



## **POLICIES & GUIDELINES HANDBOOK**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The Head of the School, the Principals, teachers and the administrators of Central Montessori Schools (CMS) extend a warm welcome to all students and parents for the new academic school year. This year promises to be an exciting and event filled year. In order to ensure that students have a happy, stimulating and successful school year, we have prepared a handbook, which outlines the school's policies and procedures. We ask you to please read this handbook carefully and retain it for future reference. We look forward to a satisfying and challenging year together!

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

CMS endeavors to provide quality education in a safe, diverse, nurturing and creative environment that helps the development of the whole child. The mission ensures that the child is academically motivated, artistically creative, physically active and emotionally supported.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

CMS welcomes all children regardless of race, religion, colour or creed. Likewise the schools do not discriminate against any employee on the basis of race, colour or national and/or ethnic origin.

CMS is committed to providing an educational environment that is free of unlawful harassment and discrimination. CMS will not tolerate actions, comments, words or jokes based on an individual's sex, race, age, religion or any other legally protected grounds. Any person who becomes aware of possible harassment should promptly advise the Principal who will handle the matter quickly and confidentially.

## **THE CODE OF BEHAVIOUR FOR STUDENTS**

### **Courtesy**

- We honour one another in a friendly, supportive and positive way.
- We are polite to each other and use appropriate language.
- We use our manners.

### **Cooperation**

- We listen to each other's opinions.
- We follow instructions given by staff members and guests.
- We follow school rules.

### **Consideration**

- We respect and care about others' feelings.
- We respect rights, freedoms and property.
- We think before we act.
- We respect school rules.

# School Policies and Procedures

## **-1- PREREQUISITES TO ADMISSION**

To complete the registration process, the following must be in the possession of CMS:

1. A completed application form;
2. Permission form for emergency medical treatment;
3. Public Health immunization form;
4. Copy of Birth Certificate (Elementary students);
5. A **non-refundable** registration fee of \$250.00;
6. One month's tuition deposit dated the day your application is received. This deposit is applied to the June tuition fee. However, the deposit is **non-refundable**, should you wish to withdraw your child before June;
7. Nine (9) post-dated cheques dated September 1<sup>st</sup> to May 1<sup>st</sup>.

## **-2- DEFINITION OF THE SCHOOL YEAR**

CMS is a year-round school, closed only on statutory holidays. The academic school year is from September through June. During the December Winter Break and March Break the school is closed. However the school offers "camp" for parents interested in this service. Information regarding dates and fees are sent home closer to the holidays. CMS is also pleased to offer a summer camp program from July through August of every year. During this time we have a "theme curriculum" featuring special trips, visitors and activities for the children.

## **-3- THE FIRST DAYS**

**Toddlers** are just learning to separate from their parents and developing into autonomous and secure individuals. We ask you to help transition your toddler into the school program by visiting with your child prior to enrollment and by allowing ample time each morning for an unhurried arrival. **For older children**, separation from parents is much different. If parents linger, these children may get mixed messages. They may translate their parents' hesitation to leave as fear. Therefore, we ask you to help your child by not staying in the classroom when your child begins school. Instead, we ask that you help transition your child into the school program by visiting the school prior to the first day. It has been our experience that once children begin school, brief drop-off times encourage a positive adjustment to school. Sending your child to class with a smile, a kiss and encouragement to have fun reassures your child that you approve. Always remember to tell your child that you will return, and always say goodbye before you leave.

## **-4- SCHOOL BUSINESS**

You are encouraged to contact the school office at any time with messages relating to your child's school day or if you have questions relating to school registration, tuition, or special programs. The telephone numbers of all the campuses are listed on the back of this booklet.

## **-5- SCHOOL HOURS**

Before school program:	7:00 am – 8:30 am (no additional fee is required)
Academic Classes:	8:30 am – 4:00 pm
After school program:	4:00 pm – 5:00 pm
Extended Hours:	5:00 pm – 6:00 pm (additional fee is required)

## **-6- CLASS PLACEMENTS**

CMS staff determines the placement of each child based on the following:

- 1) The welfare of the child;
- 2) Maintaining the Montessori principle of the three year age mix;
- 3) Developing balanced classroom composition related to age, gender, developmental maturity, toilet training, special needs, personality etc;
- 4) Observations by the Head of School, the Principals/Vice-Principal/Supervisor of each campus and classroom teachers. The request of parents will be carefully **CONSIDERED** but not promised. Once an appropriate placement is determined, a change is made only if staff feels that the student's development merits the change.

