

Table of Contents

History of Our School	3
Mission Statement	3
Program Goals	3
Oversight	4
Board of Directors	4
Hours	5
Phase In	6
Arrival and Dismissal & Change in in Pick Up	6 & 7
Tuition & Forms	7 & 8
Safety/Emergency Plans	8 & 9
Child Injuries & Clothing	9 & 10
Lunch Program	10 & 11
Food Allergy Guidelines	11 & 12
Promoting Healthy Living Habits	12 & 13
Rest	14
Child Abuse – Mandatory Reporters	14&15
Keeping Your Child Healthy & Sickness	15 & 16
Immunizations, Medications & Emergency Closing	16 & 17
Parking	17
Parent-Teacher Conferences	18
Student Behavior Management	18 &19
Birthday Observances & Toilet Training	20
Personal Belongings, Pocket Treasures	20
Special Notes for Toddlers	21
Anxiety & Routine	21&22
Staffing	23



Dear Parents,

Welcome to the Alcott School!

We look forward to partnering with you in providing our children with the most positive experience. We appreciate the trust you have placed in us and would like to take this opportunity to share our philosophy and policies with you.

Our purpose over the past 53 years has remained the same; to provide a quality educational experience for young children in a multicultural preschool environment, utilizing developmentally appropriate methods and materials. Our primary goal is to foster a feeling of competence and build self-esteem, while providing the foundation for each child to attain their personal best, make friends and have fun.

Please read the following information carefully and if you have any questions, feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,

Debra Frank – Scarsdale Site Director & SCIS Supervisor

Alex Kulpa – Dobbs Ferry Site Director & CPSE Evaluation Coordinator

Anna Caro – Montessori Coordinator

Smita Patel – Assistant Montessori Coordinator

Alcott School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, nationality or ethnic origin in administration of its policies or admission procedures.

7/2021

www.alcottschool.org

27 CRANE ROAD
SCARSDALE, NEW YORK 10583
PHONE: 914-472-4404
FAX: 914-472-7547

535 BROADWAY
DOBBS FERRY, NEW YORK 10522
PHONE: 914-693-4443
FAX: 914-693-2820

History of Our School

Alcott School is a Montessori preschool which was founded by two professional educators, Arlene Donegan and Kathleen Rohrs, in September 1968. Alcott School has expanded its range of programs and relocated many times over the years. The school began operations at the Bryn Mawr Park Presbyterian Church in Yonkers. It has moved successively from St. Clare's Academy on Jackson Avenue to Ardsley School on Concord Road, and currently resides in Scarsdale and Dobbs Ferry.

Alcott School expanded to include special education programs for toddler and preschool children. These programs began in the Concord Road School and subsequently relocated to the Ardsley Middle School, followed by Rumsey Road in Yonkers and finally, to our Broadway site in Dobbs Ferry. The Early Intervention program began in New Rochelle and now resides in our Scarsdale and Dobbs Ferry sites.

We provide a developmentally appropriate early childhood education program for toddler and preschool students. Our staff and students come from diverse backgrounds. We offer a continuum of special services to address the individual needs of each child enrolled.

Mission Statement

The Alcott School is a Montessori and Special Education preschool whose objective is to provide all children with the opportunity to develop independence, an awareness of their own abilities and a feeling of self-worth. These objectives are met by providing developmentally appropriate, multi-cultural learning environments. Alcott School recognizes the important role parent education and support for the family plays in the development of young children. Alcott School is dedicated to helping support the families enrolled in its programs.

Program Goals

- To provide a stimulating and enriching learning environment
- To foster a sense of independence in all areas of development
- To develop respect for others and the environment
- To guide children towards an attitude of openness and discovery in approaching new ideas and activities
- To foster a child's ability to socialize and maintain friendships
- To develop feelings of positive self-esteem and accomplishment
- To establish a love and foundation for life-long learning

Regulatory Oversight

The Alcott School is affiliated with the American Montessori Society and is voluntarily registered with the New York State Department of Education. Alcott is a Non for Profit Corporation chartered under the New York State Board of Regents. Both our Scarsdale and Dobbs Ferry sites are licensed as a child day care center with the New York State Office of Child and Family Services.

A copy of the Office of Children and Family (OCFS) regulations can be found in the lobbies of our locations.

