



COUNTRY DAY MONTESSORI SCHOOL OF RALEIGH

Parent Handbook

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Welcome to Country Day Montessori School (CDM) of Raleigh

Our entire staff welcomes your family to our program! We appreciate your confidence in our ability to care for your child during these most important years of growth, development, and learning.

We are committed to promoting the well-being of your child and your family. This Parent's Handbook is designed to provide you with essential information concerning our program. Please keep this handbook readily available for future reference.

Goals and Philosophy

Dr. Maria Montessori was the first university trained female physician in Italy. She believed that every child delights in spontaneous activity directed toward intellectual discovery. The attitudes and confidence developed during these formative years will serve the child throughout his/her lifetime.

Our school believes that the primary purpose of education is to nourish the innate possibilities of human development by instilling a joy of and passion for learning. Freedom of choice from a prepared environment is an integral part of our program. The prepared environment guarantees exposure to materials and experiences that develop intelligence as well as physical and psychological abilities. The materials are self-correcting, interesting to children, and developmentally appropriate.

Students are honored as unique and respected individuals. Values such as compassion, harmony and justice develop naturally from this environment. According to Montessori philosophy, children are grouped developmentally rather than chronologically. By grouping children in multi-age settings, younger children have a series of models for imitation and older children have an opportunity to reinforce their own knowledge and build self-confidence through helping younger children. We endeavor to capture a true environment that allows for the concentration, coordination, order and independence in accordance with the principles established by Maria Montessori.

Admission

Before your child's first day at CDM, we ask that you complete and return the enrollment forms. These forms assist us in providing the highest quality care for your family, and they must be received before your child may be enrolled in our program. The information you provide is strictly confidential and will not be released without your consent. You may have access to the information in your child's file at any time. **Please notify us in writing concerning changes in the following:**

- Address & Telephone Number
- Employment
- Custody
- Other important information about your child or family including all allergies and immunization records
- Changes in persons authorized for release of your child

Parents are invited to visit our school to meet our staff and to observe our teachers and students in the classroom prior to enrollment. To allow CDM to control the number of interruptions to the classroom on any given day, tours and observations are scheduled in advance. Observations are limited to 15 minutes. Specific questions for the teacher should be in writing for later discussion.

Orientation

The adjustment to any program is different for every child. Before enrolling, we encourage you and your child to arrange one or more short "mini visits" (limited to 30 minutes) to CDM to allow both of you the opportunity to gain trust in our staff and become familiar with the surroundings. Tears are normal the first few days. A quick

“goodbye” generally works best and helps relieve insecure feelings. We encourage you to call the Head of School with any concerns you have and readily accept suggestions on making this a positive experience.

Arrival and Departure/Authorization to Pick Up Policy

CDM operates M-F; 7:30am-5:30 pm on a 12 month schedule. Because we serve children from the ages of 8 weeks to 5 years of age, the protection and welfare of the children is our primary concern. Please observe the following procedures to enable us to maintain our safe environment:

- Enter and leave through the front entrance only. Please do not enter or exit from other doors (or remove your child from the playground). Accompany your child to the proper classroom. At no time should your child be left unattended.
- Make staff aware of your child’s arrival and departure. Your child should shake hands with their teacher at both arrival and departure.
- Send a written statement if we should release your child to someone other than those persons designated on the application form (this person should bring identification). We will not accept consent over the phone. You may fax or e-mail a signed notice of a new authorized person for pick up to our office. Please note we cannot release a child to anyone less than 16 years of age, or to anyone who arrives at CDM intoxicated or questionably under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Note: Our policies do not deny a parent access to his/her child unless a copy of a court order, which restrains a parent from the child, is on file with CDM.

Staff Interaction/ Questions & Comments

Parents are asked to keep their drop off and pick up times to a minimum. Lengthy departures of our parents from the classroom cause undo distractions for our children and can disrupt our teachers. Any questions for our teachers in regard to curriculum, class organization and their children’s participation should be first addressed with our Head of School.

