

MONTEMALAGA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Parent Information Handbook



Bell Schedule

Monday Early Release Days:	Starting Time	Ending Time
TK Early	8:30	12:40
TK Late	9:30	1:40
Kindergarten	8:30	1:10
Grades 1 – 5	8:30	1:30

Tuesdays – Friday:

TK Early	8:30	1:35
TK Late	9:30	2:35
Kindergarten	8:30	2:05
Grades 1 & 2	8:30	2:35
Grades 3, 4, & 5	8:30	3:00

Minimum Days:

TK	8:30	11:45
Grades K – 5	8:30	12:00

Before & After School Hours

Adult Supervision

Adult supervision is provided by school personnel as follows:

- ♥ Before School from 8:15 – 8:30 a.m. Kindergarten and Upper playground area.
Children should not arrive at school before 8:15 a.m.
- ♥ Through the school day, recess and lunch.
- ♥ Parking lot loading area in front of the school from 2:15 - 2:20 and from 2:36 - 2:45
- ♥ Front and rear parking areas at 3:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.

Kindergarten students waiting for older siblings after dismissal need to be enrolled in Kids Corner from 2:05 on. First and second grade students who have older siblings will be supervised from 2:36 until the 3:00 dismissal of upper grade students.(Sibling watch at lunch benches)

The teaching day, as well as any adult supervision, ends at 3:15. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that their children have been picked up by then. Any child left on campus after 3:15 will be without adult supervision and should be enrolled in P.V. Kids' Corner.

P.V. Kids' Corner

P.V. Kids' Corner, our before and after school daycare program, is housed on the lower campus. This child care program will be conducted from 6:30 – 8:30 a.m. before school begins each day and after school until 6:30 p.m. (Please see the P.V. Kids' Corner Parent handbook for information regarding fees, supervision times and registration or call the Kids' Corner business office at (310)541-7626 for further information) If your child does not participate in this program, he/she should go directly home at dismissal time and not play on the school grounds since playground supervision is not provided during the after school hours.

School Parking Lot & Student Pick-up

To help ease the daily traffic congestion at the school parking lot entrance during dismissal time, we request parents to drive their cars forward into the parking lot loading zone (the right side of the yellow line) as far as space permits.

- ♥ **Do not leave your car unattended in the parking lot loading zone at any time. If you need to leave your car for any reason, please park it off campus and walk to campus. Please do not park at any time in the spaces marked for Staff Members.**

Please pick up your children along the curb in both the front and back loading areas. Children are never allowed to walk or run unassisted across the parking lot. Children are **not** allowed to step off the curb unless they are escorted by an adult.

- ♥ Please drop your children off at the designated curb area, not in the middle of the lot.

Parents who choose to pick up their children (Grades 3 – 5) behind the school on Via Acalones are reminded that this is a city street and subject to vehicle regulations. Students in grades 3 – 5 may be dropped off and picked up at the back gate. Grades 1 and 2 must be picked up and dropped off in front) **Parents may not park on the opposite side of the street and walk across to pick up their child.** The safety of all of the Montemalaga families is our primary concern. The Palos Verdes Estates police will also be periodically monitor the traffic on Via Acalones.

Exiting the parking lot: There is absolutely no left turn between 8:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. when entering the school parking lot from Via Nogales. There is also no left turn when exiting the school parking lot during these designated times.

- ♥ Please be sure to follow the traffic pattern guidelines below:



Bicycle Riders

Riding bicycles to and from school is allowed for 3rd, 4th and 5th graders with parent permission. All bicycle riders must wear a helmet. Failure to do so will result in loss of bicycle privileges. Bicycles are parked in the bike rack by the school office. No skateboards or scooters are allowed on the school grounds

Remember to: Walk bikes on school grounds
Respect property of others
Lock your bike
Ride safely at all times

Opening Classrooms After School

We cannot open classrooms for forgotten books or homework once the teacher has left. Exceptions may be made for emergencies. Students are capable of being responsible.

