



GOLESTAN SCHOOL

320 San Carlos, El Cerrito, CA 94530

Parent Handbook

Welcome to Golestan School!

At Golestan we apply a heuristic approach to learning; the children express themselves through art, music, gardening, dance, science, pretend play, practical life activities, storytelling, etc... basically all that brings beauty and joy to the world around us. Our preschool curriculum is a structured hybrid of Waldorf, Montessori, and Reggio. Golestan primary school is an International Baccalaureate* (IB) candidate school for the Primary Years Program (PYP) as an IB World School.

IB World Schools share a common philosophy- a commitment to high-quality, challenging, international education. At the core of everything we do at Golestan is kindness – an understanding of and respect for others and the world we live in.

The preschoolers learn the Iranian and American alphabets in conjunction with each other in preparation for kindergarten. With the exception of the alphabet and numbers, there is no English spoken in the preschool classroom. The primary school is in English with three language tracks; we reserve one to two hours per day for immersing students in Arabic, Hebrew, and Persian languages (and potentially others in the future).

Preschoolers learn about world cultures every Friday as part of our Social Cultural Studies program. In this program, one continent is covered over two months. Each week students learn about one country from that continent, including geography, basic cultural facts, how to count in their language from 1 to 10, and basic salutations. Lunch that day always highlights foods from the country they are studying.

This parents' Handbook is designed to familiarize you with our policies and procedures. Please keep this handbook and other forms with your child's school records.

**Only schools authorized by the IB Organization can offer any of its four academic programs: the Primary Years Program (PYP), the Middle Years Program (MYP), the Diploma Program (DP), or the Career-related Program (CP). Candidate status gives no guarantee that authorization will be granted. For more information about the IB and its programs visit <http://www.ibo.org>.*

Expectations

While we do not employ a selective admissions process, it is important that we communicate the core values of the school so that parents may determine whether Golestan is a good fit for their child(ren) and family culture. If parents do not feel an affinity for some aspects of the school, they are encouraged *not* to enroll their child(ren) so that another family that is better matched is able to send their child(ren) to the school. This process enables the administration to communicate the school's expectations from the start. These include:

1. Parents should not choose Golestan solely for its language tracks. Specifically for the preschool program; while language tracks are a very valuable benefit of attending Golestan, they are only *one* of the many principles of the school.
2. The school values a collaborative approach to working with children and their families. For this reason, it is imperative that there be an environment of mutual trust and respect, and that the school and the families promote the same values and philosophies for congruence in the home-school connection.
3. The daily rhythm at Golestan is very structured but the kids are free to explore and experiment within that structure. There are a lot of opportunities for independent work, but the children are in a collaborative atmosphere.
4. On most days, students go home filthy from head to toe with the exception of their faces and hands. This is because of the experiential, heuristic approach to teaching at Golestan.
5. For preschool children: A full immersion program is a very effective means of raising native speakers in a minority or heritage language, but it is only as effective as the exposure and support the child receives at home. The preschool should not be relied upon as the sole means of teaching language to children; rather, whenever possible, the school should be viewed as a partner in helping children gain native fluency.
6. While many have requested a no-media policy for students, the school does not impose a formal policy at this time. We do, however discourage the use of media (including iPhones) and electronic toys for young children so that they may be better able to adapt to the rhythm of the school. We believe a media-free childhood is one of the more valuable gifts parents can give their child(ren).
7. Aside from unconditional love and kindness, perhaps the most important factors in a child's happiness are sleep and food. A sleep-deprived child is unable to focus or to control his/her impulses, as is a child with low or high blood sugar. For this reason, we ask that you please ensure that your child has a minimum of 11 to 13 hours of sleep every night and that you limit your child's sugar intake (including juice), especially in the mornings.

Suggested Reading

Simplicity parenting: Using the Extraordinary Power of Less to Raise Calmer, Happier, and More Secure Kids (Kim John Payne & Lisa M. Ross)

Beyond the Rainbow Bridge: Nurturing Our Children from Birth To Seven (Barbara J. Patterson, Pamela Bradley, & Jean Riordan)

Nurture Shock: New Thinking About Children (Po Bronson & Ashley Merryman)

General Information (Age and Hours of Operation)

The preschool program is for children aged 2 to 5 years (before kindergarten). The school is open Monday through Friday for all students. Standard hours are 9:00 to 3:00. Aftercare and early drop off are available upon request. Aftercare is until 5:30, with an option for 6:30 pickup.

Tuition

Tuition is due the first of each month. A \$20 late fee will be charged for payments after the 5th.