Multi-age groupings are the heart of the Montessori methodology and any change may decrease the benefit of being in the same environment for a three year cycle.

## **-7- CLOTHING AND POSSESSIONS**

Help your child dress appropriately for the activities of the Montessori classroom, both indoors and outdoors. Please remember that the children will be painting, sitting on the floor, participating in physical education activities as well as working and playing outdoors during a typical day. No child should feel inhibited because of wet or dirty clothing, therefore students should have spare clothes at school. For Toddlers and Casa children, please dress your child in clothing, which they can manage by themselves. Please practice with your child at home, so that they will feel confident in their dressing skills. Your child needs your patience, encouragement and consistency.

The following is a recommended list of items for each child to bring to school:

### **Spring and Summer**

1. Water bottle
2. Extra pair of shorts
3. Extra pair of underwear & socks
4. Extra T-shirt, blouse or dress
5. Cap
6. Sunscreen
7. NO SUNGLASSES OR SANDALS are permitted on the playground

### **Winter and Fall**

1. Water bottle
2. Extra pair of pants
3. Extra pair of underwear & socks
4. Snow boots
5. Snow jacket
6. Snow pants
7. Mittens or gloves
8. Warm Hat
9. Scarf

**Please label each item clearly with your child's name!**

- a) Children are encouraged not to wear clothing depicting cartoon or violent characters.
- b) Plastic "shopping bags" must not be left in children's cubbies. Backpacks without cartoon and violent characters are recommended for children.
- c) Toddler & Casa children who nap are requested to bring a blanket, which will be sent home **Casa - every other Friday & Toddlers - every Friday** – to be laundered and returned to school.

## **-8- ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOL UNIFORM**

The following is a list of CMS mandatory uniform requirements: (see office for uniform order forms)

### **Elementary/Middle School Boys**

- White long/short sleeve shirt
- Grey dress pants
- Navy crested cardigan
- School tie
- Black oxford shoes
- CMS Logo bag

**\* Full Dress expected by Sept. 30**

*After Sept. 30, note the following:*

1<sup>st</sup> Notice: Note in student agenda

2<sup>nd</sup> Notice: Parents will be called

3<sup>rd</sup> Notice: Parents will be asked to deliver missing items.

### **Elementary/Middle School Girls**

- School tunic (Grades 1 – 4)
- School kilt (Grades 5 – 9)
- White short/long sleeve shirt
- Navy tights
- Black oxford shoes
- CMS Logo bag

### **Physical Education Uniform (available at your school office)**

- CMS sweatshirt
- CMS sweatpants/shorts
- CMS t-shirt
- Running shoes

**Please clearly label each item with your child's name.**

CMS logo cap, book bag and backpacks are also available for purchase.

Please note that students are asked to wear their physical education uniforms to school on their scheduled gym days. Students are expected to travel to and from school in their CMS uniform.

Shirts are to be tucked in and clothing should be clean and pressed. Students must tie back long hair and are encouraged not to wear make-up, jewelry, earrings, body piercing, and tattoos. Nail polish is not permitted.

## **-9- LOST AND FOUND**

Unmarked items left at the school will be deposited in the school Lost & Found box. Please check regularly for missing items. Clothes not collected at the end of each term will be taken to a local charity. Labeled items will be taken to the appropriate classroom.

## **-10- TRANSPORTATION AND “BUSSING”**

CMS offers an “inter-campus” bus shuttle to all Central Montessori Schools. Please contact your school office for further details regarding schedules and fees.

## **-11- DROP OFF AND PICK-UP POLICY**

### **Arrival**

The importance of timely arrival and departure cannot be over-emphasized. All children should arrive on time (by 9 a.m.) before the start of class in order to prevent distractions for other students. Parents of children in Toddler, Casa and Lower Elementary classes should walk their child to the classroom and sign-in on the sheet posted by the door. The teacher or assistant will greet the child and welcome them into the classroom. Please close all gates and doors every time you enter and leave the school.

