



Parent Handbook

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Gardenview Montessori Philosophy

Gardenview Montessori bases its education on the principles of the Montessori Method and theory. We recognize that each child was created with unique abilities, strengths, and talents. Therefore, the staff at Gardenview is committed to the development of each student's individual talents to the furthest degree possible.

Gardenview's academic curriculum aims to support the development and search for independence and identity, while also striving to meet the specific needs of each child.

The students at Gardenview are guided towards understanding that the way to achieve peace and justice in the world is through cooperation, sharing, caring, and helping to build successful communities. Recognition of the rights and needs of other human beings is a fundamental pre-requisite in such a community building process. The skills needed to recognize the rights of others must first be modeled and taught inside the learning community, and then applied outside of the school in order to cultivate a sense of global responsibility and awareness. Fostering such a perspective is an important aspect of the Montessori educational process.

Holding true to the observations and practices of Dr. Maria Montessori, students at Gardenview Montessori are encouraged to work through the curriculum at a pace which is appropriate to each individual. Some students may master portions of the curriculum while continuing to practice skills in other areas. Other students, however, may master all of these concepts in a three year cycle. These students would then be offered lessons which continue to challenge their growing capabilities.

Educational Goals and Missions Statement

The basic objective of Gardenview Montessori is to provide a quality preschool education for children age 18 months to six years using the Montessori Method as the primary medium. This basic goal can be subdivided into three conceptual categories: spiritual, intellectual, and social.

The spiritual objective of Gardenview Montessori is to strive toward a high moral standard of showing love and concern for all one meets in one's daily life. The concept of inner peace will be fostered in the beauty, serenity and order of the environment. Our goal is to move toward world peace by understanding our responsibilities to respect each other and our environment.

The intellectual objective of the Montessori program is to develop each student's intellectual and creative potential to the fullest. Our focus is to guide the students through an academic curriculum that will provide them with the necessary skills to function as a contributing member of society. The learning atmosphere will balance work and fun, thereby helping students to like what they are learning and create a hunger for more learning.

The social objective is to model and interact with each other with courtesy, graciousness and gratitude. We will create cooperation rather than competition. Our goal is to foster unity and dignity among staff and students, parents and friends. Students will be guided toward understanding that the way to achieve peace and justice in the world is through cooperation, sharing and caring.

Our Community

Gardenview has a generous and supportive parent community and is a well respected and admired institution within the city of Bellingham. In turn, Gardenview strives to be a good citizen of the neighborhood, and is committed to developing projects that benefit the greater community. Blessed with the wisdom and leadership of many friends and supporters of Montessori education, Gardenview is a "can do" school.

Gardenview Montessori seeks to provide a partnership between home and school as a means of creating optimal opportunities for developing each individual's talents, skills and resources. The Parent Volunteer program is designed to give each adult an option to contribute a certain number of hours each school year or to cover the costs of hiring others to help maintain a quality program. Families who have children enrolled in the Bean Class

are asked to commit to either 15 hours of volunteer time or \$150 over the course of the school year. Families with children enrolled in the Sprout Class are asked to commit 7 hours or \$70 over the course of the year. Volunteering ensures the fullest benefits of a Montessori education for your child and provides a tangible means for each adult to contribute to that goal.

Dr. Montessori

The Montessori Method was developed by a woman named Maria Montessori. She was born in Italy in 1870 and died in Holland at the age of 81. She was the first woman to graduate from the University of Rome Medical School.

Her observation, research, lectures, and numerous books in the field of education, psychology, sociology, and philosophy are well known and recognized around the world. Throughout her life she studied children from birth through adolescence. In *The Absorbent Mind*, Dr. Montessori wrote, "the most important period of life is not the age of university studies, but the first one, the period from birth to age six, for that is the time when a person's intelligence itself, the greatest implement, is being formed. But only his intelligence, the full totality of a person's psychic powers... At no other age has the child greater need of intelligent help, and any obstacle that impedes his/her creative work will lessen the chance he/she has of ever achieving perfection."

Dr. Montessori was deeply interested in peace. She felt that order, serenity, and beauty within the child's environment contributed to inner peace. Her concept of world peace involved creating a place where both adults and children could learn to respect each other and the environment. Dr. Montessori's work was recognized when she was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. Her philosophy contributed to the development of Montessori schools all over the world that are dedicated to her vision of nurturing each child's potential to its fullest.