Class observations are allowed, but are limited to 15 minutes. Observations should be scheduled with our Head of School.

Due to issues of liability the use of Country Day staff members/employees for non school functions such as personal baby-sitting, after school care etc. is strictly prohibited. We ask our parents not to approach our staff on this issue.

Tuition Payments

The first tuition payment is due one month BEFORE the 1st day of enrollment and then the 1st day of each month thereafter. If the 1st falls on a holiday or weekend the tuition is due prior to Friday. Invoices for the upcoming month will be sent by the 25th of the current month (or charged to your credit card). Unless otherwise indicated by the party responsible for payment, invoices will be sent via e-mail. Payments after the 5th are subject to a late fee of \$50.00. Unless arrangements are made in writing, services will not be provided if payment is not received by the 5th of the month. We accept checks, money orders, cash and Visa or MasterCard.

Tuition is not credited for absences.

Hours, Holidays, and Inclement Weather Policies

We are open Monday through Friday from 7:30 am to 5:30 pm, except for holidays and teacher in-service/training days. Please consult our annual school calendar for specific dates.

Tobacco Free/Guns and Weapon-Free School

Country Day Montessori School of Raleigh has adopted a resolution declaring that all School buildings and grounds will be Tobacco Free/Guns and Weapon-Free. This includes school activities outside of school buildings and on adjacent property (such as parking lot) to school grounds. This applies to adults and teachers as well as students. Your compliance with this policy is mandatory.

Late Pickup Fees

Our center is staffed for specific opening and closing times and staff is not scheduled otherwise. Any pickup after closing time will automatically incur a late fee. Fees charged are as follows:

*****\$5.00 base fee for the first 1-5 minutes***\$1.00 per each minute after 5:35 PM*****

CDM will bill the appropriate amount with the next month's tuition. If no one is here by 5:45 we will contact the person(s) on the emergency list for us to call. The assessment of more than (2) late charges in any month will subject the family to a warning that their child's position at CDM may be forfeited. Repeated assessments may require a child's position to be forfeited at the Head of School's discretion.

Country Day Montessori School of Raleigh **will follow Wake County Public Schools closing policy for the first day of an event. Decisions regarding closing on subsequent days will be made by the Head of School.** CDM may operate on either a reduced schedule or close all together when deemed necessary by the Head of School. Please log onto your email and check for an announcement from **cdmannouncement** whenever severe weather occurs. Information can also be found on **Television:** WRAL Channel 5, www.wral.com.

Vacation

With the enrollment of your child it is necessary to maintain our teaching staff and appropriate teacher /student ratios. Once your child is enrolled the teacher's presence is required whether your child is present or not. For this reason, **Country Day** does not provide "vacation or extended absence credits." Parents electing to withdraw for the summer months or longer than 30 days will be temporarily "dis-enrolled." The slot may be held **ONLY** if the \$350/\$600 Enrollment fee is paid prior to "dis-enrolling". Otherwise, the child's / children's re-enrollment will be dependent upon classroom space available. Guaranteed. re-enrollment is not assured and your child may be placed on a "waiting list" upon your re-enrollment request.

Withdrawal Policy

There are no refunds or credits issued at any time for the registration fee, holidays, or unused days or illness. There are no exceptions to this policy. A minimum 30 day written notice of withdrawal is required on the 1st of the month prior to withdrawal. If notice is not given, a fee equal to two weeks of tuition will be charged. Once the month begins no refunds for that month will be provided.

The following are conditions that will cause services to be terminated:

- Continual late payments or continual late pick-ups (more than three within a one month period).
- The program is unable to meet the developmental or special needs of the child, as determined by the Center Director. CDM will work with families to access outside resources. However, if parents choose not to accept this assistance, the child may need to be dis-enrolled.
- Child behavioral problems deterring successful school experiences.
- The Parent-Teacher-Child triad is a critical aspect of a Montessori program and a positive, respectful relationship **MUST** be maintained at all times. Parent/Child disrespect towards the school, staff, policies or even other children/families may result in a termination of enrollment at CDM.

