



Countryside Montessori Handbook

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WELCOME, OBJECTIVES, LOCATION, STAFF, ENVIRONMENT, VISITORS

WELCOME

Welcome to Countryside Montessori. You've made a good choice for your child's early education. We feel that children are the hope of the future and we are dedicated to providing a wonderful program for them. Countryside Montessori is licensed by the state of Washington. The elementary program is state certified as a private school. The school is composed of two building and connecting playgrounds and covered areas. The school officially opened in September, 1983.

CLASSROOM OBJECTIVES

The school is based upon the Montessori philosophy which believes children learn through their own activity. A child attending this school will be exposed to a method which will facilitate the growth of inner discipline and complex reasoning through free choice and organized use of learning materials.

STAFF & CENTER ENVIRONMENT

The staff at Countryside are a carefully chosen blend of people dedicated to providing the best educational and caring environment for your child. Weekly staff meetings keep the staff informed and the school holds regular training sessions. Many of our staff have been with us for many years.

Countryside's environment is clean, safe, and well-planned. The tables and chairs are child-sized. Classroom activities and play areas are selected to provide a quality learning program for your child.

VISITORS/SUPERVISION

Children will be supervised at all times by a Countryside staff or an authorized adult dropping off or picking up. All other adults/visitors must report to the office, sign-in & get a visitors Badge.

YEAR ROUND PROGRAM, CLOSURES CLASSES, HOURS OF OPERATION,

YEAR ROUND PROGRAM

Countryside offers a year round program. Activities are planned around a variety of themes and include many opportunities for creative expression, songs, outdoor and imaginative play. In the summer, children spend some time in class in addition to exploring their world in greater depth. In the summer time classes spend more time outside especially in the morning. Special guest speakers, presenters and activities are arranged each week. We don't take the kids on field trips but bring the field trips to Countryside. Alumni are welcome to attend the summer program until they are 9 year olds.

SCHOOL CLOSURES

We generally follow the Lake Washington School district for weather related school closures. Listen to KIRO radio or King 5 TV. We will contact you if it becomes necessary to close the school during the day.

CLASSES, HOURS AND CLASS SESSIONS

- 1) Infants - 3 months to 12 months
- 2) Mobile Infants - 8 months to 18 months
- 3) Toddlers - 12 months to 30 months
- 4) Early-Preschool - 24 months to 40 months
- 5) Preschool- 2 1/2 to 4 1/2 yrs.
- 6) Pre-K- 3 1/2 to 5 1/2 yrs.
- 7) Primary - Kindergarten/1st Grade

For your convenience Countryside Montessori is open from 7:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m., five days a week, on a year round basis, except for scheduled holidays. All classes meet Monday through Friday.

Early-preschool classes meet 9:00 to 11:30.

Preschool, Pre-K, and Primary classes meet 9:00 to 3:30.

Those children who nap will rest between 1:00 and 3:00.

Please arrive before the 9:00 instruction time. Child care before and after the class allows for relaxed play with educational toys and ample outdoor play.

ADMISSION, TRANSPORTATION, SIGN-IN SHEETS, NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

ADMISSION

Countryside has a non-discriminatory admissions policy for children who are approximately 3 months old to 7 years of age. We accept any child whose needs can be met in our setting. Countryside is not affiliated with any religion. A registration fee (non-refundable) must be paid before a child is enrolled. A tuition agreement must be signed by both the parents and the school before the child is entered into a class. A class ratio of approximately ten children to one adult is maintained in the older classes, and approximately four to one in the younger rooms.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is the responsibility of the parents. Those who desire carpools will be provided with a class list of other parents' names and addresses who wish to carpool. If someone other than the regular driver is to transport the children, a written note must be sent to school. We will not release children to an unauthorized person.