Our licensor, Andrea Shako (Dobbs Ferry) – Tel: 914-801-3253

Our licensor, Monica Bischoff (Scarsdale) – Tel: 914-801-3240

New York State OCFS

Westchester Regional Office

117 East Stevens Av. Suite 300

Valhalla, NY 10595

The OCFS Child Care Complaint Line is 1-800-732-5207

Board of Directors

Alcott School is governed by its Board of Directors:

Co-Presidents: Barbara Klein and Melinda Raffe Trovini

Secretary: Laurette Olson

Members: Debbie Mumford
Susan Miron Schwartz
Simrun Gialleonardo
Arlene Donegan
Debra Dalal

Montessori Classroom Hours

Due to operational requirements, arrival and dismissal times may be subject to change. You will receive a phase-in letter in August with your child's start date and class times.

Toddler Classes (Monday-Friday)

The toddler program will run from September through late June. The hours are as follows:

	Scarsdale	Dobbs Ferry
AM Session	9:00-11:30	9:15 – 11:45

Three to Five Year Old Classes (Monday – Friday)

The 3-5 year- olds attend class according to the following schedule. These classes run from September through late June.

	Scarsdale	Dobbs Ferry
AM Session	N/A	8:45 - 11:30 9:00 - 11:45 9:15 - 12:00
Full Day	8:45 - 3:00 8:45 - 3:15 9:00 - 3:30 9:15 - 3:45	9:00 - 3:15

Phase In

Toddler Phase In:

Toddlers will be phased in during the month of September. During this time our sessions will be shortened. During the first week, the children attend for one hour. A maximum of 6 children attend each group. The time is increased to two hours during the second week and both groups attend together. A regular schedule is followed beginning with the third week of school. **You will receive a notice about our phase in schedule before school begins.**

Three - Five Year Olds:

During the first week of school, children in the 3 - 5 year old classes will be phased in on a gradual basis. This means that on the first day of school, 4 -6 children begin classes. Each day thereafter, 4-6 more children will be added to the class. Phase in week allows the teachers to devote maximum time to each child during the critical first days.

You will receive a phase in schedule before school begins.

Arrival and Dismissal

Parents/caregivers are responsible for bringing their child to the **daily health screening designated area**. Parents/caregivers are required to wait for the health screening to be cleared. Upon completion of process, the child will join his/her classroom.

Punctuality at arrival and dismissal times is essential to maintain safety for everyone, avoid anxiety in children and maintain the staggered times to allow for social distancing.

Changes in Pick-Up

To ensure the safety of your child, if he/she will be going home from school with a different family member or a friend, please make sure to email all 3 people at the location your child attends.

Scarsdale site

Donna Torre – dtorre@alcottschool.org

Kenya Hemmings – khemmings@alcottschool.org

Anna Caro – acar@alcottschool.org

Dobbs Ferry site

Barbara Berge-bberge@alcottschool.org
Anna Caro – acaro@alcottschool.org
Smita Patel at snpatel@alcottschool.org

In your email, please include:

- Your child's first and last name
- Who they will be going home with and at what time
(Name on email must match name on the person's ID)
- Parent's signature
- Date

The family member or friend will need to provide a government approved ID.

It is important to provide this information even if the person is one of your emergency contacts listed on the Blue Card and/or Emergency Form.

Please note that your child will not be released without this information in writing.

Important: If we have not heard from you and are unable to reach a caregiver or parent within one hour of dismissal, Child Protective Services will be called.

Tuition

Please refer to your ENROLLMENT AGREEMENT AND TUITION AGREEMENT for more information.

Forms

We are required by law to have certain forms and information in your child's file. The list of required forms is as follows: Day Care Registration (Blue card – front and back), Medical Statement, Medical History, Emergency Release, Photo Consent Form, Emergency Alert Contact Form, Behavior Management Policy, Vision Form, Dental Form, Individual Health Care Plans, Summary of School Policy, Rest/Nap Policy. Each medical form is valid for one year from the date of your child's physical. No child will be admitted into the school without these forms.

If your child has a Severe Peanut/Food Allergy that requires medication, you will need to have additional Medical Forms completed by their Doctor and yourself.