School Closures

Golestan School Calendar 2018-19

September						
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First Day (All) & Last Day (Primary)
 School Closure
 Staff Development Closure
 Parent-Teacher Conference Closure

Back to school night: September 27

Communication and Announcements

Please check your email regularly for various correspondences and announcements.

Sign-in and Sign-out

Please sign your children in and out daily with their first and last name and the drop-off and pick-up times.

If a person not on your authorized list will pick up your child, please send a note authorizing their release. Important dates are always printed on the sign in sheets; please make a note of them.

We are fined every time a child has not been signed in or out; please help us avoid being fined.

Drop Off, Pick Up and Late Pick Up

Please do not bring your child to school more than 10 minutes early. Letting children in early interferes with the teachers' preparation time. Please assist your child with washing hands upon arrival. Likewise, please be prompt in picking up your child(ren) at the end of each day, as the teachers need to clean up and prepare to leave for the day. If you will be unavoidably detained, please notify the school or your child's teacher as soon as you are able.

Absences and Make-ups

Please notify the teacher or the school's administration if your child will be absent, as soon as you are able. We cannot offer tuition refund for school days missed due to vacations, personal time off, school closures, illness, or any other reason, and we do not offer makeups for missed days.

Separation Process

Most well-adjusted preschool and kindergarten aged children with a deep attachment to their parents can be reluctant to separate from them. We respect and appreciate that every parent-child dynamic is different and has a different separation style. However, if at all possible, we request that you limit your daily separation routine to 10 minutes maximum.

We encourage you to participate in the home-visit program before your child begins attending Golestan, or before moving to a new class. This will enable you and your child to develop a relationship with your new teachers. It also makes for a much easier transition for the child.

In the first weeks of your child's enrollment, you may need to spend more time in the classroom to help ease the transition for your child (and yourself!). Please discuss the transition plan that will work best for you and your family with your child's teachers during your home visit. Together, you will develop a healthy separation routine. *If you are concerned about your child, you may call the school at any time for an update.*

In general, children will sense their parents' anxiety. If you are confident that your child will be safe and will have a good time, then you are helping your child feel the same.

Cubbies and Personal Belongings

Each child has a cubby for personal belongings such as changes of clothing, craft projects, parent notes, etc. All personal belongings except the change of clothing need to be taken home at the end of every week.

Children may not bring personal items, toys or accessories to school. These items tend to create sharing and ownership issues amongst the kids. Exceptions are made for younger children who are attached to particular objects that comfort them for naptime and the days they are scheduled for *Show & Tell*. Please check with your child's teachers before bringing these items.

Superhero figures and/or war toys, in particular, are strictly prohibited; dressing your child in clothing with images of such characters or items is discouraged.

Student Clothing

Please dress your child casually and sensibly. We want everyone to feel comfortable without worrying about his/her clothes getting dirty. Please choose clothing that enables your child to

move freely and comfortably exercise self-care (for example, changing or going to the toilet).

Children must wear socks and closed shoes with non-slip soles. We want children to be able to engage in safe, uninterrupted, and vigorous play. Each child should have seasonally appropriate change of clothes (including socks and underwear) available in her/his cubby, in case of accidents or active play. Please include one of each to remain at school: a pair of slippers, sun hat, raincoat, and pair of rain boots.

Home-School Connection

At Golestan, we feel that we are all raising your children collaboratively. For this reason, it is imperative that there be regular open and honest communication between parents and teachers.

Please notify your teachers if there are any changes at home that may affect your child's behavior at school. This includes variations in sleep, houseguests, a parent traveling, behavioral changes, etc.

Meals

Every day, the school supplies two to three healthy snacks, a warm homemade healthy lunch, and milk. All food consumed is unprocessed and organic. Lunch consists of one protein, one grain, and at least two vegetables. All produce is seasonal and comes either from the school garden or from local farms. All meat is free range, grass fed, pasture raised – sourced directly from Marin Sun Farms. Our bread and crackers are gluten free, whole grain, and baked at the school. No juice or refined sugars are served at the school*. Please notify your teacher of any food allergies or sensitivities.

*With the exception of cooking classes for our Primary-middle school aged students.

Due to allergies no nuts, or nut products are allowed on school premises.

Administration of Medication

If your child has been medicated before coming to school, please notify the teacher. Please do not leave medication in your child's cubby; it should be given to your child's teacher. You must have a completed Consent for Medical Treatment form (LIC 624) on file before leaving any medication for your child at the school (please see list of required forms on page 10).

