

## **8.0 Tuition Procedures & Policies**

The Parent/Guardian is responsible for reviewing the following procedures and policies and, by execution of this Agreement, acknowledges understanding of all financial obligations and the tuition structure in effect during the student's enrollment.

Below is a list of items discussed in this section:

- 8.1 Application
- 8.2 Tuition Agreement & Enrollment Forms
- 8.3 Re-Enrollment & Tuition Agreement
- 8.4 Tuition Payment Options
- 8.5 Payment Procedures
- 8.6 Payment Protection Plan
- 8.7 Sibling Discount
- 8.8 End of the Year Credit
- 8.9 Returned Payments
- 8.10 Delinquent Account Interest
- 8.11 Withdrawal & Early Termination
- 8.12 After Care & Late Pick-Up
- 8.13 School Closures

### **8.1 Application**

To begin the enrollment process, families are encouraged to tour the campus prior to submitting a completed application. A \$150 non-refundable application/waitlist fee is due at the time of application. Please note that only one campus may be selected by application.

Once an application is received, the student will be placed on the campus waitlist. Space availability depends upon whether the requested start date can be accommodated. When an opening becomes available, the campus director will notify the family. Upon acceptance of the offered space, the required enrollment forms and tuition agreement will be sent via email.

Enrollment space is limited at each campus. If an offered spot is declined, the family may request to remain on the waitlist for an additional six (6) months. If a spot is declined a second time, the student will be removed from the waitlist. At that point, a new application and application fee will be required for future consideration.

## 8.2 Tuition Agreement & Enrollment Forms

Upon acceptance of enrollment, the Tuition Agreement, Enrollment Forms, and initial invoice shall be transmitted electronically to the Parent/Guardian. All required documents must be fully completed, signed, and submitted prior to the child's first day of attendance to ensure the student's file is complete and in compliance with all applicable DSS requirements.

Tuition is calculated and billed on an annual basis and is not determined by daily attendance. Families may choose either the Monthly Payment Plan or the Full Payment Plan, as outlined in Section 8.6.

If a student enrolls after the commencement of the school year, tuition shall be prorated based on the student's official start date and calculated in accordance with the current school year's published tuition rate.

Payment options are set forth in Section 8.4, and all payment procedures, requirements, and obligations are detailed in Section 8.5.

## 8.3 Re-Enrollment & Agreement

A Re-Enrollment & Agreement Form will be distributed in March prior to the start of the upcoming school year. This form serves as both the Re-Enrollment Form and the Tuition Agreement for the upcoming school year and will be processed and charged accordingly. A \$500.00 non-refundable Re-Enrollment Fee is due at the time of submission.

If the completed form is not received by the stated due date, placement for the following school year is not guaranteed. Open Enrollment will begin 1 week after the close of the Re-Enrollment period.

By signing and submitting the Re-Enrollment & Agreement Form, the Parent/Guardian authorizes Sundrops Montessori to draft tuition payments for the upcoming school year, with the first draft occurring in July. Any changes to payment method, payment plan, or enrollment details must be submitted in writing to the Finance Department no later than June 1 or clearly indicated on the form.

There is no contractual obligation for the upcoming school year until a signed Re-Enrollment & Agreement Form is submitted by the due date. Failure to submit the form by the deadline—regardless of payment of the Re-Enrollment Fee—will require the application and enrollment process to be reinitiated. Placement is subject to availability, and if no space is available, the student will be placed on the waitlist.

Once a signed Re-Enrollment & Agreement Form is received and accepted, a binding contractual agreement exists. If a family later elects not to enroll after signing, the Early Withdrawal Fee (see Section 8.11) shall apply. Until paid in full, no financial release will be granted, and the remaining annual tuition obligation shall remain due.

If a family does not intend to re-enroll, the form must still be submitted indicating non-renewal. If not received by the due date, tuition for the upcoming school year may be processed under the existing enrollment agreement.

## 8.4 Tuition Payment Options

### Monthly Payment Plan

1. **Automatic Payment Authorization**

The Parent/Guardian is required to provide valid credit card or bank account information for the purpose of establishing mandatory automatic monthly tuition drafts. Personal checks will not be accepted unless submitted through an approved fund and expressly authorized in advance by the Finance Department.

2. **Credit Card Processing Fee**

All tuition payments made by credit card shall be subject to a non-refundable 3.5% processing fee.

3. **Advance Payment Obligation**

Tuition is payable 1 month in advance at all times. For students beginning enrollment immediately, the Parent/Guardian shall be responsible for payment of the current starting month's tuition in addition to 1 month of advance tuition.

4. **Draft Schedule**

Following receipt of the initial payment, tuition shall be automatically drafted on either the 1st or the 15th of each month, in accordance with the selected payment schedule.

5. **Payment Protection Plan Requirement**

Enrollment in the Payment Protection Plan is mandatory and shall be included in the monthly tuition obligation. The Parent/Guardian acknowledges and agrees to the terms outlined in Section 8.6 regarding the Payment Protection Plan.

### Full Payment Plan

1. **Accepted Forms of Payment**

Tuition under the Full Payment Plan must be remitted by debit card, check, or ACH transfer. If payment is made by credit card, a non-refundable 3.5% processing fee shall apply.

