



The
Montessorischool
of
Cherry creek

**PARENT HANDBOOK
FOR TODDLER CLASS**

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Montessori School of Cherry Creek, LLC.

The Montessori school of cherry creek, LLC., welcomes you. This handbook is composite of ideas and suggestion from parents and staff members. We hope the suggestions will facilitate communication and help us provide a supportive, responsive environment for all the children.

Our commitment at Montessori school of cherry creek is to provide an environment of academic excellence based upon the beliefs of Maria Montessori. We have a year-around program that follows the academic school year. Our Curriculum schedule is from the beginning of September to the end of May and then we have a summer curriculum that runs from the beginning of June to the end of August. During our summer months, we often have swimming lessons and more field trips.

Please read this handbook carefully and keep it handy for future reference when some information will seem more relevant. Our newsletters will keep you informed and changes. Our calendar, as well as what the children are doing at school.

Thank you,

The staff

Table of contents

Welcome/ introduction	page 2
Table of contents	page 3
What Montessori offers your child	page 4
Goals & Mission statement	page 4
Admission	page 5
Admission forms needed	page 5
Emergencies	page 5
Telephone calls/Fax-messages	page 6
Tornados/fire drills	page 6
Lost children	page 6
Child Abuse	page 6
Bringing materials from home	page 6
School property	page 7
Transportation/ car pools	page 7
School closures	page 7
Snow days/ inclement weather	page 7
First days	page 7
Arrivals/departures	page 8
Absenteeism	page 8
Health/minor injury	page 8
Home visit	page 9
Visitors to our center	page 9
Lunch/snacks and nutrition	page 9/10
Conferences	page 10
Full Day policy	page 10
Medications and Allergies	page 10/11
Toilet training	page 11
Clothing	page 11
Staff training	page 11
Discipline / guidance	page 11/12
Montessori philosophy	page 12

What Montessori Offers Your Child

Montessori is a way to grow in an environment that:

- Permits your child to find and to participate freely in activities suited to his/her Individual needs and level of capability.
- Helps your child become an orderly, integrated person with self-direction, inner discipline, and a sense of responsibility.
- Fulfills your child's need to become independent and to be able to make wise choices.
- Makes it easy for your child to learn social skills, as well as basic cognitive skills.

Goals of the Montessori School of Cherry Creek, LLC

Our primary aim is in the fostering of:

- The joy of learning
- Socialization
- Respect of self, others, and environment
- Independence and a sense of mastery
- Self confidence and self-esteem

Our Mission Statement

We believe that a child must be permitted the independence, self discovery and freedom to learn not just in his/her academic growth, but physically and spiritually. The Montessori School of Cherry Creek is a non-denominational school where we strive to bring cultural awareness to the children. We strive to meet the needs of the child which in turn helps the child gain self control, trust and an understanding of the world. This gives the child the needed self-esteem to function at his/her own pace within our world.

We actively help the children work out their conflicts in a positive light and lead them to an understanding of choices and consequence.

We always remind ourselves of where the child has been, is now and where he/she is going.

We have incorporated more information on the Montessori approach and philosophy in other sections of this handbook.

Admission

The school is open to all children regardless of any physical or mental challenges or race, from 12 months and walking to six years old.

The school's admission fee is not part of tuition.

The enrollment procedure includes an observation of our classes, an interview between the school and parents and a visit to your home by your child's directress before the first day of class.

Admission forms needed

1. Application
2. Contract/ Tuition agreement
3. Medical treatment authorization/release form
4. Health record
5. Dental record
6. Immunization card
7. Questionnaire
8. Small recent photo of your child

It is the parents' responsibility to keep all forms updated with all necessary telephone numbers and any new information pertinent to your child's well-being.

When it becomes time for your child to leave the school, we require a thirty-day written notice and payment in full for the thirty days. Your family may use the thirty-day period as the last month of school. Failure to comply with this rule may result in collection of the debt.

The School reserves the right to ask a family to leave the school with matters that may relate to non-payment or behavioral issues.