Montessori Philosophy

Montessori is a unique method of introducing the child to a lifetime of enjoyable learning. Special materials, largely manipulative in nature, help to answer the child's developmental needs and enable him/her to experience the excitement of learning by his/her own choice. The child is helped to develop all his/her natural tools for learning so that his/her ability will be at maximum in future learning situations.

Dr. Montessori believed that in every child there is a special kind of sensitivity that leads him/her to absorb everything around him/her self. It is the work of observing and absorbing that enables that child to adapt to life. He/she does this by virtue of an unconscious power that exists only in childhood. This process of absorbing is particularly evident in the way in which a two-year old learns his/her native language, without formal instruction and without the conscious, tedious effort which an adult must make to master a foreign language. Acquiring information in this way is a natural and delightful activity for the young child who employs all his/her senses to investigate his/her surroundings. Since the child retains this ability to learn by absorbing until he/she is almost seven years old, Dr. Montessori reasoned that a child's experience could be enriched by a prepared environment, a classroom where he/she could handle materials that would demonstrate basic educational information. Her theory is that a young child can learn to read, write and calculate in the same natural way that he/she learns to walk and talk. In a Montessori classroom the equipment invites the child to do this at his/her own periods of interest and readiness.

Observation of Classrooms

The Montessori classroom is an exciting learning environment for the young child. We would like to give you an opportunity to share your child's experience.

Throughout the year, after November 1, parents are welcome to make an appointment to observe in their child's class. Observation is critical to understanding the immense benefits of a Montessori program. It is only in seeing the children interacting with their peers, environment, and adults that you can truly come to know the richness of having children of mixed ages together, working and playing in peace. Our classrooms are open to parents, relatives and visitors by appointment from November 1.

Although we welcome observations, in order to diminish the possibility of children/teachers being distracted, we do ask that observers take note of the following guidelines:

- ▶ Enter the class as quietly as possible
- ▶ Take off your shoes
- ▶ While in the class please try to talk as little as possible to the children while they are working.
- ▶ If the teacher does not have time to answer your questions during your visit, since the children are the priority, please make a note of your questions and contact the teacher later.

The Bean Class (preschool)

The Montessori preschool/kindergarten classroom is a specially prepared environment geared to meet the needs of children ready for preschool and Kindergarten. The furniture is child-sized and moveable to maximize comfort and ease. The children learn and make discoveries in this well-planned environment because it contains interest-based activities that they can handle, manipulate, stack, sort, and compare. This environment helps children to sharpen their powers of observation and develop a trust in their own ability to learn. Each piece of material is created and designed to further the child's experience and development of more abstract knowledge.

Children are allowed to move about freely, choosing activities according to their skill level and interest. The children can choose where to place their materials (on a floor mat or at a table) and who to do the activity with. Sometimes children work in pairs, small groups, or by themselves, but always at their own pace. The children can choose from five main areas in the classroom. Each of the five areas listed below offer growth opportunities and specific skill development for each age.

There is a large play area surrounded by gardens, bamboo trees, and natural fencing. On the perimeter of the grassy field there are swings, a playhouse, tree-house, greenhouse, compost and a chicken coop. There are dedicated spaces where children may choose to engage in gardening work, find a serene place to read, or to explore elements of nature.

1. Exercises of Practical Life

- ▶ muscle control and coordination
- ▶ completion of a task
- ▶ attention to details
- ▶ grace and courtesy skills
- ▶ sense of order and sequencing
- ▶ independence
- ▶ good work habits

2. The Sensorial Exercises

- ▶ observation of likeness and difference
- ▶ eye-hand coordination
- ▶ pincer control (preparation of the hand for holding a pencil)
- ▶ spatial awareness
- ▶ distinguishing and categorizing new information

3. Mathematics

- ▶ logic
- ▶ number concepts
- ▶ number operations (addition, subtraction, multiplication, division)
- ▶ problem solving
- ▶ quantity

4. Language

- ▶ communication skills
- ▶ vocabulary
- ▶ reading and writing skills
- ▶ phonetics
- ▶ listening and speaking skills
- ▶ comprehension

5. Cosmic

- ▶ geography
- ▶ music
- ▶ science
- ▶ history
- ▶ movement
- ▶ art

Sprout Class (Toddlers)

The Sprout Program provides a small group Montessori experience geared for toddlers. The classroom accommodates a maximum of twelve children with two teachers. It is carefully prepared to meet the unique needs of this age. All furniture is a size that allows maximum independence and the toddler materials are designed to be attractive and inviting to young children. It is a place where toddlers can actively explore the world in a safe and stimulating environment.