ATTENDANCE

Absence Verification

Any time your child is absent from school, we need a note explaining the reason why your child was absent. The State Department of Education requires that we keep all notes for a period of three years. They conduct surprise audits to verify that we are following proper accounting procedures. You can help by remembering to send a note with your child when he/she comes back to school.

If your child is going to be absent for three or more days, please call the office and let us know when you expect your child to return. Make-up work will only be available after three days of illness as any shorter period of time can easily be made up when the child returns to school. If you do call the office for homework, please call before 10:00 so that your child's teacher has time to put the homework together. For either short or long terms absences, it is always a good idea to call a classmate (Study Buddy) and find out what went on during the time missed.

Sign Out/Sign In

If you wish to pick up your child prior dismissal time, we ask that you come to the office (not the classroom) and sign your child out of school. Children may only be checked out in the office. Children are not released by telephone request. Children going home for lunch must have a permission note from their parents. Children returning to school on the same day they have been checked out, must be signed back in at the office.

Tardies

If your child is late for class, please come to the office to sign your child in. The student will be given a tardy slip which is required for late entrance into the classroom. In school, promptness is an extremely important attribute. Being on time is more of a learned skill, or a habit that is developed, than some kind of a natural instinct. The first several minutes of class are very important: classroom attendance is taken (money from the state is based on this); lunch count is taken and in most rooms, a overview of the day's events is given. When a child walks in four or five minutes late, it is not only disruptive to the class, but all the "counts" have to be changed. It is also possible that the child will develop a habit that will be hard to break in intermediate school or later on in life.

We are asking both parents and children to be aware of the importance of being on time. We will communicate to you if your child is having a problem with this. For multiple tardies or truanicies parents will be required to attend a special meeting. Together, we will help our children develop good habits.

Vacations

Please remember that regular school attendance is important to your child's educational program. Many parents don't realize that removing their child from school for a vacation is regarded by the State of California as an unexcused absence and we lose as much as \$43.62 per day per child. Some parents have chosen to reimburse the school district for these lost funds. Please make every effort to take family vacations when school is not in session.

If your family must take an extended trip of five days or more, you can request an **independent study** program for your child while you are away. (See information below.)

It should be noted that it is school and district policy that students who miss work due to an unexcused absence are not afforded makeup privileges. It is also unrealistic to expect a teacher to provide class work for an unexcused absence ahead of time. Your teacher will be glad to save any class work or homework that was assigned during this period of time so that your child will be aware of what was missed.

Independent Study Program

The Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School District operates a program of independent study for students who are unable to attend their regularly-assigned classes because of extenuating circumstances and/or travel.

Short-term independent study programs (five days to one-quarter in duration) are offered at each site for students who are unable to attend regular classes for a given period of time and who wish to assure continued educational progress.

Both the short and long-term programs enable the school to count the time spent enrolled in independent study program for instructional purposes. Inform your child's teacher and ask the office manager for a form well in advance of the time needed. **Adequate notice must be given to the school for the short-term independent study program.** Both the short and long-term programs enable the school to count the time spent enrolled in independent study program for instructional purposes. Details and the necessary forms that must be completed are available in our school office.

HEALTH INFORMATION

School Health Services

All school health services are provided by the teachers, secretary, health clerk or principal. A qualified nurse is assigned to the high school and intermediate schools. Services are limited to basic first aid, taking temperatures and such communicable disease control and other procedures required by law. The Palos Verdes Estates paramedic teams are highly qualified and respond quickly when called. Accidents and injuries at school are fortunately few and generally limited to bumps, scratches, and bruises. Children are instructed to check with their teacher or yard supervisor first. If further treatment is indicated, they are sent to the office. Bumped heads are a particular concern since symptoms may not show up immediately. In the event of a serious head "bump", parents are notified that day so they can be aware of problems which might develop.

If your child has a communicable disease, please notify the school immediately. After a communicable disease, a student must be readmitted via a school nurse, doctor or the Health Department.