Emergency Preparedness

In accordance with the Earthquake Preparedness checklist, we have standard earthquake kits for children and emergency food and water in storage containers in the Preschool-Kindergarten play area.

Please write a note of comfort and assurance to your child that you will be reunited as soon as possible. Return the note along with a family picture and emergency contact information (including phone numbers and home address) in a zip-lock bag to your child's teacher. We will keep these items and will pin them on your child with a safety pin in the case of an emergency. We hope that these small measures will help reduce the level of stress in the event of an emergency.

Discipline

Physical punishment, humiliation, or techniques of intimidation are NEVER used and are not allowed at Golestan. Providing an age-appropriate environment with a thoughtful rhythm and regular routine enables a child to be more grounded. The teachers provide a consistent and predictable environment while establishing developmentally appropriate limits including: redirection, clarifying choices, problem solving, and implementing timely intervention before misbehavior escalates into a crisis.

At the core of our approach to working with children is empathy; we determine the cause of the behavior to the best of our ability in order to address the root of the issue, rather than the outcome.

"Time-outs" are never used. When the need arises, natural/logical consequences with warning - by removing the child from a situation, for example - are used to help a child understand the effects of his/her actions. These are used as learning and centering tools, not as punishment.

We combine affection with limits rather than demanding obedience. Our aim is to nurture emotional and social growth by providing developmentally appropriate boundaries. As collaborators in raising your children, mutually respectful and consistent communication between teachers and a child's parents is very important. If a child is disruptive, the teachers will discuss the issue with parents in an attempt to find a solution to the problem.

On the rare occasion that the measures described above are not effective in helping a child *not* be disruptive, the teachers will give the child two warnings before sending the child home for the day.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences are held biannually; special conferences can be requested at any time.

Health

Please notify the school if your child has any food allergies or has contracted a contagious disease. The staff respects your privacy and will keep this information confidential, unless otherwise noted by you.

Children with the following infectious diseases should stay home: Chickenpox, head lice, infectious conjunctivitis, vomiting and/or diarrhea, strep throat, hand-foot-and-mouth disease, symptoms of any other viral or bacterial infection (fever and/or the child is feeling or acting lethargic). A child who is ill to the point that they cannot participate in the daily activities and/or need constant one-on-one adult supervision, should not attend school that day and will be required to be taken home.

Please Note: A fresh cold is contagious, but a runny nose is not necessarily a symptom of illness.

We do ask that for the benefit of the other children and teachers, parents refrain from sending their child(ren) to school if they suspect the child is in the first stages of a cold, as this is the time a child is most contagious – **please do not wait until the illness / cold is full blown to keep them at home.**

Field Trips

Each class will attend a minimum of two to three field trips per year. Parent volunteers (adult chaperones) are encouraged. If there are not enough parent volunteers for a field trip, the trip may be cancelled. An emergency first aid kit, water and snacks, a list of families' contact information, and emergency contact numbers will be taken to all field trips. More specific information for each field trip will be shared by the teachers and the administration.

Safety

In case of medical emergency we will contact you and other person(s) listed on the child's "Emergency and Identification" form. If necessary, we will call a mobile ER clinic and/or 911.

Tuition Payments

Tuition payments may be paid monthly and are due by the 5th of each month, or if you prefer, quarterly, bi-yearly, or yearly tuition payments can be arranged. *If a student is withdrawn you will be responsible for all of the tuition for that year.*

Late Payments

A \$20 fee will be applied to all late payments.

Schedule Change and Refund policy

For preschool families only:

If you would like to increase hours for your student, you may tell administration at any time, and we will put your name on the waiting list for those time slots.

Though we do our best to accommodate each family, increases or decreases to schedules are based on availability; we cannot guarantee the schedule that you request. In the case of a requested decrease in hours, you are responsible for your schedule/tuition until a replacement has been found to fill your spot.

We ask that parents **please do not trade your child's days with each other.** There are many factors that come in to play for scheduling, such as gender balance of each class, wait-lists, age distribution of students, etc. Therefore it is important that all changes in schedules are made through the school's administration. If you want to make changes to your child's schedule, please submit your request to the administration and they will do their best to accommodate your needs based on availability.

Transportation

Golestan does not provide any transportation to or from the school for preschool aged children.

