



Center
Grove
Montessori

Family Handbook
2023-2024

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Core Values

*Respect,
Love,
Peace,
Responsibility,
Compassion,
Honesty,
Independence,
Kindness,
Awareness,
Confidence*

Introduction

This policy handbook is a resource for families, staff, and community members. We ask that you familiarize yourself with the information enclosed. These policies are to maintain a safe and authentic Montessori experience for our students.

Our Mission

To guide each student on their developmental path by providing a carefully prepared environment that nurtures the mind, body, and spirit to become peaceful, responsible, caring, and productive community members.

About CGM

Indu Agnihotri founded Center Grove Montessori in 2007. Along with a degree in early childhood education, Indu has a bachelor's degree in botany, chemistry, and zoology from India. After migrating from India in 1986, she received her Montessori certification in 1988. After 27 years of working with young children, she opened the first location of Center Grove Montessori with a student population of 18. The school has grown to house over 75 students at its current location in Greenwood, Indiana.

CGM is an affiliate member school of the International Montessori Council and the North American Montessori Teachers Association (NAMTA). All lead teachers are certified Montessori guides in the appropriate level of their current classrooms.

About Montessori

Maria Montessori was an Italian physician and educator who developed an educational approach focused on the way children naturally learn and grow. As the first woman to graduate from medical school in her native Italy, Montessori applied complex scientific methods to study children and their developmental needs.

Following worldwide acclaim for the success of her method, Montessori was nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize in 1949 for her work regarding education and world peace. More than 4,000 Montessori schools in the United States and her method are used in over 100 countries.

At CGM, we practice the method and philosophy as Montessori intended. We encourage all of our students to follow their interests and challenge themselves at their own pace to develop into self-confident and motivated learners.

Recognizing that we live in a diverse and interconnected world, CGM strives to create a community that reflects and celebrates this diversity, including, but not limited to, differences in race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, family structure, religious preference, national origin, or disability.

Our Programs

The Primary Classroom: 3 to 6 years

A carefully prepared "pre-school" environment encourages curiosity and exploration, offering daily opportunities for outdoor learning, cooperative play, and learning to care for the environment.

The Elementary Classroom: 6-12 years

This particular environment incorporates an extensive curriculum based on the mastery of fundamental skills, individually chosen work and research, community care, and involvement, inspiring students to learn advanced concepts and develop a desire to become responsible, curious, and caring global citizens.

SCHOOL PROCEDURES

Arrival and Dismissal

The school operates Monday through Friday, from 7:30 am-5:30 pm.

The Oak (primary) Room drop-off is from 8:30-8:45 am. Half-day pickup is from 11:15-11:30 am. Full-day pickup is from 2:45-3:00 pm.

The Maple (primary) Room drop-off is from 9:00-9:15 am. Half-day pickup is from 11:45 am-12:00 pm. Full-day pickup is from 3:15-3:30 pm.

The Tulip (elementary) Room drop-off is from 8:00-8:15 am, and pickup is from 3:00-3:15 pm.

Extended care is available from 7:30 am until the respective class times in the morning and from the end of the child's class time until 5:30 pm.

If you are arriving for extended care, please park and escort your child to the front door and ring the bell.

Please park and pick your child up from the east gate for extended care pickup if the children are outdoors or at the front door if they are inside due to inclement weather.

We ask that families be prompt during drop-off and pickup times. There will be a \$25.00 late fee assessed for all late pickups. This fee will be added to your monthly Blackbaud account.

Programs

Center Grove Montessori Programs

Primary: 3-6 years

Oak Room, 8:30am-11:30/3:00pm

Maple Room, 9:00am-12:00pm/3:30pm

Elementary: 6-12 years

Tulip Room, 8:15am-3:15pm

Extended Care Hours 7:30am-5:30 pm

Additional Programs

Summer Camp:

Available for 8 weeks during June and July for Primary students only.

Fall Break Care:

Available for Primary students only.

Spring Break Care:

Available for the first week of spring break for Primary students only.

If you are running late for your class time, please escort your child to the front door and ring the bell.