Emergency Information

In an emergency, your child may be hurt or frightened. The time you take to fill in the emergency contact information in Aeries will assist us in taking care of your child. **It is also important that you notify us of any changes during the year. Current telephone numbers, both home and work are vitally important.**

Volunteers

All classroom volunteers who come in regular contact with the students have to provide proof of a Tuberculosis (TB) test. This is the Mantoux Test. If you are volunteering at Montemalaga during the school year, you must have a current TB test form on file with the school. The health office will provide you with the proper form.

Medication at School

Arrangements can be made to administer prescriptions at school. A Parent Release form with the doctor's signature must be on file in the office before medication of any type (even over the counter) can be given. Please check with the school secretary for the proper form. Children may not administer their own prescriptions or carry medications in backpacks. See the District nurse regarding any special circumstances.

Casts, Crutches, & Sutures

It is of primary concern to maintain the safety of children while they are in school. When a child is placed in a cast, has sutures, or is required to use crutches, it is important that they be excluded from normal playground activities for the duration of this treatment. Our school health office requires a note from your child's doctor upon your child's return to school.

Playgrounds are busy, active places where children expend much energy in a short time. Children wearing casts, using crutches, or having sutures may not play on the playground areas during recess. Other activities, such as games and puzzles are more appropriate for them until their casts, crutches or sutures are removed.

Emergency Drill & Disaster Preparedness

The Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School District has developed plans for emergency drill and disaster preparedness in all schools. In the case of emergencies such as earthquake, flood, power failure, etc., during school hours, the students in all schools will be held at their respective schools. During emergencies (e.g. earthquake) that require evacuation of the classroom, children at Montemalaga will assemble on the lower playground field where they will remain together with their teacher. Parents will come to the Student Release table at the East gate by the Main school Parking Lot. Teachers at Student Release will send student runners in an organized manner to get your child for release. Please have correct identification available. Because some parents may not be able to get to school during the first few hours after a disaster, a number of children will have to remain at school. Care and supervision will be provided for them by the staff until parents arrive. Children in all grades also participate in monthly fire drills and practice classroom "Duck and Cover" procedures in the event of an earthquake. Student safety is a primary concern.

COMMUNICATION

Communication

Be sure to read the Principal's Weekly Memo, the PTA's weekly update and our school website, <http://montemalaga.pvpusd.net/> to stay informed of schoolwide and classroom news, events, and other important information.

Communication with Teachers

Communication between parents and staff members is highly encouraged at Montemalaga Elementary School. Always talk with the school employee closest to the source of the concern/problem. **TALK TO YOUR TEACHER FIRST!** Many problems that have come to the principal's attention are due to miscommunication or misinformation, which easily could have been cleared up by talking or writing a note to the teacher.

If you wish to contact your teacher, send a note, email, or call the classroom and leave a request for the teacher to return your call. Please remember that while classes are in session, the teachers are required to attend to their instructional/supervising duties and are not usually free to converse with parents.

Teachers are frequently expected to attend after-school meetings or are busy with classroom preparation in the mornings and therefore are not always available for unexpected "drop-ins". An appointment always ensures a satisfactory meeting time for all concerned.

Parent Visitation

You are welcome to visit your child's classroom for 20-30 minute sessions. Please make advance arrangements with your child's teacher and check in at the office so that we know what adults are on the school grounds. Pre-school children or children attending other schools may not visit in the classroom. Please remember that this is not a "conference" time, as the appropriate time for a conference is when your teacher can give you all of his/her attention – usually before or after school. If you remember to make an appointment for a conference, you will assure yourself of having enough time for discussion.

Parent Back-To-School Night

An evening meeting, usually held in September, is held in the fall for parents at which time the teachers will discuss the characteristics and needs of children at their grade levels, the curriculum, instructional materials, and daily schedules.