**Arriving after 9:00 A.M.** Children should be in class by 9:00 a.m., EACH DAY. If you arrive after this time, you are required to go to your school office with your child to sign-in and receive a **Late Slip**, which must be given to your child's classroom teacher. Being punctual is a vital skill that all children should observe. Please help your child learn the importance of maintaining a schedule and being on time.

### **Departures**

Your child learns to expect you at a certain time each day. Please pick up your child promptly at the specified time. Children will be released only to authorized persons who are designated on the child's emergency information card and pick-up list. The end of day can be a hectic time; parents wishing to discuss their child's progress in school are asked to make an appointment for another time. This way the staff will be able to address the children's needs without distractions.

Please notify the school in writing if there is a change in authorized persons picking up your child. We **WILL NOT** let your child leave the school premises with anyone who is not on the contact list. Unknown persons picking up children must provide identification.

## **-12- ABSENCES OR MID-DAY APPOINTMENTS POLICY**

If your child is going to be late, absent or has a mid-day appointment, please notify the school no later than 8:30 a.m. (In case of absence due to illness, please inform the office of the nature of the illness.)

## **-13- EXTENDED HOURS AND LATE PICK-UP FEE POLICY**

The regular school hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The after school program hours are from 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. There is a \$40.00 monthly fee if you wish your child to remain at school between 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. After 6:00 p.m. pickup is subject to a \$1.00 per minute fee. This payment should be given to the staff member, who stayed with your child, the same day or the next school day.

## **-14- FIELD TRIPS AND PARENT PARTICIPATION**

The scheduled school field trips are designed to complement our curriculum goals. Parents will be notified of each trip in advance. Individual permission slips must be signed and returned before the child can participate. We welcome parent participation in these trips, whenever possible. If you wish to volunteer for a trip, please let your classroom teacher know as soon as possible. Regrettably, there are only a limited number of parent volunteers allowed per class due to limited seating on the bus.

Once a year, **UPPER ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOL students** are given the opportunity to participate in a sleep-over trip. A notice containing information about the destination, time, cost and date will be sent home in advance of the excursion. The notice will include a permission slip that is to be signed and returned. Parents/Guardians are always welcome to accompany their child on this trip.

## **-15- HOMEWORK**

### ELEMENTARY / MIDDLE SCHOOL

Homework will be assigned every day. Homework assignments are to be recorded in the student's agenda. Parents should review and sign the agenda every night. All elementary students are required to purchase a CMS logo bag to carry homework and agendas to and from school.

## **-16- PROGRESS REPORTS**

The times and frequency of report cards are as follows:

Report Cards:	(i) Elementary/ Middle School	Fall – Winter – Spring
	(ii) Casa	January & June
	(iii) Toddler	June

Parent/Teacher interviews are scheduled when progress reports are issued. Please watch for the sign-up sheets during the above times to discuss the progress reports with your child's classroom teacher(s).

## **-17- BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT**

1. Parents will be informed, by a staff member, of changes in the behaviour of their child that cause concern.
2. The Board of Directors must be advised of any child whose behaviour endangers the safety or the moral tone of the other children, displays persistent resistance to authority or does not respond to efforts to modify his or her behaviour.
3. The Board of Directors, after considering the concerns and suggestions of staff members and after consultation with the child's parents and the Head of the School will decide what is in the best interest for the child and for CMS. Actions taken may include:
  - Hiring extra staff.
  - Using the service of an independent professional, or
  - Asking the parents to withdraw the child from CMS.

ANY signs of displayed physical abuse will be reported immediately to the appropriate authorities.

## **-18- SCHOOL STATEMENT ON BULLYING PREVENTION**

At Central Montessori Schools all community members, from different backgrounds and having different beliefs, have a right to work, learn and play in an environment that is safe, co-operative in nature, understanding and respectful of the rights of each individual. We are committed to providing an environment free of bullying behaviour. *\*\*NOTE\*\* More detailed information available at your school office*

## **-19- SCHOOL DISCIPLINE PLAN**

### **Minor/Infrequent Misbehaviours:**

- 1) The teacher deals directly with the student(s).
- 2) The teacher sends a note home to the parent(s) indicating the misbehaviour and the consequence. A meeting can be arranged between teacher and parent(s).