Car Line

CGM employs a staff-supervised "car line" for drop-off and pickup during Arrival and Dismissal times for the primary and elementary classrooms. This practice helps speed up the process for families and encourages the child's independence as part of their daily routine. For the car line to operate safely, all drivers must adhere to the following:

- **Do not** pass other cars in the line.
- Be respectful of others by moving through the car line as quickly as possible. If you need additional time, move forward to the "buckle zone" or park in an available space and escort your child to the staff member on duty.
- No cell phone use while in the car line, please.
- Primary-aged children need to be escorted from their car by a staff member.
- Elementary-aged children may exit their vehicle and enter the building independently.
- Do not drop off your child if there is not a staff member present outside. Please park and escort them to the front door and ring the bell.

If someone other than yourself will pick up your child, please make sure they are on your authorization list on your enrollment paperwork. If this person is unknown to the staff, they will be asked to present a photo ID before releasing your child to them. CGM assumes biological parents and legal guardians have the right to pick up your child unless the school has legal documentation on file stating otherwise. ***Giving someone permission to pick up your child is not the same as authorizing them as an emergency contact.*** If you need clarification, please contact the CGM office.

Drop off Please pull forward, so the front of your car is between the cones, and have your child exit your car from there. A staff member will meet your child at the car. For Elementary students, please have your child prepared to exit your vehicle once you are stopped. Let them handle unbuckling, getting their lunch box, opening the door to the car, and walking to the building, all on their own. They are so fully capable and proud of themselves for it.

Pick up Please pull forward so the front of your car is between the cones, and we will have your child walk out to your car once it is there. Arriving during your designated time will be extremely important as the other classes will be dismissed outside these times. If your child needs a moment to buckle or you need to help, please pull forward to the "buckle zone" once they enter your car to allow the next family to receive their child.

Please do not ever pass a car in the car line; allow your child to exit your vehicle or encourage them to approach your vehicle unless you are between the cones. Sharing this information with friends and family would be much appreciated to keep all our staff, children, and families safe.

Attendance

Daily attendance is taken shortly after arrival time ends. Children need to arrive at school on time to begin their day with the rest of their peers. Families will be contacted about excessive tardiness and absences. Your student's progress may be affected.

Birthdays

In the primary classrooms: We practice the Montessori tradition of creating a timeline of your child's life, so pictures from every year of your child's life are appreciated. If your child wants to bring in a "birthday treat," we ask that it be a

small "two-bite" snack. Please let your child's Guide know if any family members will be attending their birthday celebration.

In the elementary classroom, if a child chooses to celebrate their birthday at school, they may make a treat during class to share with their peers.

Cell Phones

Students are not permitted to bring cell phones to school. We also ask that cell phones be silenced before entering our environment.

Clothing

All clothing and belongings brought to school should be labeled with your child's name.

For primary students, a supply of clothes for changes should be sent at the beginning of the year and checked regularly to replenish and keep up with the change of seasons. Soiled clothing will be sent home in disposable plastic grocery bags.

Communication

Good communication is essential for schools and families to work together to aid the child's healthy development. The most effective method for contacting your child's Guide is through email. During class, guides are with the children but will often check email and review phone messages at lunchtime or after dismissal. You may expect a response from your Guide within 24 hours.

If you have an immediate need or message, please call the office. Office hours are from 8:00 am – 3:30 pm daily. Voice and email messages received after hours will be answered the following day. The office phone number is 317.883.0335. Office email address: office@centergrovemontessori.com

Stay Informed

CGM administration sends out monthly emails with announcements, updates, and upcoming events.

Classroom guides provide monthly newsletters or blogs with a focus on specific classroom news and communication. Families will receive these electronically unless otherwise requested.

CGM Website: www.centergrovemontessori.com

We have a private CGM Facebook group you may join after approval by administration. This is an excellent place to see pictures of what is happening in our classrooms and communicate with other enrolled families.

CGM Facebook Page: public page with current general school information.

Conferences

Family conferences are scheduled twice a year, in Fall and Spring. A family member can request a conference with a Guide at any time during the school year. You may contact the office to schedule these meetings.

Evaluation of student progress: CGM maintains careful notes and documentation on each child following the traditional curriculum. Children are not compared to each other or "graded" conventionally or arbitrarily. Written narratives are kept for younger children, and portfolio samples are kept for older students. Evaluation of progress is based on the individual growth of each child.