CDM management retains the right to dis-enroll any student/family at any time to insure a safe environment for our students and teachers. Please refer to our Discipline, Behavior and Biting Policies found on page 7 of this handbook.

MEALS

PLEASE NOTE OUR SCHOOL IS "NUT-FREE." PLEASE DO NOT SEND PEANUT BUTTER OR ANY OTHER FOOD ITEMS CONTAINING NUTS.

Daily snacks are provided by parents once a month for their child's class. There is a sign up sheet available for each classroom. Snack is served from 9:00 – 9:30 AM. Breakfast is not served and children should eat prior to arrival. Lunch hours vary from 11:00 – 11:30 AM. Afternoon snack is served between 3:00-3:30 PM. Lunch is provided by the child's parents and MUST be packed in a lunchbox labeled with child's name. *NC childcare regulations require us to provide a balanced meal should parents fail to do so. Below is the regulation for what constitutes a healthy lunch. Parents will be assessed a \$2.00 fee each time CDM is required to augment the lunch that does not meet this requirement.*

The way you pack your child's lunch can make a difference in how much is eaten and how much is thrown away. A very important thing to remember is not to pack more than your child will eat.

A healthy lunch box includes the following five components:

- **A protein rich food (Meat/Meat Alternate)**
- **2 fruits; or 2 vegetables; or 1 fruit and 1 vegetable**
- **Milk/milk alternate**
- **A grain/grain alternate**
- **A special treat (low- or sugar-free)**

If your child is allergic to any items, please make a notation on the application and medical forms and make staff aware of the situation. Please help us monitor your child's safety by reviewing the posted menu and reminding staff when the items appear. See our Allergy Policy below for more information. **Child Care Rule .0901 states:** Non-nutritional food can be served for special occasions and in addition to nutritious snacks. Foods such as potato chips, candy, cookies, and fruit juices with less than 100% real fruit juice are not considered to have any nutritional value.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Absences

We request a phone call or e-mail to the school office by 8:45 a.m. on any day your child will be late or absent from school or extended care. If a previously scheduled appointment means that your child will be late or must leave early, we request a phone call or e-mail with that information to the school prior to the day of the schedule change.

Immunizations and Physicals

Your child's latest physical examination records must be submitted to CDM along with his or her immunization record upon enrollment. We require all children to provide a physician's statement of the required immunizations. As your child receives additional shots, please notify CDM.

Failure to provide this information can be cause for removal from the program since current immunization records are required for centers to maintain a valid license.

Health Education of Children

A health history shall be obtained for each child upon admission. This will include conditions in which the child may be adversely affected by the school experience or which may adversely affect the other children. This includes allergic reactions, history of ear infections, breathing problems, etc. Immunization history shall be brought up-to-date before admission to the school and at least annually including polio, diphtheria and tetanus (DPT). Also, MMR and HIB should be included with the first series of inoculations.

Allergies

Information regarding children's allergies will be posted on the classroom information bulletin board as well as a classroom master list in the kitchen. The name of the child and the allergy will be included. In the event a doctor diagnoses your child with an allergy please inform staff immediately.

Ill Children (Health Rules for Attendance)

CDM is a place for healthy children. Unfortunately, we do not have the staff or facilities to care for children who are too ill to take part in regular activities or cannot play outdoors. We will ask you to come pick up your child and/or ask you not to bring your child to CDM if he or she has any of the following conditions:

- A temperature of 100 degrees or higher taken under the arm
- Strep throat (until 24 hours after treatment has started)
- Severe diarrhea or frequent watery stools that are 30 minutes apart
- 2 Vomiting episodes
- Pink eye or discoloration or thick discharge from the eye (until 24 hours after treatment has started)
- Scabies or lice (no nits in hair)
- Chicken Pox or a rash suggestive of chicken pox
- Skin sores, rash, or ringworm
- Cannot maintain a normal temperature without medication
- Uncontrollable severe coughing
- Pertussis, until five days after appropriate antibiotic treatment
- Tuberculosis, until a health professional states that the child is not infectious
- Cannot participate in classroom or outdoor activities as planned
- When a physician or health professional issues a written order that the child be separated from other children

If these occur while your child is at CDM you will be contacted by the Head of School or your child's teacher. If your child has a contagious disease such as influenza, chicken pox, mumps, strep throat, pink eye, flu, impetigo, etc., please keep your child at home for as long a period as your physician recommends. For the health and safety of the entire community, CDM must be notified if your child contracts any of these diseases. Failure to do so may cause termination of your child's enrollment.

