



Concord Montessori School

Parent Handbook

Ages Admitted and Services Provided

Ages

Concord Montessori School provides educational services for children between the ages of two and six. Children must be two for pre-primary class, or three for primary class, by September 1.

Hours

Pre-Primary	9 - 12 AM (M, W, F)
Primary	9 - 12 AM (M-F)
Lunch Bunch Option	12 - 1 PM

Tuition and Fees

Tuition is billed biannually, one payment due July 1, the second, January 1, with a non-refundable deposit required with an application to hold a space for the following year. Tuition and fees are reviewed annually and published on the application form.

Lunch Bunch is billed concurrently, as an additional item.

Late fees

Tuition which arrives after the due date should include a \$50.00 late fee. Students who are picked up late will incur late charges payable to the teacher responsible for their care. A charge of \$1.00 per minute will be billed for pickup after 12 noon, or 1:00 pm according to program.

Three Year Cycle

We believe that children benefit the most from our program if they attend for three years.

The Montessori materials are designed to meet the needs of children operating at various levels of development. The children progress from simple, familiar activities to those activities which are more complex and appeal to the more advanced student. They gain valuable social skills while working within a mixed-age, family like classroom.

Class Size

The OCCS requires 35 square feet of indoor activity space per child. We more than exceed this requirement. The OCCS teacher/child ratio for our age group is 1/10. Each class has 2 teachers and 20 children or fewer. Our Montessori program supports the view that we learn from each other during all stages of life. For this reason, we strive for a balance of ages in our classrooms so our younger students may learn by modeling after our older students, and our older children will have opportunities to share their accomplishments with younger members of their group. Toddler classes have a ratio of no more than 1 teacher to 5 children.

Parent/Teacher Communication

Communication between staff and families is important to us. During the year, two progress reports are completed. These are presented at conferences scheduled with your child's teachers. For a child with an identified special need, the teacher will complete a progress report every three months. Parent(s) and teacher will sign the progress report. Conference sign-up sheets are hung on the classroom door. Parents are encouraged to give constructive feedback.

Informal communication is encouraged. Parents should feel free to discuss any concerns they may have. We prefer not to discuss children in front of others, so please make initial contact by phone or written note. Sometimes a brief conversation can clear the way for excellent communication. Calls will be returned promptly. Parents may visit the school at any time.

Another way to facilitate communication is for parents to become involved in the classroom. Parents are always welcome to visit and participate in the daily activities. Parents are encouraged to share their special talents with the children. Teachers are happy to offer suggestions and make arrangements for visiting the classroom.

Any questions about the classroom should be addressed to the classroom head teacher. Any questions about school policy should be addressed to the Director.

Child's Records

The information concerning your child's file is privileged and confidential. Upon request, a child's parents may have immediate access to their child's record.

Parents have the right to add to, request deletion from, or make amendment to information, comments, data or other relevant materials in the child's record. If the staff cannot honor such a request, the parents will be notified in writing within one week of the request. The teacher's reason will be explained in that notification.

Upon written request of the parents, the school will transfer a child's records to the parents or to any other person or place that the parents identify.

At any time, representatives from the OCCS may request to see school records. The OCCS is required to respect and to maintain the records confidentially. The OCCS may not remove the records from the school.

Program Evaluation

We encourage all parents to provide feedback on the program. This helps us to strengthen our services and better meet your needs. Please use conferences and other casual conversation to let us know how we are doing. Thank you for taking the time to share your feelings and suggestions.

Admission Policy

Interested parents are asked to call the office and make an appointment for an observational visit. Children are not invited on these visits. Visits can be scheduled any time after November 1.

After the visit there will be an opportunity to talk with the director and to ask questions. If requested, an application will be given at this time.

All applications are kept on file until after re-enrollment forms are returned on January 1.

We strive to maintain a balance of ages and gender in our groupings. New children are admitted from the list of applicants on a first come, first serve basis at the discretion of the Director. Once the spaces are filled, applicants are placed on a waiting list. As spaces become available these children are offered enrollment.