Field Trips and Outings

Field trips and outings off-campus are limited to elementary students only. Families will be notified of an upcoming trip and any related fees. Volunteer drivers may be needed to transport the children. Drivers must have a valid driver's license, registration, and automobile insurance. The school's insurance does not cover field trip

volunteers and vehicles. When a parent volunteers to drive, they agree to act as a chaperone for the children they are transporting for the field trip duration. A standing permission slip allows children to travel to weekly shopping, library, or community service trips in small groups.

Holidays and Celebrations

"All mankind shares a common history, a common world of cultures and struggles toward a common future. The child should be given a sense of our heritage, our culture, and our potential destiny from the earliest moments of sensitivity. The needs of mankind are universal. Our means of meeting them create the richness and diversity of the planet. The child should come to relish the texture of that diversity." Montessori

We acknowledge and celebrate our school community's diversity and the diversity of the much larger world community. At CGM, we feel it is essential to broaden our children's horizons to encompass the entire planet, not just our neighborhood, state, country, or continent. CGM does not teach religion, but many of the holidays we celebrate may be religious in origin. Instead, we approach them from a cultural perspective, sharing food, music, dance, and traditions related to the day.

Items Brought to/from School

Our Montessori environments are thoughtfully and carefully prepared. Please refrain from allowing your child to bring toys or other items not requested by your child's Guide. Your orientation packet provides information on what children need to bring to school.

Sometimes items from the classroom find their way home. Because each item plays an important part in the environment, please have your child bring the item/items back as soon as possible. Thanks in advance for your help with this!

Lost and Found

Any lost or left behind items not clearly labeled with a child's name are put in our lost and found basket. After a reasonable time, items not claimed may be kept as extra items or donated to a local charity.

Lunch and Snacks

Proper nutrition is very important at CGM. Food is never forced on a child. Instead, food is offered frequently throughout the day. Every effort will be made to accommodate food preferences for personal, religious, or medical reasons.

Oak and Maple (Primary) Rooms:

- Water is available for the children all day.
- Snack: A morning and afternoon snack will be provided every day. Families will be given a monthly snack calendar with their child's name when it is their turn to contribute. We ask for healthy snacks that are easy to prepare. This is a good opportunity for your child to share their favorite snack with their peers!
- Lunch: Families will provide lunch for their children. We ask that you provide a balanced, nutritious lunch for your child. Candy, soda, and other highly sugared foods are inappropriate and prohibited at CGM. The school does not have the space to refrigerate lunches, so please include an ice pack for keeping items cool. To foster independence, please try to use a lunchbox and containers that your child can open themselves.

Tulip (Elementary) Room:

- Water is available to the children all day.
- Snack: Elementary students are responsible for their snacks. We prefer that snacks brought from home are nutritious and low in sugar.

- Lunch: Families will provide lunch for their children. We ask that you provide a balanced, nutritious lunch for your child. Candy, soda, and other highly sugared foods are inappropriate and prohibited at CGM. The school does not have the space to refrigerate lunches, so please include an ice pack for keeping items cool. The children may bring lunches that need reheating. While guides are available to help the children with occasional difficulty, it promotes independence and self-confidence if they can manage lunch independently.

Observations

Classrooms are open for observations from September through May. We encourage families to visit at least once a year. Observations are for 1 hour during the morning work cycle and can be scheduled through the office. Cell phone use and photography are not permitted during observations.

Outdoor Play

Time outdoors is an important part of a child's day. It provides access to fresh air, promotes a connection with nature and social growth opportunities, and aids in developing gross motor skills. Weather permitting, the children go outside every day. Primary classrooms have unlimited outdoor access during school, while elementary students have scheduled "outside times."

Transitions

The Montessori environments at CGM are tailored to meet the developmental needs of children during specific phases of growth. When a child nears the time, we expect them to transition to the next classroom level. In coordination with our Montessori Curriculum Director, we observe the child and meet to discuss their readiness for transition. Generally, children in the primary and elementary classrooms transition with the start of the new school year in August.

SCHOOL POLICIES

Admissions Policy

Center Grove Montessori is more than just a school or daycare program. We consider ourselves a community of families that have a vested interest in a shared vision, values, and goals for their children. Our lead guides have certification in the Montessori method and create an authentic experience for your child in the classroom.

Our primary goal in the admissions process is to get to know one another, ensuring that CGM is a good match for your child and family and that they are ready to begin in one of our classrooms.