## Major/Frequent Misbehaviours:

- 1) The teacher (s) informs the administrator. The parent(s) are contacted and informed about the problem. An Incident Report is completed by the teacher(s) and filed. The teacher(s) meets with the parent(s), student(s) and administrator to develop a Behaviour Intervention Plan together.
- 2) The teacher(s), parent(s) and administrator confer regarding the Behaviour Intervention Plan. After a period of time (as specified) a course of action is decided.

## -20- HEALTH AND MEDICATION

*Parents must ensure that the school is in possession of their children's Health Card numbers.*

We maintain very high standards of hygiene. We use safe germicidal cleaning products in disinfecting our tables and equipment. Hand washing is implemented before and after snack/lunch and frequently during the course of the child's day. Please notify the school if your child gets infected with any of the diseases that are common to children such as measles, chicken pox, or any other contagious diseases. Parents **must** play their part in trying to curb epidemics by not sending children to school when they are sick. Please use your discretion if your child has a cold, runny nose, cough, etc. If you would like any medication to be dispensed to your child while at school, you **must** provide the following to protect the child and the staff:

- All medication(s) must be prescribed by a doctor. (A pharmacist's label must be attached to drugs, such as cough medicine(s) and decongestant(s) showing that they have been prescribed by your doctor.)
- All medication(s) must be in the original bottle and have your child's name on it.
- Antibiotics must be administered first at home by the parents, before being administered at school. (In case of any allergic reaction)
- Outdated medication(s) will not be administered.
- A MEDICATION PERMISSION FORM must be completed (prior to your child starting his/her day), each day your child requires medication.

The *Public Health Act* requires that children do not attend school when suffering from any communicable disease. The recommended minimum period of exclusion is as follows:

- Chicken Pox: 5 days from the onset
- Pink eye: 24 – 48 hours (follow your doctor's instructions)
- Lice: Treat child with appropriate shampoo and follow ALL directions carefully. Child may return 24 hours after FIRST shampoo treatment.
- Strep and Sore Throat: 48 hours after antibiotics
- Scarlet Fever: 48 hours after antibiotics
- Red Measles: 7 days (from appearance of rash)
- German Measles: 5 days (from appearance of rash)

A child who returns to school after contracting any of the above communicable diseases must bring a note from their physician indicating that they are in good health and able to return to school.

Any children exhibiting signs of diarrhea or vomiting must be picked up immediately and may return to school only after they have been 24 hours free of symptoms.

Please be aware that existing by-laws require outdoor play for all children. If you feel your child is too sick to participate in outdoor play, then it is deemed that your child is too sick to be at school.

It is recommended that children who require prescribed fever reduction medication every four hours (e.g. Tylenol, cough syrup etc.) should NOT be at school. Staff **cannot** administer such medication without a doctor's note.

**Immunization information must be provided by parents before the first day of class.**

All allergies must be listed on the student's enrolment form. If your child develops any new allergies not listed on the form, please notify the office and the teacher immediately.

**-21- ACCIDENT/SERIOUS INJURY POLICY**

The following outlines the procedures of CMS in the event of illness or injury at the school or while attending school events off school premises.

In the case of **minor** injuries:

- 1) A qualified teacher(s) will administer first aid and make the child as comfortable as possible.
- 2) The parent(s) or contact person will be notified immediately.

In case of:

**Emergency illness or injury:**

- 1) The teacher will be in charge of administering first aid and to make the child as comfortable as possible.
- 2) An ambulance will be called.
- 3) The parents of the child will be notified.
- 4) A teacher will accompany the child in the ambulance and stay with the child until parent(s) arrive.

The school officials will act on behalf of the parents/guardians in case of an emergency. In order to take the best possible action on behalf of parents/guardians, parents/guardians agree to release and indemnify CMS from any and all claims for damages arising as a result of any accident or injury sustained by the child arising from participating in any school activities.

**Emergency Evacuation Procedure:**

In case of emergency evacuation the staff will take the children to the designated emergency shelter for each campus.