(Forms are available within the medical packet, on the website and in the school office). **These forms are valid for six months.**

Enrollment forms which are in this Parent Handbook packet **must be completed and returned to school no later than July 16, 2021.**

Copies of government issued photo ID's are required for all adults listed on the child's emergency form.

Please post the Alcott calendar in a conspicuous place. You will need to refer to it frequently during the year. The calendar is also available on the school website at www.alcottschool.org.

Safety/Emergency Plans

Your children's safety is very important to us. Children are supervised at all times during program hours. The ratio of adult to children is in accordance with the Office of Children and Family Regulations

Emergency Drills

In order to be prepared for emergencies, we conduct monthly fire drills and two shelter in place drills per year. Our Emergency Alert system will be utilized in the event of an emergency to inform you of events and student collection locations.

Evacuation Plans

Relocation may be necessary if the staff and students are unable to safely remain in the school building.

Scarsdale Location

Primary evacuation site:

The Trinity Lutheran Church

Children and staff will walk in the Crane Road parking lot to enter the church.

Secondary evacuation site:

Scarsdale Village Post Office

29 Chase Road, Scarsdale

Dobbs Ferry Location:

Primary evacuation site:

Mercy College Staff and children will proceed to 565 Broadway (formerly Our Lady of Victory Academy, now part of the Mercy College Campus) and into the school gym or designated classroom.

Secondary evacuation site:

Sacred Heart Church Staff and children will safely walk down Broadway and enter the church which is at the intersection of Broadway and Ashford Avenue.

Safe Sheltering in Place:

At both of our locations, we have systems in place to immediately notify the staff and children of the need to shelter in place. **All plans are available for review at each location. All safety plans were made in consultation with our local police departments.** Please note that although we hope emergency situations will not arise, should one occur, the safety and well-being of your children are of utmost concern to us. The children will believe that we are going on an adventure. The staff will bring food, water and other necessary supplies with them.

Child Injuries/Accidents

In the event that your child is injured on the school premises, a staff member will inform you in person (at pick up time) about incidents such as minor scrapes. You will be informed about other injuries such as bumps to the head, large or small, by telephone after the incident occurs. You will be asked to read and sign an accident report at pick-up time on the day the accident occurs. If a parent is not picking up, we will email a copy to sign and be returned to us in a timely manner.

Clothing

Label each piece of clothing

Children should be dressed in washable play clothes. Try to use child friendly

fasteners whenever possible. Zippers, snaps, belts and suspenders can make it more difficult for children to dress and undress independently. Use elastic waist pants and Velcro shoes/sneakers. Only closed-toe, rubber soled shoes may be worn at all times. **Flip-flops and Crocs are not acceptable.**

All children should come dressed to play outdoors . . . even in the cold.

This means warm coats, hats/hoods, mittens, snowsuits and boots when there is snow. Please send in inside shoes as children will remove boots for indoor activities

For the 3-5 Year Olds:

Please send in a box of baby wipes and a complete change of clothes on the first day of school. Please put them in **a labeled regular shoe size box**, with two pairs of underpants, socks, a shirt, and pants.

For the Toddlers:

Send in a box of baby wipes and 2 complete changes of clothing (including socks and sneakers) **in a labeled shoe size box**. A package of disposable diapers, labeled with your child's name, should be sent if your child is not toilet trained.

The Toddler staff changes all of the children wearing diapers throughout their class time as is necessary. The children are encouraged to participate in this whole process. Please leave onesies, buttons and overalls for non-school days. This will help develop independence.

Alcott School Lunch Program

As parents and staff, we all share a basic desire that our children eat nutritious food in a pleasant atmosphere. Good nutrition is important and something that we are all concerned about. We feel strongly that to be consistent with our interest and concerns, we need to do our best to insure that each child in our school is provided with wholesome, healthy foods.

Please read carefully our policy regarding lunch:

1. Please send your child's lunch in a soft sided lunch box with handles, with his/her first and last name clearly marked on it. Handles are necessary so that children can carry their lunch independently.
2. Send foods that need to be consumed warm in a thermos. That will eliminate the need to microwave lunches.
3. Lunches will be kept in the fridge until lunchtime.