Families are required to tour the school before enrollment and are given the opportunity to observe in one of our classrooms. We present our programs with transparency and honesty to help families grasp the true nature of our school and what we have to offer.

Oak and Maple (Primary) Rooms: A new student is admitted into our primary program when they are three years old or transitioning from the toddler program. Expectations as to a child's readiness for this environment are as follows:

- Shows signs of wanting to take care of needs independently.
- Do not put non-food items in their mouth.
- Able to use the toilet independently.
- Do not use biting, hitting, or kicking to communicate.
- Able to eat independently.
- Able to understand and respond to simple instructions.
- Physically able to navigate stairs and carry a tray from a shelf to a table.

Tulip (Elementary) Room: A new student admitted into the elementary program must have reached their 6th birthday before August 1. Expectations as to a child's readiness for this environment are as follows:

- Physical signs such as losing teeth may occur
- Interest in participating with the older students
- Gravitating towards group work rather than working alone
- Physically independent & wanting to test their strength (opening doors, buckle/unbuckle seat belts should be mastered at this point)
- Self-directed (finds things to do when bored, independent of adults)
- Able to take feedback.
- Completing a work cycle consistently
- Put aside their wishes to listen to instruction
- Ability to control their body
- Long to go out and explore the world beyond school and home
- May have become messier
- May be beginning to understand sarcasm/jokes

*100% independent dressing, toileting, and feeding

Admissions Procedure

Application: all applications will be processed upon receipt of a completed form and non-refundable application fee. The application is valid for three years from the application date or until the child is no longer eligible for enrollment. If the offer for enrollment is declined for any reason, the application will be withdrawn.

Enrollment Agreement: A child is officially enrolled in the program when the school has received the completed/signed enrollment forms, registration fee, and is enrolled in Blackbaud. Enrollment cancellations 15 days or less prior to the student's start date as indicated on the enrollment form will require the following:

- Written notification.
- One month of tuition based on the schedule indicated
- on the enrolled semester's current school year enrollment form and material fees.

CGM requires that the following forms are kept on file for child enrolled in the program:

- Enrollment form.
- Tuition agreement.
- Specialized health waiver.
- Vaccination record (waiver available).
- Standing permission form (elementary only).

*It is the family's responsibility to notify the school when there is any change in the information provided on

these forms.

Application List: If no openings are available, completed applications fill spots in the classroom as they become available. Completed applications and a non-refundable fee (later applied to registration fees) are required to be considered for enrollment. In the event of an opening, enrollment will be considered based on the date that the application and fee were received and the child's age and needs (in accordance with the Montessori multi-age classroom setup).

*Siblings of currently enrolled students, children of staff members, and transfers from other Montessori schools may be granted priority in the admissions process.

*Center Grove Montessori admits students of any race, color, nationality, and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students. CGM does not discriminate based on race, color, nationality, or ethnic origin in the administration of educational and admission policies.

CGM is committed to creating a balanced learning environment for all students. We strive to integrate and accommodate children with all needs into our program according to the Montessori philosophy and appropriate early childhood practices. When necessary, we will work closely with families and other outside resources to help any child in our environment.

In some circumstances, CGM may not be the "right fit" for a child and family. We reserve the right of acceptance into our program or ask a child to leave the school at any time of the school year based on our inability to meet the child's needs.

Provisional Acceptance: All newly enrolled children enter a 60-day provisional acceptance period. All children are accepted into the program, understanding that if the Guide feels the school cannot meet the

child's needs, the staff and parents will explore alternatives together. During this time, guides will begin their observations of the child. Should the Guide determine a meeting is necessary to discuss the student's experience in the classroom, this may be done as soon as two weeks after the initial enrollment date. If a child's behavior is addressed with a family at any point within 60 days of the enrollment date and the school has determined that the needs of the child are not being met, CGM will ask the family to remove the child for a time determined by the Guide and the Montessori Curriculum Director. The school will hold the child's spot for 60 days following withdrawal to provide the family time until their child is ready to return. Should a student return, the child will return on provisional acceptance. After two weeks, the Guide and Curriculum Director will determine if the child is ready to stay for the remainder of the year. It is expected that tuition will be paid during the provisional period.

Student Withdrawal: A minimum of 30 days written notice for the academic year and a minimum of 2-week notice for summer camp withdrawal must be given to be considered for financial reimbursement of payments made for future enrollment.