In-House Registration

Children already enrolled in our Primary Class have the first option to register for the following fall. Registration begins November 15 and ends December 15. Siblings may also register during this time. After December 15 the waiting list applicants will be offered available openings. Every parent signs an enrollment agreement when enrolling a child. Parents should consider their commitment to the program before enrolling. Deposits are non-refundable. We are aware that area schools have a variety of enrollment deadlines but have decided our priority is to enroll families whose first choice is Concord Montessori School.

General Policies and Procedures

Snow Policy

When Carlisle Public School is closed for the day, Concord Montessori School will also be closed for the day.

When Carlisle Public School has a one hour delay, Concord Montessori School will open at 10 AM.

School cancellations or delays can be heard on radio and television. Please do not call the school. If the school is closed or delayed, no one will be at school to answer your call.

Transportation

Transportation is the responsibility of the parents. You will be given a class list which includes the names, addresses and phone numbers of all our families.

Please notify the teachers of your car pool arrangements. If there is to be a change, even for one day, you must notify the teachers. We will not release your child to any unauthorized person.

Massachusetts state law requires all children under the age of five to wear a seatbelt or other appropriate child restraint while in a moving vehicle. Teachers are not allowed to fasten car seat belts.

Pick up and Drop off

Drop off time is between 8:50 am and 9:00 am. Teachers are setting up the room and meeting before this time, and cannot be responsible for your child. Pick up is between 11:50 am and noon (12:50 pm and 1:00 pm for lunch bunch).

School Clothing

School clothing should be sturdy and easy for your child to manage alone. This is especially important if your child needs to get to the bathroom quickly. We ask for your cooperation in dressing your child appropriately. Slip on pants/skirts with elastic waists and slip-on shirts, dresses and jumpers are much easier for small hands to manage than clothes with buttons and other difficult clasps. Dress children in clothes that are easy and comfortable for moving and working on the floor. We ask you to assist us by putting your child's name on his/her outer wear. Please provide a pair of plain slippers for your child to use during the morning in the classroom.

Please send a change of clothing for your child, including underwear and socks. The clothing should be put in a large zip-lock bag with your child's name on it.

Parents provide diapers, wipes and ointment for a child in the Toddler Class. We will follow your lead in toilet training to maintain consistency.

Outdoor play is part of our curriculum. Except when it is very cold or inclement, the children will go outdoors daily. We do not have staff available to remain indoors during this time. If your child is well enough to come to school, it is assumed that he will also go outdoors with his class. Please send hats, mittens, rain/snow pants and boots for your child on cold and wet days.

Discipline Plan

Discipline and guidance shall be consistent and based on an understanding of the individual needs and development of the child.

Discipline will be directed to the goal of maximizing the growth and development of the child and for protecting the group and the individuals in it. The goal of discipline is to assist the child in establishing an inner discipline.

Children are taught respect for each other and their environment. This includes care of the materials, pride in their work, respect for the work of others, and respect for the world around them. Children are encouraged to talk about their feelings and to express their feelings to each other. This is an ongoing piece of the Montessori curriculum.

Outlined below is the discipline plan which will be used by the staff members at Concord Montessori School.

1. A child who needs to be corrected will be spoken to in a quiet but firm voice about the problem at hand. When possible, this will be done away from the other students so that the child will not be embarrassed in front of his/her peers.

2. If the problem is physical in nature (hitting, pushing, fighting, etc.), the child will be removed from wherever he/she is and will be invited to sit in a quiet spot in the classroom for a few minutes. When the child is again calm, he/she will be invited to return to the group.
3. Corporal punishment, including spanking, will never be used.
4. No child will be subjected to cruel or severe punishment, humiliation or verbal abuse.
5. No child will be punished for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet.
6. If aggressive behavior continues, a parent conference is set up with the goal of mutually coming to a decision. A follow up conference is scheduled to decide the success of the plan. If the plan is not successful, the teacher may suggest one option in the referral plan.

Assumptions

The Tuition Deposit is non-refundable.

The full tuition will be paid if a family decides to withdraw a child from the program.