Social interaction with other children, development of language skills, care of oneself and the environment, and music and movement activities are integral to the Montessori toddler experience. Simple hands-on activities in the classroom respond to the toddlers' urge to use all of their senses—indeed their whole bodies—to explore everything around them. The toddler program also appropriately accommodates the very young child's sensitive period for language by offering creative and intriguing concepts to expand their growing vocabularies. Joining conversations, listening to stories, classifying objects, and learning songs and poems all nurture their budding language skills. To help smooth their initial social interactions, the toddlers also learn to use words for the feelings they experience in themselves and others.

An open, supportive relationship between teachers and parents is essential to providing optimal conditions for the toddler in the Montessori classroom. Daily communication, formal conferences, and parent involvement contribute to an atmosphere in which your child can realize his or her full potential.

Mixed-Age Class

Fundamental to Montessori theory is the multi-aged classroom. The classroom space is shared by preschool and Kindergarten children. The children may work either individually or in small groups learning and sharing with one another. It was Dr. Montessori's belief that the children of mixed-age groups mutually benefit from working together. There is a love, respect and admiration between ages.

The special equipment that a child will use at three or four will help develop the concentration, coordination, and working habits necessary for the more advanced exercises he/she will perform at five and six. By being in a multi-age classroom, children are exposed to a wider variety of activities, have more opportunity to try out new and challenging skills, and learn compassion, patience and tolerance.

Montessori prepares the child to be a creative learner, developing habits of initiative, persistence, and a sense of order, curiosity and concentration. In a mixed-age classroom, children benefit from seeing all these concepts modeled and presented throughout the day.

Montessori captures the concept of "the family" at the core of learning. After all, one does not segregate members of a family according to age! It is natural that older children learn to be responsible, gain self-confidence, and develop self-esteem and leadership skills through interacting and modeling to younger children. The younger children offer the older children opportunities to extend care and compassion to another human being. Those parents with more than one child can understand this concept as they observe this in daily practice between and among their children.

By placing children of mixed-ages together, Montessori observed that a natural family atmosphere was created. Such a natural setting allows children to interact and learn life-long skills of living and working together in peace and harmony within a relaxed, safe, and nurturing environment.

Role of the Teacher

The Montessori teacher, called a directress/director, is the link between the child and the environment. He/she carefully observes each child to know what he/she is doing and what his/her interests are every day. The teacher allows the child to work at his/her own pace and in an unhurried atmosphere. The teacher respects the child. The Montessori teacher allows the child to develop physically, socially, emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually.

The Montessori teacher's role is that of an observer, whose ultimate goal is to intervene less and less as the child develops. The teacher creates an atmosphere of calm and order in the classroom and is there to help and encourage the children in their efforts, allowing them to develop self-confidence and inner discipline. With the younger students at each level, the teacher is more active, demonstrating the use of materials and presenting activities. Knowing how to observe constructively and when to intervene is one of the most important talents the Montessori teacher acquires through Montessori education and experience.

The Montessori teacher is actively involved in his/her own spiritual, intellectual, and emotional growth as a part of a life-long learning process. The teacher models a love of learning in his/her own life that is infectious and essential when working with children.

Class Sessions

Gardenview Montessori offers several choices for class sessions:

- ♥ Bean Class, Morning Class: 8:30 – 11:30
- ♥ Bean Class, Morning Class with Lunch Bunch: 8:30 – 12:20
- ♥ Bean Class, Afternoon Class: 12:30 – 3:30
- ♥ Bean Class, Afternoon Class with Lunch Bunch: 11:30-3:30
- ♥ Bean Class, Full Day Class: 8:45 - 3:15
- ♥ Sprout Class 8:45 – 11:15, Monday-Thursday

Scheduling accommodations may be made for families who have children enrolled in both the Sprout and Bean Classes.