Enrollment cancellations 15 days or less before the student's start date, as indicated on the enrollment form, will require the following: Written notification and one-month tuition based on the schedule indicated on the enrolled semester's current school year enrollment form and material fees.

If both the family and school administration determine together that CGM is not appropriate for the enrolled child, the child may be withdrawn, and the parents relieved of any further financial responsibility effective on the day of withdrawal. The family will be refunded appropriate tuition payments for future enrollment if withdrawal is necessary within the first two months of enrollment.

If the school initiates the withdrawal of a child for any reason, the family will be notified and relieved of any further financial obligation.

*After consulting with staff and parents, the Head of School has the final decision-making authority on enrollment.

Discipline Policy

The children in our classrooms enjoy considerable freedom of movement and work choices; however, there are clearly defined limits on the range of acceptable behavior. Students are promptly redirected when their actions fall outside of the appropriate boundaries. Our goals regarding behavior in our classrooms are always focused on nurturing a child's self-discipline development.

Preparation of the environment and carefully defined ground rules are essential to successful discipline. When a child moves beyond these boundaries and redirection is unsuccessful, a discussion occurs privately between the Guide and student. (Children are not disciplined in front of their peers.) Age-appropriate and relevant consequences are reviewed and put into practice if the behavior continues.

Example: If a child is painting on the wall instead of the paper on the easel, she is reminded by the Guide or assistant that "we only paint on paper" and shown the proper tools to clean up her mess. If the child refuses to comply, the painting work will be unavailable to that child until they are ready to use it properly.

If a child is endangering the safety of themselves or others, an adult will immediately intervene and remove the child from the situation. Once the child/children are safe, the Guide will assess the situation and choose appropriate disciplinary measures.

Our approach to discipline is based on empowerment, mutual respect, and trust. Corporal punishment is prohibited. Withholding food, water, or rest as a punishment is also prohibited.

When any student at Center Grove Montessori finds it challenging to meet the school's expectation of positive conduct, every effort will be made to bring the student, family, and staff together to achieve a solution.

Privacy Policy

Child privacy: The staff at CGM values the privacy of each family enrolled in our program and will keep personal and private information secure. The school will not give out phone numbers, email addresses, birthdays, or home locations without the verbal consent of the family.

Staff privacy: CGM respects the privacy of its entire staff. The office will not give out home phone numbers or addresses. Guides may elect to give out their contact information but are not required to do so. During the school day, staff will be given messages received by the primary school phone number. If it is an emergency, please notify the person answering the phone, and the Guide will be notified immediately.

Social media: CGM uses a private Facebook Group, a public Facebook page, and our website to share information with prospective and current families. The private Facebook group is open to enrolled families only.

Form requests: Should a form be completed about a student for an outside party, the guides and staff require 48 hours to review and complete the paperwork. Completing forms is up to the discretion of the guide or staff member, and they can refuse to fill out and sign if they so choose.

Complaints: Should a family need to share a complaint about the school or a representative from within the school, an email detailing the complaint must be sent to an administrator. When the Head of School has reviewed the complaint, a response to the complainant will be made after further information is obtained.

Safe Environment Policy

Center Grove Montessori is committed to providing a safe and inclusive school community. The collaboration experienced in our classrooms and our outdoor environment helps children learn how to develop and nurture their personalities while functioning harmoniously within a group.

When confronted with aggressive or inappropriate behavior, the adults will address the issue immediately as appropriate for the specific situation. In most cases, the child will be removed temporarily from the area or asked to stay with an adult. Minor incidents usually just require redirection.

Families will be informed of more significant occurrences or repeated or escalating situations by communication from their child's Guide. The Guide may request a meeting with parents to address the situation and discuss possible solutions to help the child.

If the child continues to experience inappropriate behavior at school, the Guide, Curriculum Director, and the family will meet to form an Action Plan for the student. In cases of serious behavioral or threatening conduct, CGM reserves the right to require the child to leave the school grounds for the day.

The Head of School reserves the right to suspend or expel a student or family from the school at any time. Our goal is to ensure that every child has a safe environment in which to learn. This policy is to help us achieve that goal.

Community Code of Conduct: Center Grove Montessori cannot and will not tolerate any irresponsible and dangerous behavior, acts of violence, threats of violence, emotional or sexual harassment, or verbal abuse directed toward enrolled families, current staff, or school property.