Emergencies

In case of an emergency, we will try and contact parents or persons listed on the information card. You are required by state regulations to provide us with telephone numbers of persons who may pick-up your child if he/she is ill. If no one is available you must be ready to pick up your child if needed. In medical emergencies your child may be taken to the nearest hospital. We may also call (911) for paramedic assistance. For emergencies you may call the office at 303-627-2715. If power is out you may reach us on our cell phone at 303-875-4187.

Telephones/fax

You are welcome to call the school at anytime. Our hours are between 7:00 am and 6:30 pm Monday –Friday. If we are not available, our voice mail will be on. We will return your call as soon as possible. You may also fax us at 303-627-9482.

Tornados, Blizzards, any type of Dangerous Storms and Fire Drills

If we receive warning of a tornado we will gather the children in an Interior room away from the windows. We practice drills of this type during the warmer months.

Fire drills are practiced monthly. Escape routes are posted in each classroom. In the event that the school will need to be closed due to weather, we will post the changes on our answering machine at the school

Lost Children

Our school has never lost a child. However, in order to comply with Human Services Regulations we must have a written policy if the event were to occur, we would notify the parents and the authorities.

Reporting of Child Abuse

Any staff member of the school, who has reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been subject to abuse or neglect or who has observed the child being subject to circumstances or conditions which could reasonably result in abuse or neglect shall immediately report to the county department of human services or local law enforcement.

The report of suspected child abuse shall be made to the county department of human services, police department, or law enforcement agency in the community or county in which the school is located.

Parents suspecting any type of abuse can make reports through the same agencies.

The reporting agencies are; City of Aurora Police Department at 303-739-6000. The Crisis Intake phone number is 303-636-1750.

If you wish to file a complaint, you may do so by contacting the Department of Human Services Childcare Division at 303-866-5958.

Bringing materials from home

PLEASE do not allow your child to bring toys to school. If your child wishes to bring in an educational book, game or other item, please discuss this with

the Directress in your child's class. We have found that these items can get lost or broken and it can cause bad feelings among the children.

If your child brings home some object that is not familiar to you please check with us, often it can be something that belongs in our class room.

School Property

Parents are responsible for reimbursing or replacing any school property deliberately damaged or broken by their child.

Transportation

There is no transportation available through the school by any of the staff members at any time, except for planned field trips.

School Closures

The School is closed a total of eleven days a year. These days include; One week in between Christmas and New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Presidents Day, Memorial Day, Labor Day, and two In-Service days a year. There are a total of twenty-one days a year that we have not billed for. This means you are not paying for the school closures and in addition, you have ten days for your family to use as vacation or sick days.

Snow Days/ Inclement Weather

We will coordinate our Snow Day closings with Cherry Creek Public Schools. Please call the school if you have any question as to the closing of the school for that day. We will record a message with closing information on it. The school does not reimburse for closures due to circumstances beyond our control.

First Day

The first day is a great change in a young child's life. Successful adjustment to this new environment is primarily dependent upon the attitudes of the parents and their cooperation with the Directress and the other teachers.

Try to avoid excessive discussions about school. The child should feel it will be a normal and natural part of his/her growth and an extension of his/her home life. If you are calm and positive in your approach, your child will sense this and feel that going to school is a good thing. Just a few days before the first day, teach your child the names of the classroom staff.

When leaving your child on the first day, say a friendly good-bye, only one time, and leave. Parents need a matter-of-fact attitude which gives the child great security. Do not return for any reason, nor enter your child's room, for this can upset your child quickly. What happens after you leave is the staff's

responsibility, and you need to have confidence in their ability. This will ensure your child's adjustment is going to be a good one. You can communicate to your child that you have confidence in their ability to handle this new situation even if it is a little scary.

We know how difficult this is for parents and we welcome your phone calls to check on your child, or you may observe through the observation windows. If the child feels your confidence in the staff this will help to dispel his/her fears. Usually, a child's anxiety only lasts a few minutes.

Arrivals/Departures

Each classroom has a sign-in/out sheet placed near the classroom's entrance. Each child must be signed in and out; Always including the pick-up person's first and last name. An adult's signature is required in signing a child in and out. **All children will be walked to their class by an adult.** Please make sure anyone dropping off knows this.