4. When packing your child's lunch, consider some of your child's favorites from this list on the next page.

- fresh raw vegetables like: carrots, string beans, celery, peppers, whole peas in pod, cucumbers, cherry tomatoes
- cut up cheese, sliced egg, yogurt, cottage cheese, cereal, leftovers from dinner
- fruit, tuna fish sandwiches, cream cheese on raisin bread, etc.
- whole grain breads or crackers

5. To avoid **choking hazards** with food such as: hot dogs, grapes, carrots, etc., please **cut them into small bite size pieces**.

6. **Please do not send any of the following for lunch:**

Soda, candy, gum, lollipops, popcorn or any junk food (Twinkies, Ring Dings, etc.)

Additional Suggestions:

Remember to choose foods your child enjoys eating. Preparing lunch with your child the night before often leads to a more leisurely morning routine.

Due to the increased incidence of allergies and asthma, we request that you DO NOT send peanut or nut products to school. We are a nut restricted environment.

Food Allergy Guidelines

Our staff strives to provide a safe and healthy environment for all children. We follow these guidelines to the extent possible, but we do not guarantee that we can keep our environment completely free of food or other allergens that might cause a severe reaction.

- All children's allergies that require treatment must be documented by a medical professional, including symptoms that indicate a reaction is occurring and instructions for administering medication. Appropriate Alcott School documentation must be completed and turned in before the start of school. See medical forms in this mailing.

- We talk to the children about the importance of keeping the classroom safe and healthy for fellow classmates.
- We encourage frequent hand washing, especially before and after meals and snacks.
- We clean tables and other work surfaces several times a day, before school begins, before lunch, after lunch and at the end of the session.
- We do not permit the sharing of lunches.
- We post lists of allergies in every classroom. The teachers and assistants are required to be familiar with every child's allergies.
- We make every effort to avoid serving foods that contain peanuts or tree nuts or may contain traces of such foods.
- Other foods such as shellfish, eggs, or milk may be served on a classroom-by-classroom basis depending on the food allergies present in that classroom.
- If children have life-threatening allergies to foods, we ask that the family provide an acceptable snack to be kept at school and served as an alternative, as needed. Snack must be in a container with a lid, child's first and last names and date. At their parents request, these children may sit apart from the others when eating snack or lunch.
- We ask that parents speak with their child's classroom teacher regarding children with allergies in the classroom before sending in special snacks or treats.
- Our guidelines apply to all functions in the school building in areas where children are present.

Promoting Healthy Living Habits

The following is to share information with you about healthy food and beverage choices and the prevention of childhood obesity.

The foods children eat and lifestyle habits they learn have a lasting effect on their health. There are ways that Alcott School is promoting healthy habits while your child is in our care:

- We offer a fresh fruit and vegetable snack program as well as other options: for example, healthy cereal, crackers, avocado, cream cheese, trail mix, etc.
- We engage in daily physical activity.
- Our staff supervises the children at meal times and models appropriate table manners and conversation.
- Eating healthy habits is part of our classroom nutrition curriculum. We dedicate time and provide the children with activities that reflect this topic.

The following are good ideas for the home to help your child set healthy living habits:

- Offer the fruits and vegetables you see served in your child's classroom at home. Sometimes new foods take time. Offer new fruits and vegetables many times.
- Allow your children to help with food preparation, table setting and food planning at home.
- Cook and bake together.
- Chart how many different fruits and vegetables the family eats each week using stickers or drawings.
- Eat together.
- Talk about the healthy foods that you eat as a family.
- Stay active together. Going for walks or bike rides, or playing in a local park are great ways to enjoy activity with your children.
- Limit screen time as much as possible. Physical activity helps children's bones and muscles grow strong and lowers the risk of weight gain.

For more information about healthy eating and exercise, visit:

Choose My Plate

www.choosemyplate.gov

Eat Smart New York

www.otda.ny.gov/programs/nutrition

Core Nutrition Messages for Healthier Food Choices

www.fns.usda.gov/fns/core-nutritionmessages/default.htm

Physical Activity Guidelines for Children during Covid19

<https://www.gundersenhealth.org/health-wellness/be-well/activities-for-kids-during-quarantine/#:~:text=The%20most%20efficient%20way%20to,physical%20activity%20in%20children.>

Rest

We believe that preschool children who follow a full day schedule require a daily rest/nap period during their school day.