Bringing or carrying a weapon to the school or Center Grove Montessori grounds is illegal.

Smoking, Drugs, and Alcohol Center Grove Montessori is a smoke-free environment. No one may smoke anywhere on school grounds.

CGM must be free of alcoholic beverages or controlled substances whenever children are present. Alcohol may be served at adult functions outside of school operating hours when no children are present.

Harassment Center Grove Montessori maintains an environment free of harassment and intimidation for all staff and volunteers. The school has a zero-tolerance policy for vulgar, abusive, humiliating, or threatening language or other inappropriate behavior in school. Employee violators of this policy are subject to immediate termination. Non-employee violators of this policy are subject to immediate expulsion from CGM grounds. Any harassment observed should be reported immediately to the Head of School.

Suspected Child Abuse The State of Indiana requires any staff member who has the knowledge of or observes a child in their professional capacity or within the scope of their employment whom they know or reasonably suspects has been the victim of child abuse to report the known or suspected instance of child abuse to a child protective agency immediately or as soon as practically possible by telephone and to prepare and send a written report thereof within 36 hours of receiving the information concerning the incident.

Employees are instructed to inform an administrator immediately if they have any concerns about the possibility of child abuse.

Technology Usage Policy

Cell Phones, computers, and tablets are not to be brought into the school from home. Students in our Elementary environment are allowed carefully monitored computer usage for research and project purposes with the permission of the lead guide.

Tuition Policy

Tuition and fees are paid to the school via Blackbaud. All families are required to sign up with Blackbaud and have an active account. Families must pay all Blackbaud's fees, including late fees. Tuition may be paid annually, semi-annually, or monthly per the following payment schedule:

Annual - Due August of the current school year. A 5% discount is applied to these payments. A late fee of \$75.00 per month will be applied to the family account if payments are not received in full by August.

Semi-annual - Due August and January of the current school year. A 5% discount is applied to these payments. A late fee of \$75.00 per month will be applied to the family account if payments are not received in full by August and January.

Monthly - Payments due once a month to Blackbaud, beginning in August, ending in May. **(10 payments)**. **There will be a \$75.00 late fee for all payments received after the due date.**

Fees

- Registration fee due annually - \$200.00 (\$150.00 to returning families if collected in February before the upcoming school year)
- Semester Material fee due twice a year - \$100.00 (primary), \$200.00 (elementary)
- Blackbaud Fee collected annually in August to Blackbaud (if paying monthly tuition) - \$50.00

Extended care Extended care is provided from 7:30 am until the start and from the end of class to 5:30 pm.

Option A- Families are invoiced monthly for the prior month. The rate is \$9.00 per hour (for any part of an hour).

Option B-The monthly fee of \$300 is for the families using before and aftercare from 7:30 am -5:30 pm.

A \$25 fee will be assessed for each late pickup.

Extended Absences Families absent for an extended period due to travel or sickness will still be responsible for their tuition. No reductions in tuition or skipped payments will be available.

Collections Families are to make payment by the due date or make payment arrangements in writing. If no payment agreements are made with the school, children will be asked to leave as of the second day for which tuition has not been paid. When payment is made, children may return to school. At the discretion of the head of school, Center Grove Montessori may fill the child's spot. Families will be sent to a third-party collection agency if payments are more than 30 days late in Blackbaud. The school understands that families may experience some financial difficulties and are committed to working with any family to make acceptable payment arrangements. The families are responsible for communicating their financial needs and changes with the school to avoid any further fees or withdrawal from the school.

Returned Checks A \$30.00 fee is charged for all returned checks.

Tuition Credit There is no credit given for absences (including but not limited to; illness, death in the family, or vacations). There are no tuition credits for school closings. Families are responsible for full-month tuition payment if their child attends two or more weeks of the month they begin their enrollment. This applies to all tuition schedule options. At the school's discretion, it is to prorate tuition and fees based on a child's start date at the school.

Center Grove Montessori school is solely supported through tuition and fundraising. This income must be assured to meet salary, rent, and maintenance requirements.

Tuition paid in installments does not constitute a fractional agreement.

Referral Bonus If you refer a family to us that enrolls, you will get a referral bonus. Ask an administrator for more information. The new family must have been enrolled for one month before the referring family can receive the bonus. The bonus is \$25.00 per child (ren) enrolled.