SIGN-IN SHEETS

It is important that you sign-in and out each day with your full signature. Each class has their own sign-in book in the front hall right under class bulletin boards. Important information concerning each class is posted on these classroom bulletin boards. Lesson Plans and daily schedule are posted as well as names and pictures of staff. Newsletters, snack lists, lesson plans and accident forms are attached to the sign in sheets. Your child's emergency information, immunization records, class registration and sunscreen forms are also kept in the staff lounge. Please let the office know so we can update them when changes occur.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

It is Policy of this child care center that no person shall be subjected to discrimination because of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, religion, creed, marital status, disabled or Vietnam Veteran status, or the presence of any physical, mental, or sensory handicap as required by law. This Policy applies to every aspect of the agency's programs, practices, policies, and activities, including client services and employment practices. Reasonable accommodations will be made as necessary.

LUNCH, SNACKS, BIRTHDAYS, HOLIDAYS

LUNCH

Please send a lunch box complete with a drink and ice pack. A sample lunch includes a sandwich, fruit, small dessert and a drink. Let the office know if you need some suggestions of what to bring. Leftover food that will not spoil will be returned to your child's lunch box so you can monitor exactly how much your child has eaten. Children may not share food. Please label all parts of the lunch box.

SNACKS

A snack is available twice daily during class time. Each student will have a turn to bring the snack to school for the entire class. We encourage you to send a nutritious snack including foods from two major food groups and low in sugar. Examples are: crackers and fruit, vegetables and cheese, pumpkin bread and milk. There are other examples in the front of the sign-in books. Each class maintains a list of what snack was served each day.

BIRTHDAYS

We enjoy celebrating your child's birthday. We try to arrange for your child to bring snack that day. Please refrain from sending cakes as they are difficult and messy to serve. Cupcakes, muffins, or cookies are preferable alternatives. Be creative! Parents are always welcome but please let the teachers know you are coming.

HOLIDAYS

We celebrate the holidays at Countryside and often include food. We invite you to come and help and enjoy the festivities. We celebrate Thanksgiving with a group luncheon and graduation with a group picnic. We also have special snacks on Valentine's Day, Halloween, Spring Egg Hunt day and Winter Gift Exchange Day.

MEETINGS, OBSERVATIONS/CONFERENCES, WORK, BELONGINGS

SCHOOL MEETINGS

The school holds an Open House for the parents in September. We also have several Parents' Nights during the year where we discuss the school program and other relevant issues.

OBSERVATIONS/CONFERENCES

You may call and arrange a visitation to observe your child. Conferences are scheduled twice during the year for all students. If you wish to talk to a teacher at any time, please call the school and arrange an appointment. If a teacher feels s/he needs information from you or wishes to give you information, s/he will call you for a conference. All conferences are confidential. Parents have free access at all times to all areas of the Center that their child uses.

CHILDREN'S WORK

Newsletters, snack lists, class work and art work will be put in your child's white box daily. Please check these regularly. It is important that you acknowledge this work and take it home.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS AND EXTRA CLOTHES

Candy, gum, and toys may not be brought to school. Assure your child that his/her toys are for home use and that at school s/he has special work to do. Please check your child's pockets before and after school. Return any unfamiliar items to school as they may be part of our school equipment. Please bring a book on your child's snack day for Show and Tell. Every child should have a Gallon size Zip-Lock bag at school each day with two extra sets of clothes for accidents and for wet days when the children's clothing might need changing. Please include a plastic bag and remember to mark each item clearly.

EXERCISE

We believe that children need fresh air and exercise. Outdoor play is scheduled daily. We have excellent covered play areas so the children may play outside on rainy days. Dress for the weather and send your child in shoes they can wear for running.

RULES, REPORTING AND DISCIPLINE

SCHOOL RULES

- 1) No child may hurt himself or another child or an adult in anyway.
- 2) No child may disturb the work of another.
- 3) No child can willfully destroy school property or activities.

The purpose of the ground rules are to aid in the development of self-respect and respect for others.