2. **Payment Deadline**

For the annual program (mid-August through July), full tuition payment is due no later than July 1 prior to the start of the academic year.

If enrollment begins after the start of the academic year, full payment shall be due upon submission of the Enrollment Forms and executed Tuition Agreement.

3. **Payment Protection Plan**

Enrollment in the Payment Protection Plan is optional under the Full Payment Plan. Please refer to Section 8.6 for complete terms and conditions.

## **8.5 Payment Procedures**

Tuition may be paid through a monthly payment plan or paid in full. Tuition is billed at an annual rate, and no proration or refunds will be issued for absences due to illness, vacation, or other personal reasons.

Families who choose to pay tuition in full by the due date will receive a 3% discount. To qualify for the discount, full payments must be made by debit card, check, or ACH. Credit card payments are subject to a 3.5% processing fee and are not eligible for the full-payment discount.

For families enrolled in the monthly payment plan, payments are due one month in advance. At the start of the school year, the first tuition payment is due on July 1st or July 15th, depending on the selected billing date.

## **8.6 Payment Protection Plan**

The Payment Protection Plan fee is \$35 per month. This fee is mandatory for families enrolled in the monthly payment plan and optional for families who choose the full-payment option.

The Payment Protection Plan is designed to relieve families from the obligation to pay the remaining balance of the school year in the event of early withdrawal. When the plan is in place, the early withdrawal fee will be limited to one month of tuition under the monthly payment plan, as outlined in Section 8.11.

If the Payment Protection Plan is declined under the full-payment option, no refund will be issued in the event of withdrawal.

## **8.7 Sibling Discount**

A sibling discount of 5% shall be applied to the lowest tuition rate for families with two or more children concurrently enrolled. The discount applies only to tuition and does not extend to fees, aftercare charges, late fees, or any other ancillary costs.

The school reserves the right to modify or discontinue the sibling discount policy with advance written notice.

## **8.8 End of the Year Credit**

An end-of-year credit in the amount of \$400.00 shall be applied to the final scheduled tuition payment of the academic year.

This credit is contingent upon the student remaining enrolled through the final day of the school year. In the event of early withdrawal for any reason, the end-of-year credit shall be forfeited, and no prorated or partial credit shall be issued.

The end-of-year credit has no cash value and shall not be refunded, transferred, or applied to any outstanding balance other than the final tuition payment of the academic year.

## **8.9 Returned Payments**

Any payment returned for any reason, including but not limited to insufficient funds, closed accounts, or declined transactions, shall be subject to a \$35.00 returned payment fee.

The returned payment fee, together with the outstanding tuition balance, shall be due immediately upon notice. Failure to remit payment in full may result in suspension of services and/or termination of enrollment at the school's discretion.

## **8.10 Delinquent Account Interest**

Any outstanding balance that remains unpaid for more than 60 days shall accrue interest at the rate of 1.5% per month / 18% per annum.

Interest shall be assessed monthly and shall apply only to the portion of the account that is more than 60 days past due. Interest will continue to accrue until all past-due amounts are paid in full and the account is brought current.

## **8.11 Withdrawal & Early Termination**

In the event a student withdraws prior to the conclusion of the school year, an Early Withdrawal Fee shall apply. The Early Withdrawal Fee shall be equal to 1 month of tuition calculated at the monthly payment plan rate. Any end-of-year credit described in Section 8.11 shall be forfeited and shall not apply in cases of early withdrawal.

Upon notification of withdrawal, a pre-filled Withdrawal Form will be transmitted to the Parent/Guardian for completion. The form must be completed, signed, and returned to initiate account adjustments. Upon receipt of the fully executed Withdrawal Form, tuition drafts and account records will be updated accordingly.

Until the completed Withdrawal Form has been received and the Early Withdrawal Fee has been paid in full, all scheduled tuition drafts shall continue, and the Parent/Guardian shall remain financially responsible for the full annual tuition obligation.

## 8.12 After Care & Late Pick-Up Policy

A \$40.00 drop-in fee shall be assessed if a student is picked up later than the designated time associated with the student's selected enrollment option. To avoid this fee, students must be picked up no later than the following times:

- Half-Day Session – Pickup by 12:00pm (excluding Nido)
- School Day Session – Pickup by 3:00 pm
- After School 4:30 pm Session – Pickup by 4:30 pm
- After School 5:30 pm Session – Pickup by 5:30 pm (excluding Nido & Daniel Island)

If a student is not picked up by 5:30 p.m., a late pick-up fee of \$5.00 per minute shall be assessed beginning at 5:31 p.m. and continuing until the child is signed out.

All drop-in fees and late pick-up charges will be invoiced separately and shall be due on receipt. No grace period shall apply to any pick-up time.

## 8.13 School Closures

Tuition is calculated on an annual basis and shall not be reduced, prorated, credited, or otherwise adjusted due to scheduled school closures, including but not limited to winter break, spring break, traditional holidays, or teacher in-service/training days. Tuition remains due and payable in full regardless of whether school is in session during such scheduled closures.

The school reserves the right to modify the academic calendar or operating schedule as necessary. Families are responsible for reviewing the official school calendar. Any schedule changes will be communicated in advance through the Sundrops newsletter or other official school communication.