Special Circumstance Procedure Center Grove Montessori can help currently enrolled families financially when unforeseen/special circumstances arise. CGM aims to give fair consideration to all submitted applications and make the policy known and available to current families.

CGM considers special circumstances to be:

- Death of an immediate family member
- Loss of job
- Medical status change of immediate family member
- Loss of residence due to weather or unforeseen circumstances
- Costs associated with children in the immediate family with mental or physical disabilities
- Foreclosure or Bankruptcy
- Change in the housing of immediate family

Application Procedure:

For a family to be considered for financial assistance from CGM, the family must complete the "special circumstances form." The form outlines the date of the unforeseen circumstance, a brief description of the circumstance, the length of time the family anticipates the financial changes to be in effect, the monetary amount being requested, and the specific monetary amount being requested by the family. Once this form is received, the school will notify the family if further documentation is required to process or deny the request. CGM reserves the right to deny any family a request at any point in the process due to lack of documentation, fund availability, or circumstance determined by the school. Applications can be submitted by enrolled families at any time during the calendar year for the current or upcoming school year. Application processing times may vary depending on the volume of submissions and response time from the requesting family. The amount of financial assistance will be determined by the school administration and can only be applied to fees and tuition August-May of each school year. Families will continue to be responsible for summer camp fees and registration fees.

Summer Camp Summer camp is designed to help families who need year-round placement for their children ages 3 -6 in an authentic Montessori environment. Children who are currently enrolled in the school or enrolled for the upcoming fall semester can attend. Families can sign up for as little as two weeks in summer camp or all weeks offered (typically eight weeks). Payments are made at the beginning of the month via Blackbaud. If signing up for all eight weeks, the \$75.00 registration fee is waived; should that schedule change mid-summer, families will then be retroactively charged the \$75.00 registration fee. Families are asked to update the school on schedule changes one week before camp to be considered for financial reimbursement for future payments. The school can deny enrollment in the summer program at their discretion.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Closings and Delays:

Safety is the priority when considering calling a school delay or closing. Delays and closings are done as early as possible. Extreme weather such as cold/wind chill, snow accumulation, and road conditions govern our decisions. Center Grove Montessori will determine whether there will be a delay or school closure and notify families via text, news stations, and the closed Facebook group as soon as possible on the morning of the schedule change.

Sources to check for school delays and closings are:

- RTV 6 - www.theindychannel.com
- Wish TV8 - www.wishtv.com
- WTHR 13 - www.wthr.com
- FOX 59 - fox59.com

*Some websites offer the option of a "text alert" that would send you a message on your cell phone if the school was delayed or canceled. We encourage you to sign up for this. It is a free service and is the fastest way to receive notifications.

Families should look at local news stations for Center Grove Montessori to be specifically listed. The administration makes decisions regarding delays; directly contacting teachers will not be helpful.

Our school Facebook page: www.facebook.com/groups/112857012058428/

In most instances, a one-hour delay will be from the start of each class time, and no before care will be provided. Should the school choose not to initiate a delay or closure, but a family feels they need to keep their child at home due to inclement weather, the school will honor that decision.

1 Hour Delay Structure:

Willow – Arrive at 9:00 am

Oak: Arrive at 9:30 am

Tulip - Arrive at 9:15 am

Maple: Arrive at 10:00 am

Early Release If snow starts late in the afternoon with potentially hazardous conditions, we may have early release. We understand you may be at work. Please try your best or arrange to pick up your child as early as possible. Please be considerate and keep our aftercare staff and your safety in mind. You will find this information on the above-mentioned TV channels, school website, Facebook page, email, or calling the school.

Local and National Emergencies If children and staff need to evacuate the building due to a national or local emergency, they will proceed to the closest safe building directed by emergency personnel. The school will only be evacuated if the building is deemed unsafe for occupancy by the police/fire department. Please tune into your local TV and Radio stations for more emergency information. Please ensure that all information, telephone numbers, and emergency contacts are updated and checked throughout the year.

The school highly recommends that each family has an emergency plan for picking up their child at school.