If the staff requests that a child be withdrawn from a program, the tuition will be prorated.

All children will be immunized according to OCCS and State regulations. Families will provide the school with a completed, current physical examination form prior to admission.

Termination Policy

A child will be asked to leave Concord Montessori School for one or more of the following reasons:

1. Lack of payment. (Parents having delinquent payments will be offered a payment plan. If a parent cannot adhere to the payment plan, the child will be asked to leave the program.)
2. Inappropriate placement for the child. If a child has a special need that cannot be met with reasonable adaptations to the program, the following procedures will be followed:
 - a. notification of concerns to parents (written letter and oral conference)

- b. a referral with written reasons will be made and documentation will be given to the parents
 - c. a core evaluation will be initiated
 - d. determination of placement with outside specialists and family
 - e. assist parents with services and give the family 7 days written notice.
 - f. When any child is terminated from the school the teacher will prepare the child for leaving in a manner consistent with his ability to understand.
3. Inappropriate placement for the family (If the school cannot meet a parent's request, an alternative program referral will be offered.)
4. A child may be terminated from the program for behavior dangerous to himself or others. Reasons for termination will be given in writing to the parents.

Parent Committee

The parent committee is made up of at least one parent from each primary class and it will represent each group. Its role is to provide support for the administration of the school. The members decide an agenda and set up meetings to accomplish their goals. They host the coffee in September and the end of the year picnic.

Newsletter

The parent committee with teacher input issues a newsletter periodically to inform parents of class activities. It includes a calendar of events.

Photo Day

We provide an optional photo day in fall. An individual and a class picture is taken of every child.

Sharing

The Primary Classes have sharing time during the week. It provides the children with an opportunity to express themselves at circle time. Nature items and books are good for sharing. Toys are discouraged unless they relate to a current topic.

Fridays

Children may take their papers home on Fridays and need to bring a backpack or bag to hold the work they have stored in their cubby holes. Because we encourage the process rather than the product, we do not have papers go home every day. The children are excited to pack up their work on Fridays and we encourage you to sit down together and go over their work when they arrive home.

Handbook

The handbook is given to a family upon enrollment.

We hope this handbook covers all the questions you have regarding the school's policies. There is a \$10 replacement fee for the handbook.

Food/Nutrition

Snack

Children should bring one small nutritious snack which should include two food groups. For example, crackers and cheese, vegetables and dip, granola with dried fruits and cereal, a small sandwich, fruit and cereal, yogurt and cereal etc. Dessert foods are not permitted. Upon arrival children place their food in the snack basket where it remains until they choose to eat it (or at snack time in pre-primary class). Snack time is a favorite activity and children enjoy eating with a friend, preparing their food, and cleaning up at the end. We ask you not to send food in lunch boxes or to send juice boxes or thermoses. Water is always available for the children to pour and drink. It is easier for the child not to have to remember to bring home empty food containers. We are a nut free school and snacks can have no peanut traces.

Lunch

Eating together is a pleasurable activity for all of us. Children should bring their own lunch.

Suggestions:

1. sandwiches (pita bread, English muffins, muffins, bagels, pizza)
2. fruits
3. vegetables
4. rice, pasta,
5. salads, tuna, chicken, fruit
6. yogurt, cereal, cottage cheese
7. milk, juice
8. crackers and cheese

No candy, soft drinks, gum or more than one dessert, please.

We encourage but do not force the children to eat. Any leftover food will be put back in the lunch box (or bag) and returned .

Illness

If your child is sick or will not be coming to school, please call your child's teacher at school by 9:00 AM. Your child should remain home if any of the following conditions exist:

1. **Fever**
Children should remain at home for 24 hours after fever has subsided.
2. **Vomiting**
Children should remain at home for 24 hours after vomiting, as a result of illness, has ceased.
3. **Diarrhea**
Children should remain at home for 24 hours after having diarrhea.
4. **Contagious Infection**
If your child has any type of contagious infection he must remain at home until the infection is controlled and your pediatrician and our health care consultant agree the child may return to school.