**A Fire Evacuation:**

- 1) Alarm will sound. Staff will line up and count all children.
- 2) The staff will walk the children outside, taking the attendance records and registration forms with them.
- 3) While outside, a roll call will be taken.
- 4) The children will walk directly to their designated emergency shelter
- 5) A staff member will be responsible for double checking the areas and closing all doors.
- 6) Parents will be contacted.

**-22- NUTRITION AND SNACKS**

For the *Toddler, Full Day Casa and Lower Elementary children*, the school provides a hot nutritious lunch and two snacks daily. Please ensure that your child eats a nutritious breakfast at home. The school provides a mid-morning snack, which is available between 8:30 – 10:00 a.m. Although lunch is provided by the school, children are allowed to bring nutritious snacks. If your child brings a snack, please make sure that they avoid NUTS AND NUT BY-PRODUCTS.

**CENTRAL MONTESSORI SCHOOLS OPERATE IN A NUT-FREE ENVIRONMENT.**

Children are not to share their food with others or to bring gum or candy to school. Please inform the

school of ANY allergies or special dietary requirements for your child.

**Upper Elementary/Middle School students** must pack their own lunch and snacks. Parents and students are required to follow these guidelines:

- Bring only nutritious (NUT FREE) food for lunch and snacks – whole grain crackers or bread and a variety of raw fruits and vegetables are recommended.
- Chocolate and candy are not permitted.
- In the interest of safety and efficiency, we encourage the use of a thermos/ice pack for lunches and snacks.
- Students are not allowed to chew gum while in class or while participating in school activities.

### **-23- BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS**

We acknowledge that celebrating children's birthdays can be very exciting. However, due to overwhelming health concerns from parents, we request that you only bring nutritious snacks to school, even for birthday celebrations. **PLEASE DO NOT** bring party loot bags, gifts, fancy cakes (cream filled, ice cream, icing etc.) to school. We also ask that NO videos be taken, "still shots" are allowed. Your child may like to select a book to donate to the school in commemoration of their birthday. Your child's teacher can assist you in the selection of a book that will enrich our library.

*Please note that if you wish to distribute **personal party invitations** it must be for the whole class, otherwise they must be distributed off school premises.*

### **-24- PICTURES AND VIDEO CAMERAS**

The school may take various pictures and videos throughout the course of the school year that may be displayed in the school or on the school's website and on promotional material. These pictures can range from class trips to various activities the children participate in throughout the week. These pictures will **NOT** be used for any other purpose.

### **-25- SHOW & TELL**

Generally toys should not be brought to school. Children are encouraged to share fascinating discoveries with the class related to the theme of the week, culture, science or nature. Please label any items brought to school so that it will be returned home safely. NOTE: "Show and Tell" is generally each Friday.

### **-26- HOLIDAYS**

The CMS academic year is from September to June. The school is closed on the following days:

- Labour Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Holidays (2 weeks) \*
- March Break (1 week) \*
- Good Friday
- Easter Monday
- Victoria Day
- Canada Day
- Civic Day

\* Over Christmas, March Break and the Summer months the school offers a stimulating and fun filled "Camp" for children. A newsletter detailing dates, times and fees will be sent out to parents during the year. Demand is

very high for the camp, thus parents are encouraged to notify the school as soon as possible to confirm the dates they will be attending "Holiday Camp".

### **-27- WITHDRAWAL POLICY**

Sixty days written notice is required in the event of a child's withdrawal from the school. Prior to the withdrawal date, a "Written Notice of Withdrawal" form must be completed. These forms are available in the office. Tuition will be due for the sixty days following proper notification even if the student is no longer attending the school. If the sixty days written notice is not received, full program fees will be charged. A permanent space cannot be guaranteed if you wish to temporary withdraw your child. School fees are based on registration for a full year and any temporary withdrawal does not necessitate a refund. The deposit with your application is applied to June only.

*CMS may terminate services if policies are not followed or fees are not paid in advance.*



## *NO PEANUTS OR NUT PRODUCTS*

Dear Parents,

Please be informed that peanuts or **ANY** nut products are banned in this school. Several of our students have an allergic reaction and could have an anaphylactic shock as a result of peanuts, peanut butter or ANY nut products. We insist that none of these items ever be brought into the school. We know that if your child had such an allergy you would expect the same type of protective policy.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Central Montessori School