Class begins at 9:00a.m. Please be on time. When your child arrives late, it means something has been missed.

Absenteeism

Please notify the school if your child is going to be absent by calling the office and speaking to staff or leave a message.

Health/Minor injury

Children who are deemed too sick to be in school will be sent home. If parents cannot be reached, a person noted on the information card will be asked to pick up the child. Our school is not licensed to care for sick children. If a child must be isolated from other children due to illness, he/she will be kept in the office under supervision, or in a quiet area of the classroom on a rest mat. All contagious diseases must be reported to the Directress, and will be posted for parents to see.

We must ask for each and every parent's cooperation with issues which are extremely important for the well being of all. We must have complete cooperation in keeping sick children out of school. It is the school's responsibility to determine whether a child is too sick to be permitted into class, as we must protect all the children. The following situations will at all times require a child to not be permitted into class or for the child to be picked up:

- a. any fever
- b. any unidentified rash
- c. drainage from the eyes or nose which is greenish in color
- d. diarrhea or persistent cramping
- e. vomiting

- f. infected skin patches of any nature
- g. dark, tea colored urine/ blood in urine or bowel
- h. sore throat or trouble swallowing
- i. severe coughing
- j. difficulty breathing
- k. any unusual behavior that might be associated with illness

In the case of Conjunctivitis or “Pink-eye”, we ask that the child remains at home for a full 48 hours after being on medication before returning to school. In the event of a fever, children must remain at home for a full 24 hours before returning to school.

We must have complete cooperation with our policy in regard to confirmed cases of an illness which is contagious. At all times we will follow these policies, and if we are unclear on any illness we will contact the Health Department.

Home/ School Visit

When you enroll your child, your child’s Directress will plan a home or school visit before your child begins. This is a brief (1 hr. or less) and informal time for your child. The purpose for the visit is for the Directress to establish a bond and trust with the child. The children get very excited about their Teacher visiting them in their home environment or the child coming to see their new class.

Visitors to our Center

Sometimes we will have special visitors to our school. This might include Firemen, Policemen, Storytellers, Puppeteers, etc. If you have any special ideas please let us know.

Unknown visitors to our school should understand that they will be asked to sign in, stating name, address, reason for visit and show proof of ID with photo, and/or driver’s license.

Lunch, Snacks and Nutrition

We strive to give the children nutritional snacks and encourage the families to bring nutritious and wholesome food for snacks and lunches. Because of food allergies we do not allow children to share lunches. We encourage the children to eat the food their parents have packed for them, occasionally parents may volunteer to bring in a special treat for a birthday celebration or have a pizza party. In such events we ask the parents to give us a two day notice. It is our responsibility to post this information for all the parents to see.

Our school is a “nut free school”. This means we do not allow any nut products in our school. Because of the rise in dangerous nut allergies, we feel

it is important to take as many precautions as possible to protect all children. This is a small inconvenience for the amount of protection it provides.

There are a few items we STRONGLY discourage bringing in your child's lunches. These items include candy, soda pop or any highly processed food items. These items have little to no food value and can contribute to how a child functions during the day.

We ask parents to bring morning snack for two to three weeks out of the year. When bringing snack we recommend something nutritious rather than a "treat" type of food item. Some snack ideas are: Crackers and cheese, any fruits or vegetables. Any baked items need to be prepared in a State approved kitchen or any grocery store that has a State approved kitchen.

Conferences

Conferences will be held two times during the year. They will be held during the day and in the evening. The children will have a regular work day and a substitute will be assigned to the classroom, if you can not meet during these times, arrangements can be made with the Directress.

Full day policy

Human Services has enacted a policy for all pre-schools dealing with children who stay more than four hours a day and are under the age of five.

Each child who stays for more than four hours a day and is under the age of five must have a mat for rest or quiet time. The school has mats for the children to use, but we will need the children to bring in their own fitted crib sheet and blankets and a small pillow with their name on it.