It's a way for the children to "re-charge their batteries" since their minds and bodies are busy working really hard at practicing and learning new skills. Learning how to relax your body in this high paced world is a life skill that plays a part in our overall health.

All children enrolled in the full day program at Alcott School have a daily rest/nap period in their classroom after lunch. Each child brings a bedroll from home along with their rest shoes. These items stay at school during the week, **and the bedroll goes home for laundering on Fridays and returned on Monday.** Each child has their own labeled rest cot which the school provides. These cots are cleaned and sanitized by the classroom staff. During rest/nap time, the lights are dimmed, the blinds are closed, and the teachers help them relax and feel comfortable. Children are placed on cots on a head to toe pattern to maximize social distancing. Sometimes soft music is on, audible stories are played or a teacher reads a book aloud.

Rest Shoes

We require shoes for rest time. To maintain a clean cot, please send your child to school with **rest shoes**. These are shoes that have not and will not be used for outdoor activities. They must have **solid soles for emergency evacuation, in any kind of weather, in order for the children to walk out safely. Shoes should not light up or make noise.**

During rest/nap time all the children are expected to rest their minds and bodies for a reasonable amount of time while lying down on their cot. Many children will sleep each day, but those children who don't fall asleep after an acceptable amount of time will be able to engage in quiet work while the rest of the class rests. The length of time that each child rests varies depending upon multiple factors such as: when did the child fall asleep, did the child have a poor night sleep, how the child is feeling, etc. The classroom staff will share with you your child's rest/nap patterns at school and we ask that you please do the same in regards to it at home.

Child Abuse – Mandatory Reporters

Employees of the Alcott School are mandatory reporters of suspected child abuse and/or neglect according to New York State law. If any school employee has a reasonable basis to suspect that a child may be the subject of child abuse, maltreatment or neglect, the school employee MUST make a phone call to the Child Protective Services Hotline and provide them with enough information that the government may conduct an investigation to determine if the child is being neglected, abused or maltreated. A written report must also be submitted. It is not within the authority of Alcott employees to investigate suspected situations of abuse, but it is an illegal act to fail to report the suspicion.

Keeping Your Child Healthy

Our goal is for all of the children enrolled at Alcott School to have a healthy and productive school year. We are asking your help in achieving this goal. The following guidelines will minimize the chances of your child contracting an illness during the course of the school year.

- Help your child develop the habit of washing hands frequently.
- Teach your child to blow their own nose and to wash hands afterwards.
- Teach your child to cough into their elbow.
- Teach your child to keep their hands out of their mouths and away from their faces.

Keep your children home if they are sick or look like they may become sick during the day.

Upon entering the building all students must wash their hands with soap and running water. While at school, the children will wash their hands when they are dirty, after toileting, before and after food handling or eating, after contact with bodily secretion or fluid, and after coming in from outdoors.

In accordance with NYS OCFS, Alcott School continues to follow the guidance set forth by the Office of Children and Family Services.

Sickness

If your child will be absent, please call the school office. Children who are absent **3 or more days** must have a doctor's note before returning to school. Please see information in the medical packet within this mailing.

If a child's symptoms become severe and we cannot reach the parents or designated emergency contact, we will call 911.

Immunizations

By New York State Law, as of June 13, 2019, there is no longer a religious exemption to the requirement that children be vaccinated in order to attend:

- * Public, private or parochial school (for students in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade) or
- * Child day care settings

Please see medical packet for more information.

Medications

No prescribed medications will be administered to children except in the event of an emergency. If your child has an allergy, asthma, seizure history or any other medical condition which may require the emergency administration of medication, a health care plan will be written. A *Request for Administration of Medication* for each medication must be completed by your child's health provider including signed parental permission.

Medication forms and instructions can be obtained in the medical packet in this mailing, in the school office or on our web site. Medication consent forms must be **renewed by your child's health provider every 6 months.**

Health problems such as a history of sudden febrile seizure may require that the child's temperature be monitored through the day.

Thank you for your cooperation. Your child's safety and well-being is important to us.

Emergency Closing

Inclement weather or any other emergency situation may sometimes necessitate closing school. School closings will be posted on the school website at www.alcottschool.org, and on Cable Channel 12 News in Westchester. A message via robo call, text and/or email will be sent using information provided on your communication form. If you are in doubt, call the school and listen for

our message on the answering machine.