This would include:

- a. severe colds
 - b. pediculosis (head lice)
 - c. chicken pox
 - d. impetigo
 - e. conjunctivitis
 - f. rash accompanied by fever
 - g. earache
 - h. sore throat
5. Children should remain at home for the first 24 hours on any antibiotic medication.
 6. Children should remain at home if there is a suspected reaction to food or medication.

If your child is mildly ill, we discourage you from bringing the child to school. If a child becomes mildly ill at school, you will be notified and requested to make arrangements to pick your child up as soon as possible. Until you arrive, your child will be isolated from the group and attended to by a teacher. The alternate adult authorized to care for your child will be notified if the

teachers are unable to reach you. The school's complete health care policy is kept in a binder at each building.

Appendix 2

Emergency Health Care Procedures

In case of a medical emergency, the teachers will make every effort to contact the parents. The alternate person on your child's registration will be called, if communication with the parents is unsuccessful. In case of serious injury, the rescue/ambulance service will be called. Your child will be transported to Emerson Hospital. A teacher will accompany your child to the hospital and provide the doctor with your child's medical records. A staff person will continue to try to reach the parents.

Field Trips

If your child is injured or becomes ill while on a field trip, for which we will have sought your prior permission, we will make every effort to contact you. If necessary we will have your child transported to the nearest emergency facility by ambulance.

The list of emergency telephone numbers, the allergy list, a first aid kit, and your child's records will be brought on the class field trip.

Fire Drills

Located in all classrooms are evacuation procedures in the event of a fire or other emergency. The Carlisle Fire Department will conduct fire drills at the school. Children are prepared in advance for what will happen during the fire drill.

Policy on Child Abuse

The term child abuse refers to any incident which an individual engages in conduct that is potentially harmful to the physical, sexual, or psychological well being of a child under the age of eighteen years. Teachers are mandated reporters by law. Any teacher or other mandated reporter who has knowledge of a suspicion of child abuse must immediately discuss that knowledge with the Director. This information will be assessed and dealt with responsibly by a team led by the Director, according to policy. This process includes reasonable judgment and the recognition that children should be safe and that teachers and families hold in their mind the best interest of the child.

If any allegations of child abuse are made by a parent or another staff member about a teacher, that teacher will be immediately suspended without pay. A teacher cannot work with children until a decision is made by DSS and OCCS

Massachusetts requires a criminal offender record check (CORI) on all staff workers. All new staff are monitored and have had a reference check. Any staff member will be immediately suspended during an investigative period involving that teacher of child abuse. Any parent who suspects a teacher of any form of child abuse should report it immediately to the Director. The Director is mandated to report the complaint to the Department of Social Services and OCCS.

Medication

No medication, over-the-counter or prescriptive medication will be administered at the school, unless the staff or director assess that immediate medical attention is required or if a child is at school for four or more hours. The exceptions are Epipens and allergy medication, both of which must have a school medication order form filled out by the doctor and parent.

Prescriptive Medications

Dispensing of prescription medication requires written permission from a parent. Medication must be in the original container, state the physician's name, state the child's name, state the name of the medication, and state directions for administration and for storage. A written record in the medication log includes the child's name, the date, the time the medication was given, the dosage, and the name of the person who administered the medication. Any unused portion of medication will be returned to the parents.

In order for teachers to give your child a prescriptive medication, the parents must sign the medication form, or teachers will not administer the medication.

Non-Prescription Medication

Dispensing non-prescription medication requires permission from a physician and a parent. Parents must provide specific written instructions from a physician and also the parent's written permission to the school for the administration of the medication. A written record of the medication is put in the medication log. Any unused portions will be returned to the parents.

Topical Non-Prescription Medication (sunscreen, bug spray)

Parents must provide specific, written instructions and written permission in order for the teacher to administer the medication. Bottles must be marked with the child's name. Any unused portion will be returned to the parents.

Referral Process

The director and the teachers evaluate and monitor the children's behavior and their progress weekly. Occasionally a staff member may have a particular concern about a child's academic or social progress or a child's well-being. Sometimes the particular issues of a child can be best handled by an agency or person outside of Concord Montessori School. In that event, a referral to the outside agency is made.