Medications, allergies and Sun screens

We strongly prefer not to give any medications to our students. If your child must have medication, the doctor's permission must be given and the medication sent in the prescription container. **We will not administer non-prescription drugs of any kind (Including cough drops and vitamins).** In addition, you and your physician must fill out a medication permission form. Please allow time to fill out a form and send it to your doctor. If any medication is found in a lunch box or backpack, etc. it will be thrown away! You must give the medication and the form to the Directress for it to be put in a locked box in the kitchen.

We strongly encourage you to apply sun screen before your child is brought to school. It is difficult for the staff to apply lotion to all the children. The lotions we keep in supply at school for re-application are Hawaiian Tropics 50 sun block, and Rocky Mountain Sport SPF 30 sun block.

Under no circumstances shall any staff member administer any type of antihistamines without a doctor's permission.

Parents and the school provide daily snack for the children and therefore you must inform us if your child has any allergies regarding food and beverages of any kind. Please write a list of any allergies and give it to the school for us to keep on file and inform the Directress.

Toilet training for the toddler class

The toilet training is a big part of the curriculum in the Toddler class. During diaper changing times, we invite the child to sit on the toilet. Sometimes they decline and we respect their choice. Usually they sit and sometimes go to the bathroom on the toilet because they see the other children sitting or going to the bathroom.

Clothing

We ask that you bring in a complete change of clothing that is suitable for the weather of the season, in a zip lock bag with their name on it and on each item of clothing.

Staff Training

All staff members are trained in child CPR/FIRST AID. In addition, every staff member has a minimum of 12 educational training hours during the school year. All Directresses have Montessori Training from an approved A.M.I. or A.M.S. Training Institute. Group Leaders and Assistant teachers have completed the necessary training for the position.

Discipline/guidance

The Montessori classroom is a very special environment designed to meet a child's needs. When a child is happily engaged in his or her "work", there is no need for adult intervention, and they gain a greater feeling of self worth. Within this environment they are expected to treat each other, the staff, and the materials with respect.

In searching for ways to help build each child's self esteem and ability to respect others, we strive for a calm and satisfying environment. Children learn behavior from adult guidance and observing other children. It is our responsibility as adults to help foster healthy and happy interactions. Developing social attitudes begins at home.

Classroom rules are centered around respect for others and our environment. The children are not permitted to do anything that will disturb someone's work. A disruption usually happens by accident, and the children first tell each other what he or she did to disturb the work. This is usually sufficient. If

behavior continues, the child is encouraged to enlist a teachers help and together they talk to the child involved. If the problem should persist, or a child needs help with confronting another child, we will assist in a dialogue exchange of listening and mirroring with the children involved. We use the techniques from methods such as Positive Discipline, Montessori Peace Education and Parent Effectiveness Training. We help the children learn to listen, respond, and work out an agreement. In addition, we encourage even the shy child to speak up, and respond to how he/she is feeling.

Chronic misbehavior results in unhappy children, and a disruptive learning environment. When a child becomes disruptive, parents will be notified. If the behavior continues, parents will be asked to seek professional guidance. Our responsibility to your child includes the obligation to limit this disruption from the learning experience. If a child cannot modify his/her behavior, the parents will be asked to remove their child from our school. Parents are responsible to reimburse or replace any school property deliberately damaged or broken by their child. We try to involve the child as much as possible in the replacement and repairs of any broken materials or property.

Please remember that we, as teachers and parents, need to be in continual communication concerning the social interactions of each child. Here at the Montessori School of Cherry Creek we do not use any kind of physical discipline.

Montessori philosophy

Education is a preparation for life, not a search for intellectual skill. The children have one intuitive aim in self-development: they want to develop their inner resources and ability to cope with our strange, complex world. The child who accomplishes this moves into harmony with the world and becomes a full person.

Dr. Montessori tells us that the only really important thing in education is to teach the student how to learn. The motivation for learning must come from within the child. Human beings are born with the desire to know, the urge to explore, and the need to master the environment. The environment is carefully prepared to train the senses, to stimulate curiosity, to satisfy the child's need-to-know and protection from unnecessary failure.

When the children have completed the three-year cycle of Montessori preprimary program, we hope they will have developed self-discipline, self-knowledge and independence, as well as enthusiasm for learning. They should have an organized approach to problem solving and a good base of basic academic skills.