Volunteers

There are many areas at Montemalaga where parents can volunteer their time. These opportunities range from the classroom to the library or technology lab, or you can even get involved in teaching an "Art At Your Fingertips" lesson! Included in our back-to-school packet is a pamphlet which describes all these wonderful opportunities and gives you a place to sign up for whatever interests you. We hope that you can find a way to get involved. A meeting is held each fall to familiarize parent volunteers with our programs. It is important that parents sign in at the office and wear a visitor badge while on campus.

SCHOOL POLICIES

Standards for Appropriate School Behavior

Please make sure you review with your child the Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School District Safe Schools policy.

Responsibility

Responsibility is a skill that must be taught. Parents should begin teaching their children responsibility at an early age. Even toddlers can learn to pick up after themselves and be helpful in the family. Students in school need to learn to be responsible for their actions. It is important that they suffer the consequences or reap the benefits from choices they make. It is a mistake for teachers or parents to cover or take over a child's responsibility. We teach children to be independent and responsible citizens who view life as a continuous effort of making good choices.

Homework

It is the policy of the Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School District that all students of every grade level should be regularly assigned homework, and that homework should be an extension of the work of the regular school program.

It is our belief that all students should have a consistent "study time" appropriate to their grade level. This study time should be Monday through Thursday. If your child has no homework for that night, then the time should be used for free reading. This policy is based on the belief that students need to develop the "habit" of making time to do homework.

It is always important for students to make up any work that is missed since school work tends to be sequential in nature. Students who have an excused absence are entitled to make up all work without penalty. However, students who miss work because of an unexcused absence, truancy or class cut are not afforded these same makeup privileges and except in those cases where special arrangements have been worked out with the school, may not make up for credit any work missed (board Policy 6154).

Pupils and Money

Pupils do not need money at school unless they are going to our student store or purchasing a snack from the cafeteria.

Telephone Use

The use of the telephone is for emergencies only. Please make prior arrangements with your children regarding after-school plans. Children who forget homework or books will be asked to take the natural consequences. Students may use the phones in the office for emergency calls only. We do not recommend that elementary school students bring cell phones to school. If they are brought to school, cell phones need to be turned off and kept in backpacks during school hours.

Classroom Disruption

Please do not allow your child to bring toys, including stuffed animals to school. These are disruptive to classroom instruction.

Hazardous Objects

Do not allow your child to bring objects to school that could be harmful to himself or another student. This also includes toys or other objects that would be disruptive to the school program. Such items would include knives, skateboards, darts, firecrackers, water pistols, swords, balloons for "water bombs" etc. Students caught with such items could have the items confiscated and may be suspended from school.

LUNCH

Cafeteria Services

Lunches are prepared in a central kitchen at Miraleste Intermediate School and served hot to children. Menus are located on our School Website. Milk, juice, and ice cream may be purchased at school to augment lunches brought from home. Lunches cost \$3.50 and milk is available for 50 cents. Children may not purchase lunches with cash as our Cafeteria does not accept cash. However, cash for Wednesday's snacks is accepted. We have a new online payment system, TITAN School Solutions. Students will be using their student id number to purchase lunch. Using TITAN Family Portal, parents will be allowed to:

- Make an online payment to their children's cafeteria meal accounts
- Remotely monitor their children's accounts
- Set up automatic recurring payments
- Set up low balance e-mail message alerts
- Manage your student's meal account on your phone or mobile device

Applications for Free and Reduced Price Meals

Applications for free or reduced price meals are available online. Children from families whose income is within the approved levels are eligible to receive meals free or at a reduced price. To apply, please complete an application and return it to the school office. Those who were on the program last year, must fill out a new application for this school year.

Forgotten Lunches

Please don't disturb your child's class by taking a forgotten lunch to the classroom. Just drop the lunch by the office and they can pick it up at lunchtime. The office will always make sure that children have lunch.

Thank you for taking the time to review this handbook. The entire Montemalaga staff looks forward to providing a positive and successful educational environment for your child!