REPORTING CHILD ABUSE

The administration or staff at Countryside will report immediately any instance of suspected physical, sexual, or emotional child abuse, child neglect or child exploitation to Child Protective Services as required by law. We also report any harassment, intimidation or bullying as required by law.

Any unusual situations will be recorded in your child's file on an incident report. This includes unusual behavior that a child has especially when it requires unusual intervention from a teacher. A focus of concern is often used to get additional information to address the situation.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Discipline will take the form of intervention to prevent behavior that is potentially harmful to the child, other persons, or property. When a problem or misunderstanding arises, there is a clear procedure to follow. We generally follow the Montessori and Love and Logic methods.

- 1) The teacher will help the child solve his own problems.
- 2) The teacher will speak to the child concerning appropriate behavior.
- 3) The child will be removed from the activity or situation.
- 4) The teacher will present and discuss the problem with the Director.
- 5) The parents will be called for a special conference with the teacher and/or Director.

The conference will serve the purpose of exchanging ideas to help the child. Cruel and unusual discipline, spanking, discipline hazardous to health, and frightening or humiliating discipline shall not be administered.

DIAPERS, POTTY TRAINING, NAPS, CLOTHING, CLEANING, ANIMALS

DIAPERS

Children not yet potty-trained should bring a sufficient number of diapers, rubber pants, and/or training pants in their diaper bags. Please also include diaper wipes, two extra sets of clothes, and a plastic bag. Diaper service is available in the Infant room at no extra charge.

POTTY TRAINING

Toileting is a cooperative process between parents, teachers and child. When child shows readiness at home/school we will work as a team to encourage independence, to ensure success, and discuss methods for toileting habits.

NAPS

Children who nap in the Toddler Building should bring two light blankets. Discuss with teachers, the child's needs and habits to incorporate self-soothing methods. Infants are placed on back when sleeping unless health care provider requests another position (SIDS Policy). In the Preschool and Pre-K classes we ask that you supply your child with a small blanket to rest on. (Remember cubby space is limited.) Be sure to label each item. In the Primary Class, children have a quiet story time in the afternoon.

SCHOOL CLOTHING

In addition to being comfortable and appropriate for the weather, school clothing should be easy for the child to manage him/herself, completely washable, and every item should be labeled. This is particularly important in the case of outer wear. Please keep in mind that it is always easier to take off extra clothing so dress your child in layers. Because the children will go outside to play every day, be sure to dress them appropriately for playground and weather.

CLEANING/HANDWASHING

We clean the school at once per day and sanitize the tables after eating and toys after playing as needed. Children are taught to wash their hands when they arrive, come in from playing, after toileting, before eating and as needed throughout the day.

ANIMALS

We have animals for the children at Countryside. We currently have rabbits and goat outside and an aquarium in the Primary classroom. To reduce potential health risks, we ask everyone to wash their hands after enjoying the animals.

DIRECTORY, IMPORTANT INFORMATION, CHILDREN'S FILES, DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

DIRECTORY

A Directory of all the children in the school is printed each year in the fall. The child's name, parents' names, addresses, and home phone numbers appear in the Directory. This information is to be used to carpool, get together with friends, etc. If you DO NOT want to be included in the Directory, please let the office know.

INFORMATION FROM HOME

In the event that a significant change occurs in the home, please inform the office as soon as possible. Common causes of significant change include: either or both parents being away from home for any reason for an extended time; new person living in the home; illness in the family; accident or death in the family; new caretaker; moving; death of a pet. All information will be regarded as confidential. The school will keep you informed of any significant changes in the school environment which may affect your child.

UPDATE your child's information when changes occur, including know if change in your child's schedule or if your child is to be picked up at school at a different time.

CHILDREN'S FILES

Confidential files on the premises for each child include registration data, Health history/ individual health care plan, medications given, authorizations, copies of illness or injury reports, certificate of immunization status, anecdotal records and progress reports.