Please understand that delaying and/or closing school is not something done without a great deal of thought. Our primary concern is the safety of your children.

Parking

Do not pass school buses with flashing lights!

Do not leave children in your car unattended!

Do not leave your car running.

Do not park, wait for or drop off passengers in the fire lane!

Scarsdale Parking:

- Make a right turn at the STOP sign as you enter the parking lot.
- The traffic flow is one way in a clockwise direction. Drive slowly and with caution.
- **Park in the lot in an unnumbered spot and escort your child to their classroom designated health screening area (TO BE ANNOUNCED).**

Please do not:

- **Send your child to the health screening area unescorted. Do not leave before health screening process is completed.**
- **Park blocking the front entrance of the building or alongside the playground.**
- **Do not park in any numbered parking spots (along the church building).**

Dobbs Ferry Parking:

- **Park in designated spots only and escort your child to his/her classroom designated health screening area (TO BE ANNOUNCED). Drive slowly and with caution.**
- Be prepared to wait for a parking spot to become available.
- Be considerate of others and leave yourself plenty of time.
- During drop-off and pick-up, you may park behind cars facing Broadway in the lower lot. Those cars belong to staff members.

Please do not...

- **Send your child to the health screening area unescorted. Do not leave before the process is completed.**

- **Park in the circle in front of the building where buses pull up.**
- **Leave your car parked in the middle of the parking lot, blocking other cars from pulling out.**

Parent – Teacher Conferences

Two conferences are scheduled each year. One is conducted in late fall and the other in the spring. We encourage both parents to attend conferences whenever possible. The director and teachers are always available for special conferences whenever they are necessary. Children should not attend conferences. Please make arrangements for their care.

Do not hesitate to ask questions or share information (re: illness, separation, a death in the family, etc.) with the staff. It helps us respond to the needs of your child if we are informed of anything unusual occurring within your family. Very often what is happening at home affects a child's behavior in the classroom. Please keep communication open. Email your child's teacher to schedule a time to talk.

At any time during the year, if you should have any questions about the program, policy, or procedures, please speak with the Director of Montessori, the Site Director, the Montessori Coordinator or the Assistant Montessori Coordinator.

Student Behavior Management Plan

Preschool children and toddlers are inherently working upon and refining their social skills. At the Alcott School, we help the children to develop internal self-control, independence and empathy for others. At times it becomes necessary to intervene in a child's behavior and therefore, we have developed and implemented a behavior management plan.

Alcott School's behavior management plan consists of the following techniques to pre-empt instances where behavior management is necessary and to intervene in a child's behavior as needed:

We redirect, i.e. in a conflict we provide choices and alternatives. For example, "You can either sit on a rug or at a table for story time."

- * We focus on "Do" rather than "Don't." For example, "We walk inside," instead of "Stop running inside!"
- * We encourage children to use friendly words rather than physical acts. For example, "This is my work."
- * We praise positive behavior. For example, "I like the way you used your

words."

- * We model desired behaviors in order for the children to learn by example.
- * We arrange the classroom space to positively impact children's behavior. For example, avoid large open spaces that might encourage children to run indoors.
- * The classroom is the children's place. We listen to the children and respond to their needs proactively to achieve their goals. We aim to keep the children engaged with activities thus helping to prevent conflict.
- * We involve the children in the development of the classroom rules.

The Alcott School adheres to the following guidelines when implementing behavior management techniques with a child enrolled in the program:

- * Children may only be disciplined by the director, head teacher, Program Coordinator, Program Supervisor, classroom therapist or assistant teacher.
- * The Alcott School applies all rules consistently and appropriately to the ages of the children and their developmental level and abilities.
- * Any behavior management used will relate to the child's actions and be handled without prolonged delay.
- * A child may be briefly separated from the group, but only long enough to gain self-control and will be in view of, supervised and supported by the director, head teacher, Program Coordinator, Program Supervisor, classroom therapist or assistant teacher.
- * We do not use corporal punishment.
- * We do not use methods of interaction that punish, demean or humiliate children. Nor do we physically restrain children, other than to keep them safe.
- * Any abuse or maltreatment of a child, either as an incident of discipline or otherwise, is prohibited.

Please note that, we do not tolerate or in any manner condone an act of abuse or neglect of a child by an employee, volunteer, or any person under the programs control.