You may be asked to provide a doctor's note before your child may return to school and your child must be symptom-free for 24 hours before returning. Please notify CDM of any contagious illness so the other parents may be informed. Your privacy is assured. You will be contacted to pick up your child if he or she becomes ill during the day. If we are unable to contact you within 30 minutes of our initial call, we will begin calling your emergency contacts on file.

Outdoor Activities

Generally all children are expected to participate in outdoor activities. Children well enough to return to school following an absence are able to go outside for short periods. Sunscreen is required for all children. A parent's note is required for sunscreen and insect repellent to be applied to all children under two years of age. All parents must fill out a medication consent form to have sunscreen applied to their children and it will be only once at midday.

Authorization to Act in Case of Emergency

All parents at time of admission shall be asked to give CDM written authorization to act according to the best judgment of staff if immediate action is necessary in case of illness or accident and parent cannot be reached immediately. The emergency information also gives permission to transport your child by an ambulance or aid car to an emergency center for treatment. This also gives consent to any medical, surgical and hospital care treatment and procedures performed by a licensed physician or hospital when deemed immediately necessary.

Medication Administration Policy

CDM staff are not authorized to, nor do they administer, any medications of any kind (with the exception of diaper cream, sunscreen and insect repellent). This policy is intended to prevent and errors in medication

administration. Parents are urged to give doses of medication at home if possible. If not, parents must administer the medication here at school.

Toilet Training

When you feel your child is ready to toilet-train, we will be happy to assist you. Your child may be ready to potty-train if he or she is:

- Walking well
- Staying dry for several hours
- Able to communicate the need to use the toilet
- Appears to be aware of wet or soiled diapers
- Is in a cooperative mood

There is no definite age when a child is ready -- toilet training may begin in either toddler class or two-year pre-school program. Both the parents and staff should use the same procedures for training so it does not confuse the child. If there is too much anxiety or stress, it may be better for the child to wait and try again at a later time.

Behavior Plan

The plan for behavior at CDM has been developed based on health and safety requirements. Young children need to be reassured that people who love them will guide, protect and set limits that will keep them safe. In the event of continual behavioral issues, biting, destructive behavior or endangering another child, you will be asked to withdraw your child from school. Normally a two-week notice is provided prior to dis-enrollment. However, if a behavioral issue continues dismissal may be immediate.

Discipline Policy

Encouragement and positive reinforcement are effective methods of the behavior management of children. When children receive positive, non-violent, and understanding interactions from adults and others, they develop good self-concepts, problem solving abilities, and self-discipline. Based on this belief of how children learn and develop values, Country Day Montessori School practices the following discipline and behavior management policies:

- * We will respect and encourage the children.
- * We will “re-direct” their attention to modify behavior.
- * We will reason with and set limits for the children.
- * We will model appropriate behavior for the children.

Biting Policy

Incidents of biting do occur and are stressful for all of the students, staff and parents involved.

Parents of a child who bites another child will be notified. After three biting incidents, the family may be asked to remove the child from our program. Most bites do not break the skin. If the skin is broken, the parent will be contacted by phone, and an incident report will be filled out for the parent to sign stating the situation. Then the bite will be washed three times with soap and water, ice applied and TLC given. Staff reports all biting incidents to Head of School.

Clothing and Personal Items

We suggest the following in order for your child to receive the maximum benefit from play:

- Dress your child in play clothes that are washable, roomy and easy for them to manage.
- Provide a change of clothing* in case of spills, accidents or emergencies.