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

Fire and Earthquake drills are conducted monthly. Next to the office you can find a copy of the Crisis/Disaster Response Handbook. We will do everything we can to protect your child in the event of a crisis or disaster. Please send in pictures and a love note to comfort your child, as well as a 3 day supply of medication in quart size zip lock bag. If telephone lines are unavailable, please call our out-of-state number, Thayer Jester 1-310-592-3945 to get information about the school. Evacuation plans are posted by each door.

ACCIDENT, IMMUNIZATIONS, MEDICINE, ILLNESS/EXCLUSION, CONSULTANTS, REPORTING

ACCIDENT

In the case of an accident at school, you are called immediately after first aid is given. If you cannot be reached, the emergency numbers will be called. If your child needs immediate medical attention, s/he will be taken by aid car to Evergreen Hospital.

IMMUNIZATIONS

A certificate of Immunization needs to be on file at the center indicating your child is current on their vaccines or have a religious or personal exemption. New forms are available in 2010 including all of the vaccines now given.

MEDICINE

We will be glad to administer medicine at school. To do this, we require that you sign a medication permit authorizing us to dispense the medicine. The medication should be in its original container. Please indicate the prescribed dosage, the child's name, date and time to give the medicine. Non-prescription medicine will be dispersed as indicated on the manufacturer's label. Children under 2 may require a physician's written authorization. All medicines are kept out of reach of children. Refrigeration is available.

ILLNESS/EXCLUSION

If your child is absent for more than 3 days, kindly report to the school as to the cause. When you have verification of the fact that your child has a communicable disease, please call the school immediately so a note can be posted to alert the other parents. Please do not send your child to school if s/he is not well enough to go outside. We follow the health department rulings about when to exclude children from school.

CONSULTANTS

A public health nurse visits the center monthly and allows staff to ask questions and review practices. We often ask Kindering to come in to evaluate and make recommendations if the staff concerns about a child in their class. Consultants will help the staff meet the needs of the child, develop resources and train staff. Children whose needs cannot be met at our center will be referred to alternative placements.

REPORTING

Diseases and other health concerns are posted by the office. Food poisoning, communicable diseases, serious injuries are reported as required by law.

TUITION, DISCOUNTS, EXTRA CHARGES, WITHDRAWAL

TUITION

Tuition is due on or before the first of each month. Full tuition is due each month. Late payments will be assessed a penalty. Our general policy is to adjust our fees annually, if necessary. More frequent adjustments may be required occasionally. Current Tuition Rates are posted by the Office.

DISCOUNTS

Families enrolling more than one child full time will receive a 10% discount off the 2nd child's tuition fees.

EXTRA CHARGES

Additional charges are assessed for extra services provided beyond the basic program.

A Registration Fee must be paid before the child can be enrolled in the Center.

Supply fees are included in the tuition rate.

Children who withdraw for any reason will lose their class placement. If you wish to re-enroll your child, the school will consider you for the first available opening. A Re-

Registration Fee must be paid before the child can return.

An Extra charge of \$3.00 will be billed for new underwear if your child has a potty accident and does not have a clean change in their cubbies.

If you are unable to pick-up your child by 6:00 P.M. a published after hours Late Fee will be billed to your account.

Late Payment Penalty All payments are due at the first of the month. A \$10.00 minimum charge is assessed after the 5th of the month on past due accounts. If the tuition and any additional charges have not been received by the end of the month, your child may not attend until such payments are made or arrangements have been made with the office for such payment.

Returned checks result in a \$25.00 minimum charge. Recurrent returned checks will cause the account to be collected on a cash-only basis.

Other Charges may be assessed for tickets, sign language lessons, yoga classes, etc. which may be offered to you on an optional basis.

WITHDRAWAL

Written notice must be given at least 30 days before withdrawing your child from the school. If less time is given, tuition for that month is still due. If a balance is left on your account after your child is no longer attending the school, a \$25.00 late fee will be added to your balance each month unless a \$50.00 payment is received. If a payment has not been received in 90 days, your account will be turned over to collections.