The Lunch Bunch is offered to children four years or older and gathers from 11:30 to 12:20 Monday through Friday. This is a time for the children to join together with an adult to enjoy sharing a meal together. The children prepare for lunch by washing their hands, setting out a placemat and a cloth napkin at a table and laying out their lunch items.

The Full day class is offered to those children 5 years and older who demonstrate a readiness for this program. The children in the full day class will work right along side of the children who are in either the morning or afternoon class. The full day class may offer some added benefits such as additional enrichment classes or specialized field trips. In the full day program children can build on the skills and information that they have acquired and work more independently and in greater depth.

Admission Policy and Procedures

Gardenview Montessori accepts and welcomes students of any economic and social class, racial and ethnic heritage, religious belief and family structure. Children between 18 months and six years old are eligible for admission into Gardenview Montessori.

Acceptance into the program is with the understanding that the child is ready for school. If after an appropriate settling in period, the staff or parents deem that the child is not adjusting to the academic or social life of the school, he/she may be placed on a modified schedule. In some rare cases, a child may be required to withdraw from the program until such time when it is deemed by the staff that he/she is ready and would benefit from the program.

The following is a listing of specific steps in our admissions process:

- When the decision to apply is made, complete the application form and send it to the school with a non-refundable application fee.

- Admission decisions are made by the administration and teaching staff. The decisions are based on the needs of existing classes with regard to balance of age and sex. Upon receipt of the application fee, we will hold a place for your child in our program.
- If a space is not immediately available you may wish to be placed on a waiting list.
- If it is our judgment that your child would have a difficult time in a Montessori environment, we will inform you immediately.

Tuition

Tuition is based on the 10 month academic school year which has been divided into 10 equal payments for your convenience. Gardenview Montessori's annual expenses, and consequently a child's tuition, are calculated on the assumption that children are enrolled for the entire academic year. Therefore, the parent's or guardian's obligation to pay the tuition and fees for the full academic year is unconditional and no portion of fees paid or outstanding will be refunded or canceled in the event of the student's absence due to illness or vacations. All tuition is to be paid on or before the 1st of each month beginning in August and ending after the May 1st payment. If payment is not made on a regular basis then your child's enrollment at Gardenview Montessori may be revoked at the discretion of the administrator. If tuition is not received by the 10th day of the month then a late fee will be charged at \$50 per week on top of the regular tuition until the payment is received.

While we do offer the option of paying by credit card via PayPal we strongly encourage you to pay by cash or check, because we are charged fairly large fees for the convenience of using PayPal.

Tuition and Fees 2016-2017	
Bean Class, Morning or Afternoon (preschool and Kindergarten)	
3 days per week	\$280/month
3 days per week with lunch	\$365
3 full days per week*	\$535
4 days per week	\$335
4 days per week with lunch	\$420
4 full days per week*	\$575
5 days per week	\$365
5 days per week with lunch	\$455
5 full days per week*	\$620
* Full days only available to children age 5-6	
Sprout Class (Toddlers)	
3 days per week	\$285
4 days per week	\$345
5 days per week	\$405
Other fees	
One time, non-refundable application fee	\$50
Sprout annual supply fee	\$65
Bean, half day annual supply fee	\$80
Bean full day annual supply fee	\$100
Commitment Hours per school year 15/Beans, 8/Sprouts	
Enrollment Deposit:	\$200
(applied towards September tuition)	

Attendance

Each child must be accompanied by an adult when entering or leaving the school. If an adult other than the designated adult needs to pick up the child please let the staff know either in writing or verbally. We will often be checking ID from anyone that we do not know who is picking up a child. Please take the time to inform your child if there is to be a change in the pick-up arrangements.

Dismissal times are 11:15, 11:30, 12:20, 3:15, and 3:30. Because the teachers have many other duties, it is essential that children are picked up on time by an adult. Parents are legally responsible for the child before and after normal school hours, even when the child is in the school parking lot.

Lateness

Children have a great need for consistency and order in their daily lives. Consistency in attendance helps children develop a positive attitude toward their work and also helps them develop social skills and a greater sense of community.

Arrange your daily routine to give your child plenty of time to get ready for school. A relaxed and predictable preparation time helps children arrive at school happy and eager to learn. Please help your child arrive on time each day. It is important not to be late because your child may feel left out if the class has already started when he or she arrives. In addition, late arrivals tend to disrupt the class.