Forms required from families

Each preschool family must complete and submit the following forms before the school year begins:

1. Current Admission Agreement
2. California School immunization Records
3. Parent Consent for Administration of Medication and Medication Chart (LIC 9221)
4. Identification and Emergency Information forms (LIC 700)
5. Child's Pre-admission Healthy History- Parents Report forms ((LIC 702)
6. Child's Pre-admission Healthy History- Physician's Report Forms (LIC 701)
7. Documentation required for health-related services (e.g. blood-glucose monitoring, and nebulizer care) (LIC 9166)
8. Gastrostomy Tube Care: Physician's checklist (LIC 701A)
9. Consent for Medical Treatment forms (LIC 624)
10. Unusual Incident/Injury or Death Reports (LIC 624)
11. Signed, dated receipts of Notification of Parent's Rights (LIC 995)
12. Signed dated Personal Rights receipts (LIC 613)

Each primary school family must submit their child's updated immunization records before the start of each year.

Thank you for entrusting us with your children. Together, we will raise a generation of inquisitive, altruistic, thoughtful, generous, intelligent, responsible, dignified, and kind individuals that embody compassion and integrity.

FOR PRESCHOOL FAMILIES:

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

CAREGIVER BACKGROUND CHECK PROCESS CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

The California Department of Social Services works to protect the safety of children in child care by licensing child care centers and family child care homes. Our highest priority is to be sure that children are in safe and healthy child care settings. California law requires a background check for any adult who owns, lives in, or works in a licensed child care home or center. Each of these adults must submit fingerprints so that a background check can be done to see if they have any history of crime. If we find that a person has been convicted of a crime other than a minor traffic violation or a marijuana-related offense covered by the marijuana reform legislation codified at Health and Safety Code sections 11361.5 and 11361.7, he/she cannot work or live in the licensed child care home or center unless approved by the Department. This approval is called an exemption.

A person convicted of a crime such as murder, rape, torture, kidnapping, crimes of sexual violence or molestation against children **cannot by law be given an exemption that would allow them to own, live in or work in** a licensed child care home or center. If the crime was a felony or a serious misdemeanor, the person must leave the facility while the request is being reviewed. If the crime is less serious, he/she may be allowed to remain in the licensed child care home or center while the exemption request is being reviewed.

How the Exemption Request is Reviewed

We request information from police departments, the FBI and the courts about the person's record. We consider the type of crime, how many crimes there were, how long ago the crime happened and whether the person has been honest in what they told us.

The person who needs the exemption must provide information about:

- The crime
- What they have done to change their life and obey the law
- Whether they are working, going to school, or receiving training
- Whether they have successfully completed a counseling or rehabilitation program

The person also gives us reference letters from people who aren't related to them who know about their history and their life now.

We look at all these things very carefully in making our decision on exemptions. By law this information cannot be shared with the public.

How to Obtain More Information

As a parent or authorized representative of a child in licensed child care, you have the right to ask the licensed child care home or center whether anyone working or living there has an exemption. If you request this information, and there is a person with an exemption, the child care home or center must tell you the person's name and how he or she is involved with the home or center and give you the name, address, and telephone number of the local licensing office. You may also get the person's name by contacting the local licensing office. You may find the address and phone number on our website. The website address is <http://cclid.ca.gov/contact.htm>.

Community Care Licensing



CHILD CARE CENTER



NOTIFICATION OF PARENTS' RIGHTS

THIS NOTICE MUST BE POSTED IN A PROMINENT, PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE AREA OF THE CHILD CARE CENTER

AS A PARENT/AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE, YOU HAVE A RIGHT

1. Enter and inspect the child care center without advance notice whenever children are in care.
2. File a complaint against the licensee with the licensing office and review the licensee's public file kept by the licensing office.
3. Review, at the child care center, reports of licensing visits and substantiated complaints against the licensee made during the last three years.
4. Complain to the licensing office and inspect the child care center without discrimination or retaliation against you or your child.
5. Request in writing that a parent not be allowed to visit your child or take your child from the child care center, provided you have shown a certified copy of a court order.
6. Receive from the licensee the name, address and telephone number of the local licensing office.
7. Be informed by the licensee, upon request, of the name and type of association to the child care center for any adult who has been granted a criminal record exemption, and that the name of the person may also be obtained by contacting the local licensing office.
8. Receive from the licensee the Caregiver Background Check Process form.

<http://www.cclcd.ca.gov>

For the Department of Justice
"Registered Sex Offender" database, go to
www.meganslaw.ca.gov

NOTE: CALIFORNIA STATE LAW PROVIDES THAT THE LICENSEE MAY DENY ACCESS TO THE CHILD CARE CENTER TO A PARENT/AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE IF THE BEHAVIOR OF THE PARENT/AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE POSES A RISK TO CHILDREN IN CARE.

Licensing Office Name: _____

Licensing Office Address: _____

Licensing Office Telephone Number: _____