Referrals are handled in this order:

1. A staff member has a concern about a child.
2. The staff member makes the Director and other staff members aware of the concern.
3. Teachers and the director observe the child, review records, and document their findings
4. The child's teacher schedules a meeting with the child's parents and the director in order to communicate the information and gather additional feedback. Parents are informed under Chapter 766 the reasons for the referral, the summary of observations and efforts made to accommodate the child's needs.
5. Decisions made at the meeting are put into writing and signed by the parents, the teacher, and the director. The teachers assists the parents in the referral process. Written consent is required by parents prior to the referral.
6. If necessary, the parent contacts the suggested outside agency and sets the referral process in motion.
7. Staff members will prepare any forms or reports requested by qualified specialists on behalf of the child and family.
8. If a referral is made, the teacher will follow up with the service provider, with parental permission, for consultation and assistance in meeting the child's needs at school. If it is determined that the child is not in need of services or is ineligible to receive services, the teacher will review the child's progress every three months to determine if another referral is necessary.

Referral list:

Special Education Dept. for Concord,	(978) 318-1400
Special Education Dept. for Carlisle, Linda Stapp	(978) 369-3758
Special Education Dept. for Bedford,	(781) 275-7588
Early Intervention for Concord,	(978) 369-3524
Family Service for Concord,	(978) 369-4909
Eliot Community Mental Health Center	(978) 369-1113

Lore Kantrowitz, Child Psychologist	(978) 369-6274
Judy Hanselman Family Therapist	(978) 692-6670
Doctor/Dental Referral, Emerson Hospital	(978) 369-1400
Parental Stress Hotline	(800) 632-8188
DSS	(508) 345-2101
Child at Risk Hotline	(800) 792-5200

Special Needs Recommendations

Concord Montessori is a strong believer in early detection and programming for children with special needs, and we enjoy a good working relationship with the Concord Public Schools and Early Intervention. We will make every effort to alert parents to potential problems, help them locate testing and diagnosis, and make recommendations for appropriate placements. We realize this can be a difficult process but we are convinced early treatment is essential to the optimal development of each child.

Curriculum

Practical Life

The Practical Life area concentrates on developing a foundation for learning in all of the other areas in the classroom. The four basic skills which are focused on are: **order, coordination, concentration, and independence.**

A child's development comes through the carefully designed hand to brain learning activities. The exacting movements and sequential work patterns encourage the development of order within the child. The exercises of Practical Life are designed to encourage the child to develop independence, sense of responsibility, and enthusiasm for learning.

The Practical Life activities are the ones that appeal instantly to the younger students. These activities include but are not limited to:

1. scooping
2. squeezing
3. twisting
4. pouring
5. stringing
6. rolling and folding
7. care of the environment (washing, polishing)
8. care of the person (dressing, hand washing)

Sensorial

The sensorial area is the focal point for the development of the whole child. All of the equipment is carefully and scientifically designed to help a child to develop his intelligence. A child's senses are more acute between the ages of two and five. This is the time when working with sensorial materials can help a child grow and develop to his highest potential.

The sensory areas, which are trained and refined, are the sense of **dimension**, **tactile** sense, **chromatic** sense, **auditory** sense, **thermic** sense, **gustatory** sense, **olfactory** sense, **stereognostic** sense (combines tactile, baric, thermic), and **visual** and **tactile** senses combined.

The sensorial materials are designed to give a child a system by which he can discover similarities and differences. The materials include but are not limited to:

1. matching
2. sorting
3. dimension
4. color
5. shape
6. texture
7. auditory

Language

The Montessori environment is constantly interwoven with language and communication. Language is an integral part of each area the children study. Language is not solely designed to teach a child to read, but it is also to help him to develop skills of communication and verbal expression. The development of a child's **imagination**, **independent thought**, **interaction with others**, and **verbal problem solving** are all integral parts of the language area.