Whether your child's day ends at 11:15, 11:30, 12:20, 3:15, or 3:30pm, it is important that you pick up your child on time. Children become anxious when someone is late picking them up. To emphasize this importance we will institute a late fee of \$15 for the first 15 minutes and \$10 for each 5 minutes afterwards. Every family will receive a one-time 15 minute grace period. After the grace period, if you are late picking up your child you will receive an invoice at the end of the week with the amount that is due. We appreciate your understanding with this matter.

Birthdays and Celebrations

Birthdays are a really important part of a child's life and we will take time to celebrate with his/her community. Your child's teacher will schedule the celebration with you. Parents and other family members are encouraged to be a part of the celebration.

Parents may bring a simple "treat" to share with the students of the class after the celebration. Please bring something small without too much sugar. Often children are thrilled to have a "fruit kabob" or some other interesting treat. Please be aware that many children have food allergies and may be very sensitive to things such as sugar and nuts.

Please refrain from handing out birthday invitations at the school unless all of the children are invited. This is both sensitive and considerate of others feelings and needs. You will receive a phone list with all of the addresses and children are always excited to get something in the mail.

Celebrations and family rituals are what tie the community together and foster a trust and camaraderie among generations. Gardenview acknowledges and exposes the children to the wide variety of cultural traditions shared around the world.

Snack

Children are scheduled to supply snack for their class at some point during the school year. Many children have very severe allergies to nuts, especially peanuts, as well as allergies to dairy, eggs, chocolate and sugar, so we ask that you try to come up with healthier or more natural options. **PLEASE DO NOT SEND ANYTHING WITH NUTS!!** Each family will receive a calendar with the dates that they are responsible for bringing in a prepared snack. Please send in enough snacks to serve 35 children each day. We also welcome fresh produce from your garden anytime during the year.

Clothing

Part of the Montessori system is to encourage children to take care of their own needs; therefore, simple clothing that the child can manage easily is most appropriate. Dressy clothing, overalls and belts tend to inhibit being able to take care of their bathroom needs and would therefore be unsuitable.

If your child is not yet able to tie their own shoes, please do not send them in tie shoes to school. Independence is a key point to the Montessori Method and being able to take care of his/her own shoes will help to foster that independence. Shoes should be comfortable enough to wear on a long walk.

We like to enjoy our space and the activities here at Gardenview and would encourage you to send your child to school in things that you don't mind if they get paint, glue or mud on. The children who come home the dirtiest often had the best day at school.

Please send a jacket, sweater or coat, **clearly labeled with your child's name (a label maker works well and doesn't come off in the wash)**, to school almost every day. They may not need to wear it, but at least they will be prepared if the weather does change and they require something warm.

Staff Days

We have several days designated throughout the year as staff days. In order to encourage and promote professional development, the staff can use these days to enrich, observe, or record important aspects related to Montessori's teaching and philosophy. In some cases the staff may use a Staff Day to prepare for parent/teacher conferences, write evaluations, to participate in training sessions, or general classroom maintenance and preparation.

Discipline

The Montessori teacher and staff respond to each child's individual need and meet them in a constructive way. We stress the positive and minimize the negative. It is a rarity to hear a teacher use words like, "no, not, can't, don't, and shouldn't." The child is free to move about the classroom at will, talk to the other children (without disrupting), work with any of the materials that he/she knows how to use, or to ask for a new lesson from the teacher. The rules are few and clearly presented: Respect for self, respect for others, and respect for the environment.

Very seldom do discipline problems occur in a Montessori classroom as the prepared environment encourages the discovering and sharing of knowledge within a mixed age classroom which results in constructive role modeling between and among the children. If a student has difficulty following the rules of the community, the response will be age-appropriate. Personal attention, distraction, substitution, and/or removal from the situation are typical approaches. Many instances resolve themselves as the student is guided or redirected to a more meaningful activity.

Gardenview has a no-tolerance policy on violence, and corporal punishment is never used. If a child uses physical violence against another child or an adult this procedure will be followed:

1. The child will be reminded of the rules.
2. The child will be removed from the situation and asked to sit, work, or play by themselves.
3. The parents will be called and the child will be asked to go home for the day.
4. If the behavior happens on more than one day during a week, the child will be asked to take a day off from school. This may require an adult to miss a day of work to stay home with the child. If this does occur we ask you to help your child see how serious this is and that it is unacceptable at school.
5. If a child is asked to stay home more than three times in a month that child will be asked to leave the school until the physical issues can be resolved.