- Provide clean beddings* for your child that should be washed regularly.
- Label all items (including lunch boxes) brought to CDM including outer garments with a permanent marker. **CDM is not responsible for lost articles.**
- Shoes are required at CDM. **We discourage open-toed shoes, “Flip Flops” or loose sandals** that do not buckle at the ankle. This type of shoe makes outside play dangerous. Sneakers are best.

**These are regulations that must be followed per NC law. Parents who do not provide such changes will be assessed \$5.00 per item (provided by CDM), unless they are returned clean to the classroom within two business days.*

Maintaining a Clean Environment

The good health and well-being of our children and staff is very important. Our school is under a service contract for nightly cleaning of the classrooms, bathrooms, kitchens, office and general areas. We also contract for deep cleaning over the course of the year. In addition, staff sweep the floors, clean surfaces before and after meals, and sanitize bathrooms on a daily basis (more if needed). Infant/Toddler staff continually clean and sanitize all of the toys and materials that the children use. Throughout the course of the week and the month, all areas of the room are dusted, cleaned and/or mopped to help maintain healthy environments.

Reporting Suspected Abuse/Neglect Policy

The purpose of the child care facility licensing system is to protect children by ensuring that each child care facility in the state provides a safe and healthy environment for children where care is provided by qualified persons of good moral character. The mandated reporting law applies to children in child care facilities and states that any person who has cause to suspect that a child in a child care facility has been maltreated shall report the case of that child to the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Child Development and Early Education. An employee of a child care facility is in the unique position of being able to observe events that occur within the facility. Such observation may cause the employee to suspect that a child is being maltreated by another employee or by a volunteer. The employee is obligated to make a report to the DCDEE, even if the employee informs a supervisor of his or her suspicion and/or the employee has concerns that the employer may retaliate.

A report may be made over the telephone by calling the Intake Unit at the DCDEE at (919) 527-6500 or, if calling within North Carolina,⁶³ at 1-(800) 859-0829. There does not appear to be an afterhours (nights and weekends) contact number for the DCDEE, but a person making a report may leave a voice message if he or she calls during non-regular business hours. The outgoing DCDEE message states that the reporter’s call will be returned but that if an emergency exists, the reporter should call local law enforcement.

A written report of suspected child maltreatment may be sent by

- email to webmasterdcd@dhhs.nc.gov;
- postal mail to NC DCDEE, 2201 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-2200; or
- fax to the “Intake Unit” at (919) 715-1013

Parent Participation

CDM has an “open door” policy, and we encourage you to drop in whenever you wish. Children especially enjoy it when parents are in attendance for many of the special events held throughout the year; such as the Celebration of Life (see next page), the Thanksgiving- potluck feast, Earth Day, Mother’s Day- Muffins for Mom, Father’s Day- Donuts for Dad and the End of the Year Celebration. Communication is the key for a happy, positive relationship between you, your child, and CDM. Your comments and suggestions are always welcome.

Celebration of Life

Montessori birthday celebrations are very special. In many classes, the birthday children bring in pictures for each year of their development in order to make a timeline. During the celebration, the children come to line, where in the center of the line, a candle represents the sun. The birthday child, holding a globe, walks slowly around the sun (candle), one revolution per year of age. The children, parents or teachers talk about developmental milestones that children have reached during each year. Parents may also provide a special snack on that day, if they wish (see childcare law below). Please notify the classroom teacher in advance of any planned celebration or snack so that the class can plan accordingly. Teachers have the final approval of snacks and foods served in their classrooms. **Child Care Rule .0901.** Food served to children must come from a source that has been inspected and approved by the Environmental Section of the Department of Environmental and Natural Resources. 1) When a food is sent from a child's home and it will be served to that child, there are no restrictions on the source. However, if the food will be served to other children (such as birthday cake for a party), it must come from an approved source. 2) Approved sources for food could be a local bakery or grocery store, prepared at school, or pre-packaged for retail sale.

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

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