Birthday Observances

Children will be recognized in class on their birthdays by having the traditional Montessori birthday celebration. Prior to the birthday day celebration, parents will email **one** photo for each year of the child's life and a write one statement about each year of their life regarding milestones (first steps, first words, riding a tricycle, etc.) Also include date and place of birth. The teacher will show the photos, read the child's story, sing songs, and a snack will be provided by the school. Due to Covid19 restrictions, we will not allow food or any other items to be brought to school for birthday celebrations. Unfortunately, parents/caregivers are not allowed in the building for these celebrations.

Toilet Training

Children attending 3-5 year old classes are expected to be toilet trained, or at least actively working on the process. If you are concerned about this, please speak with your child's teacher. Toddlers are not expected to be toilet trained.

Personal Belongings

Due to COVID19 restrictions, children may not bring any personal belongings to school such as toys, stuffed animals, and books.

Pocket Treasures

From time to time every child takes home something from school, usually inadvertently. Often these items are very small in size like a penny or small gold bead. Frequently these tiny treasures are part of a classroom activity and without them the activity is incomplete. If any unidentifiable objects like this turn up at home, please return them to the school. We can usually tell at a glance whether or not they are pieces of apparatus from the classroom or sometimes a random object picked up from a friend.

Special Notes for Toddlers

Separation

Parent-Toddler separation is different for each individual. Some children separate easily while others may take a little longer. Due to Covid19 restrictions, we are modifying our toddlers phase in. Parents/caregivers will be expected to be present, but for shorter periods of time for the first two weeks. Only one adult per child is allowed. The health screening for the parent/caregiver will be the same as for staff members. That includes temperature check, Covid19 related questions and social distancing.

Parents and caregivers can best help with this process by following these simple suggestions:

- Talk about the program **only** a few days before classes begin
- Use simple, matter of fact words; and drive by the school building and point out "this is where you will be going to school".
- Do not "over sell" the activities.

Remember: Arriving too early or too late can lead to confusion, tears, or clinging behavior. Goodbyes are most easily accepted when brief and confident, e.g. "I will pick you up after story time/bubbles. All the parents come back after story time / bubbles."

Anxiety

If your child is not ready for you to leave during the phase in period, relax. Cell phones must be off and put away. Stay with us in a low key manner. Sit in the grown up chairs provided in the classroom or by the playground and let your child come and visit you. You might want to bring a book to read (no cell phone or I pad) to occupy yourself while sitting in the classroom or outside in the playground. This all depends on the Covid regulations. More information TBA in your phase in letter. Please keep your book with you at all times. **You may not bring siblings with you.** Following the plan that the head teacher has for you and

your child usually leads to a successful separation. Please follow the teacher's lead. As phase-in progresses, friendships and trust with peers will replace your child's anxiety, and he/she will relax and begin to enjoy the program.

Class Routine

Following a routine helps to provide comfort and confidence to the toddler. The knowledge of the order of the activities helps the child acquire a sense of time - a beginning, middle, and end to each session. A typical classroom routine consists of work time, story time, songs, and gross motor play. The teacher will share a daily schedule with parents once school starts.

The classroom is divided into areas including: block building, practical life and sensorial activities, art, reading, gross motor, and manipulatives. Art projects are open-ended and focus on the process rather than the end product.

Staffing

Debra Frank

Scarsdale Site Director and SCIS Supervisor

Deb can be reached at (914) 472-4404 or at dfrank@alcottschool.org

Alexandra Kulpa

Dobbs Ferry Site Director & CPSE Evaluation Coordinator

Alex can be reached at (914) 693-4443 or at akulpa@alcottschool.org

Anna Caro

Montessori Coordinator

Anna can be reached at (914) 472-4404 or at acar@alcottschool.org

Smita Patel

Assistant Montessori Coordinator

Smita can be reached at 693-4443 or at snpatel@alcottschool.org

Theresa Osborn

Montessori Admissions/Accounts Receivable

Theresa can be reached at 914-693-4443 or at Tosborn@alcottschool.org

A staff member will be available in all locations during the school day. An answering machine will be on when no one is available to answer the phone. Please leave your message on the answering machine or in our voice mail system if nobody is available to speak with you.

7/2021