Evaluations and Conferences

Close contact between the parents and the teacher is beneficial to the development of the child. Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled twice each year. Please feel free to make appointments for extra conferences if there is a need or desire to connect with the teacher on your child's progress.

Health Care Policy

A child who has a temperature, severe runny nose, diarrhea, lack of sleep or a communicable disease should not be sent to school. Should your child become ill during the school day or show signs of an impending illness, you will be notified and asked to collect the child as soon as possible. If you are unable to be reached, we will contact the number you designated as an emergency contact. It is the responsibility of the parent to inform the school of any changes in contact information.

A child who is ill must be kept at home until the symptoms have been gone for at least 24 hours.

Should any accidents or serious illness occur, the student will be taken to the nearest hospital and the school will make every effort to notify the parents or designated emergency contact person.

Parents should notify the teacher in writing if their child has a medical condition or is on medication of any kind. If a parent requests that the staff administer medications the medication must be in the original prescription bottle and written consent must be given to the staff at Gardenview Montessori prior to any medication being administered.

Gardenview Montessori adheres to the immunization requirements of the State of Washington for all children. Each child enrolled at Gardenview will have in his/her file a current record of administered immunizations authorized by his/her family physician. Immunization records can be faxed directly to 360.543.5213.

Hand washing is very important at Gardenview Montessori. Children are expected to wash their hands before eating, after playing outdoors, after handling pets and after using the toilet or having a diaper changed. A hand washing lesson is given at the start of the school year to every child at Gardenview.

Keeping the environment clean is very important for the health and safety of the children and the staff. The staff will clean all surfaces and items as they become soiled. Gardenview Montessori prides itself on being eco-friendly. We use earth friendly products to clean and sanitize whenever possible. One of the preferred cleaning products is [Lavendar Hydrosol](#) from Pelindaba Lavendar Farm on San Juan Island. It is a natural product that cleans and disinfects, and is safe enough for the children to use in the classroom.

Animals

"Solicitous care for living things affords satisfaction to one of the most lively instincts of the child's mind. Nothing is better calculated than this to awaken an attitude of foresight."

—Maria Montessori

The students at Gardenview love to help care for the animals on site. We have had a variety of animals since the doors opened in 2004 including frogs, rabbits, guinea pigs, stick bugs, butterflies, fish and chickens. We believe that it is very important for the children to be exposed to and learn to care for the living creatures around them. That being said, we do also take care to keep the animal environment safe and healthy for the children as well as the animals. We have installed a child-safe hand sanitizing station near the chicken pen, and have enlisted the help of Bio Bug Pest Management to help keep rats away from the school. Bio Bug only treats the school when the children will not be on site for at least 72 hours after the application of any pest control agents.

Weather

Gardenview Montessori will only close school on days that the Bellingham public schools are closed due to snow or ice. We do not have late start times at Gardenview. That information will be announced on the local radio station: 104.1 FM, KAFE. Please listen to this station before heading to school if there is snow on the ground in Whatcom County. An e-mail will also be sent to the Yahoo Group regarding any schedule changes.

Outside the Gated Areas

As a responsible and respectful community, we ask that all drivers drive slowly on Firwood and avoid blocking the driveways of our neighbors. Parking at Gardenview is limited. Please pull into the first available space, walk your child up to the gate, and make sure they are inside the building before you leave. To make drop off and pick up fluid, we ask that you leave quickly to allow for other cars to park. When finding a parking spot, please do not block any other cars in. This will respect the needs of those who may need to leave quickly as well as help to prevent accidents.

If there is no room in our parking lot you may need to circle the block and come back. If you would like to spend extra time at Gardenview to visit with other parents, please park on Maplewood Ave. or Birchwood Ave. and feel free to spend time on the playground or in the front yard visiting with other parents.

In order to keep the children safe at Gardenview Montessori we must insist that only adults be allowed to open the gates leading out of the grounds. We also ask the children to hold the hand of an adult in the parking lot as there is the potential for a lot of traffic, especially during drop off and pick up times.

We appreciate your help keeping our school a safe, happy, and healthy place for children to learn.