The language materials begin with simple exposure to vocabulary and progress to exploration of grammar and to total reading experiences. The materials include but are not limited to:

1. phonetic sounds
 - a. sandpaper letters
 - b. matching objects with the initial sounds
2. blending sounds to make simple phonetic words
 - a. matching objects/pictures with simple, printed, phonetic words
 - b. making simple, phonetic words using a movable alphabet

3. Phonograms (consonant and vowel combinations)
 - a. matching objects/pictures with word cards
 - b. making words containing phonograms using a movable alphabet
 - c. composing short sentences/stories using a movable alphabet
4. Reading
 - a. simple readers
 - b. simple grammar work
 - c. more advanced readers
5. Writing (unrestricted - on blank paper or chalkboard)
 - a. exploration of letter and number forms
 - b. writing forms with pencil, marker, and chalk
 - c. writing dictated sounds and words
 - d. writing own words and sentences
6. Handwriting (on paper in designated spaces)
 - a. writing individual letters, simple words, simple sentences
 - b. writing full name, address, phone number
 - c. writing created stories in a journal book

Mathematics

The math materials have been developed scientifically which much precision to make the learning process as effective as possible. The child learns easily using concrete materials. As in the other areas, **repetition** and **manipulation** are the keys to learning. The physical order of the materials is developed to follow the pattern of the mental order. These materials hold a fascination for the child, usually beginning at age four. The more concrete materials the child works with during the years 2 1/2 and 6, the better grasp the child will have of the abstract at a later age. The materials are designed to go from zero to nine thousand nine hundred ninety nine. The order of the materials moves through **quantities from one through ten, recognition of numerals, the concept of zero, the decimal system**, and into **the abstract**. The materials allow for discovery by the child through repetition and reason.

Teachers begin with the exploration of number and quantity, building on the knowledge the child acquired using the sensorial materials until he progress to fuller understanding of more complex ideas.

1. counting 1 - 10
2. recognition of numbers 1 - 10
3. sequencing numbers 1 - 10
4. counting 11 - 19
5. recognition of numbers 11 - 19

6. sequencing numbers 11 - 19
7. counting 1 - 100
8. recognition of numbers 1 - 100
9. sequencing numbers 1 - 100
10. composing numbers 1 - 10,000
11. writing numbers 1 - 10,000
12. adding numbers to 10
13. subtracting numbers from 10
14. adding two-digit numbers
15. subtracting two-digit numbers
16. exchanging
17. time concepts
18. money concepts
19. calendar skills

Science Activities

The science curriculum includes but is not limited to the following:

1. living and non-living things
2. plants
3. animals
 - a. insects
 - b. birds
 - c. fish
 - d. reptiles
 - e. amphibians
 - f. mammals
4. solar system
5. vertebrate and invertebrate

Geography

Children become familiar with the world by exploring globes and maps. As each area of the world is studied, the culture, resources, and treasures of that area will also be explored. The geography study includes but is not limited to:

1. Land and water formations
2. Continents
 - a. puzzle maps
 - b. flags
 - c. customs, cultures, celebrations
 - d. natural resources, treasures, animals

Music Appreciation

Along with songs, rhymes and finger plays, the children listen to and read biographies of classical musicians.

Art Exploration

1. Construction activities
 - a. cutting
 - b. tearing
 - c. gluing
 - d. stitching and weaving
 - e. folding
2. Modeling and sculpturing
3. Exploring crayons, markers and colored pencils
4. Drawing and copying models of
 - a. landscapes
 - b. still lifes
 - c. portraits
5. Painting with brushes and other tools
6. Art appreciation of famous artists (Monet, Picasso, Van Gogh)

Suggested Reading

The Montessori method is a system of educating young children that many parents may be unfamiliar with. In order to fully understand and to appreciate the opportunity for success that your child is receiving, some readings have been suggested:

The Secret of Childhood

by Maria Montessori

The Absorbent Mind

by Maria Montessori

Montessori, A Modern Approach

by Paula Polk Lillard

The Montessori Controversy

by John McNichols

A Parent's Guide to the Montessori Classroom by Aline D. Wolf

available from: The Parent Child Press
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