guardian.

Aggressive physical behavior is unacceptable at The Malvern School. Should this situation occur, a staff member would intervene to protect the other child and encourage a more acceptable behavior. To ensure the safety of another child, physical restraint by a staff member may be necessary. Should an incident occur, parents would be informed, and a parent/teacher conference may be requested to discuss the situation and how to best move forward. The Malvern School reserves the right to remove a child from the school should the child's behavior be uncontrollable, disruptive and harmful to himself/herself or others. Therefore, it is very important for parents and staff to have an open line of communication.

At no time will a child be subjected to any physical, verbal, emotional, or coercive form of punishment while attending The Malvern School. The staff will not discipline a child for sleep habits, toilet accidents, food consumption, or lack of participation in activities. The staff will always take into consideration the child's age and level of social/emotional development when a need to address a challenging behavior arises.

It is occasionally necessary to separate a child from a group for their own safety and well-being or the safety of others. This change to a different classroom area is handled in a calm manner without unnecessary stress, and the goal is to allow the child to regain self-control with teacher support.

At all times, staff must focus on ensuring the safety and wellbeing of the children in their care, supporting the children through their daily experiences using positive guidance strategies.

COMMUNITY SERVICE & FUNDRAISING

The Malvern School is proud of our philanthropy efforts and have committed to *Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation (ALSF)* as our primary charity to support. Each year we are awed by our generous families' and staffs' hard work and contributions to this incredible foundation. Our ALSF "season" runs from April through July; during these months schools will offer many events, fun challenges, and opportunities to support ALSF, including our June Lemonade Day with stands and events at all locations. All of our activities and contributions for this and any other cause are voluntary.

Aside from ALSF, we encourage each school to choose only one additional local charity to support, generally during the winter season for a short term fundraising drive (food drives, Toys for Tots, The Salvation Army, etc.)

ADDITIONAL SAFETY POLICIES

Our buildings are extensively cleaned and disinfected by our outside professional cleaning service on a nightly basis with increased attention to frequently touched areas. In addition, staff rotate materials frequently throughout the day for sanitation in all classrooms. Frequently touched surfaces are disinfected throughout the day.

The Malvern School is a smoke and vapor free environment. Parents, staff and visitors are asked to comply with this request.

The Malvern School is a non-violent environment. Weapons of any kind, including knives, firearms, or any potentially dangerous weapons are prohibited on the premises.

Please note that if, at any time, school personnel suspect a pick-up person to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, authorities may need to be contacted, or other stringent steps followed to ensure the safety of the child.

To promote the safety of children, parents, and employees, as well as the security of its facilities, The Malvern School may conduct audio and video surveillance of any portion of its premises at any time, except private areas such as bathrooms. Video cameras will be positioned in appropriate places within and around The Malvern School. Parents through enrollment understand and agree to The Malvern School's policies on monitoring and surveillance. Parents understand that you and your child(ren) may be audio recorded, videotaped and/or photographed while inside and/or surrounding the school building. Parents understand that there is no expectation of privacy in connection with the use of

this equipment or with the transmission, receipt, or storage of information in this equipment. Parents will not have access to the live audio or video feeds nor any recordings made thereof.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

You and your children, as a client of this facility, have the right to be provided with services at this facility, and be referred for services at other facilities, without regard to your race, color, religious creed, handicap, national origin, age, gender, or limited English proficiency. If you believe the center is not in compliance with the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination, you may contact the Division on Civil Rights in the NJ Dept. of Law and Public Safety at 609-292-4600.

At times, The Malvern School may need to make accommodations in order to meet the needs and/or protect the health or well-being of one or more of our students. This may impact others at the school, and we appreciate our families' understanding and respect for individual situations. We give equal consideration to circumstances with any of your children. Some examples of such accommodations are: restrictions on foods sent from home, minor adjustments to the schedule or facility, and understanding that personnel such as therapeutic support staff may be present in classrooms.

PARENT COMMUNICATION

At The Malvern School we provide many opportunities for parents to receive information on the progress of their child's development as well as details on monthly activities occurring at the school.

Daily profile reports are prepared individually for each child and sent electronically via the Tadpoles communication system. These reports provide parents with an overview of the activities in which their children participated as well as information on lunch, nap and toileting. Parents should check their email daily for these reports and any other messages. To bridge the gap from school to home the staff will provide a supplemental activity for you to do with your child each night. Supplemental activities include, but are not limited to, reading a story, learning the words to a new song or fingerplay, etc.

Parent Conferences are held at least twice a year, or more often by request. This is a time to discuss your child's development and school experience in detail. Observations of your child's progress are electronically recorded by the teacher throughout the year and detailed reports will be made available to you in January and June. This is provided to all parents, regardless of choosing to conference. Conferences are generally held in January and June. At this time, all conferences will be held via phone, virtually or scheduled outside of school hours. Additionally, in early October and April, you will receive a Progress Report, which includes a general summary of your child's progress and our upcoming goals for him/her.

Email Addresses are provided for all Directors and are a convenient method to communicate with them. We want to be as responsive as possible; however, Directors are occasionally out for a meeting, observing classrooms, checking in with the staff and children, or otherwise away from their computers. If you do not get a timely response to an email, please email the other Director or call the school.

Daily communication between staff and parents is given during the morning and evening to provide updates on the children's health, dispositions, etc. A lengthy dialogue may not be possible at drop-off and pick-up times. If you have a concern that requires more than a few minutes, we are happy to arrange a special conference. Naptime is usually the most convenient time for this type of conference. We ask that you communicate with school staff using the business phone, not personal/cell phones.

Monthly newsletters, calendars, and snack calendars are sent home to keep parents aware of school activities and events. You will receive these items via email.

Other communications include informal notes, monthly calendars, memos, and Quality Assurance Parent Surveys.

FINAL WORD

We reserve the right to change any policies with or without prior notification if deemed in the best interest of the school. Updates to these procedures may be needed as new information is provided by the Centers for Disease Control, American Academy of Pediatrics, federal, state and local officials.

If, after reviewing this Parent's Handbook, there are any questions or comments regarding The Malvern School and its policies, parents should feel free to speak with a Director.

If at any time you have a concern that you do not feel is being addressed to your satisfaction by the school's Directors, please contact our Executive Office via the Customer Care line at 1-877-MALVERN. An Operations Representative will contact you to discuss your concern.



Receipt and Acknowledgement Of The Malvern School Parent Handbook

This Parent Handbook is an important document intended to help you become acquainted with The Malvern School. This Handbook will serve as a guide; it is not the final word in all cases. Individual circumstances may call for individual attention. The contents of this Manual may be changed at any time at the discretion of The Malvern School.

I have read The Malvern School Parent Handbook and have been advised of all Malvern School policies and procedures.

Child(ren)'s Name (please print) _____

Parent Signature & Date _____

Director Signature & Date _____