Lock Down Lockdowns are used to directly impact the school by responding to acts or threats of violence to students and staff. During a lockdown, all doors to the school are locked, and students will be led downstairs. Once a lockdown is in progress, no one is permitted in or out of the building. **No one other than law enforcement is allowed access to the building until the lockdown is over.** Families will be notified as soon as possible via email in case of a lockdown emergency.

Visitation All visitors must notify the main office at the arrival time, the purpose for a visit, and inform the office upon departure. Families touring or observing may be asked to use the tour tracking sheet. The Montessori classroom is a very special place. The environment is carefully designed to meet the developmental needs of children. A delicate balance occurs between the child, Guide, and the environment as they work together to support growth and learning. The presence of visitors moving freely through the room can be distracting and, at times, confusing for the children. It can interfere with the atmosphere of independence and concentration in the classroom.

We ask that all visitors respect the children and the classroom. The Guide will direct visitors into appropriate areas to sit and observe. Visitors should remain seated and refrain from engaging in conversation or activity with the children.

When an Emergency Occurs: We recognize that when an emergency occurs, families will be worried and want to be reunited with their children as quickly as possible. We intend to make this happen, but the safety of the children always comes first. Your first instinct may be to go to the school, but doing so may impede emergency crews' and the school's efforts to deal with the situation. Center Grove Montessori will contact you as soon as it is safe to pick up your child.

Emergency Procedures:

Smoke detectors are located in each area of the school. These detectors are checked regularly.

Fire extinguishers are located on the wall near each exit, near the stove, and the furnace. These extinguishers are checked regularly and inspected by a professional annually.

Emergency phone numbers are located in the classroom.

In case of an emergency:

- The Guide will ask children to stop what they are doing and quietly walk to either the primary or secondary exit. In case of a fire emergency, the smoke detector alarm will go off, and the Guide will instruct children to immediately proceed to the nearest exit.
- As the children are lining up, the Guide or her assistant will check all classroom areas for children (bathroom, kitchen, etc.), and in inclement weather, collect children's coats and gear - if safe to do so. In the case of a fire emergency, the Guide will escort the children out of the building as quickly as possible, checking that all children are present. Since a quick evacuation is essential in a fire, this may mean leaving coats and gear behind. The extra staff member in the building that day will check the building for any children.
**The Guide will walk with the children to the designated meeting place. Once assembled in a safe place, the Guide will take attendance using the class list.*
- Authorities can be notified using a cell phone if not already alerted by support staff and the security system.
- Families will be notified using the emergency contact list if necessary. This list is checked and updated frequently.

Fire Drills Random fire drills are conducted three or four times a year. The emergency procedures described above will be practiced.

Tornado Drills Random tornado drills will be conducted two times a year. Guides, staff, and students will be assembled in the middle room of the basement.

General Student Health and Safety Policies:

Documentation must state that the child has received age-appropriate immunizations following the Indiana State Public Health Law. Any child who is not immunized because of the parent's genuine and sincere religious beliefs may be admitted if the parent furnishes the school with a written statement. All children must remain current with their immunizations and update the documentation at the school annually.

In addition to the health care statement, the following documents will be submitted at the time of admission and be kept on file while the child is enrolled:

- * A written consent signed by the parent authorizing the school (provider) or other caregivers employed by the program to obtain emergency health care for the child (emergency card).
- * A written consent signed by the parent allows the school(provider) to arrange for transportation of the child in need of emergency care or, in the case of emergency evacuation from the site, permission to transport the child to one of the designated relocation sites.
- * A written consent to allow the child to be photographed at school and permission for the school to use these photographs for school albums, newsletters, our website, Facebook group, and other school-related purposes. (special craft projects, press releases, etc.).
- * Authorized pickup list.

Medication Policy Center Grove Montessori guides and staff will not administer any medication, prescription, remedy, or treatment, except topical ointments such as sunblock, except to the extent that such administration is required under the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Should a child need medication to be provided due to a medical condition – a written note is required from the doctor overseeing the child for that medical condition. At least one legal guardian must complete the "Medication" form.

Illness Policy Center Grove Montessori adheres strictly to the State of Indiana guidelines for dealing with illness in the school. The standards are to protect your healthy child. Please do not send your child to school if they are experiencing any symptoms or illnesses or cannot participate in daily activities. Your child will recover more quickly at home, and the

other children and adults at the school will be protected from continued exposure to the illness. ***The school is neither licensed nor equipped to care for ill children or modify their activities to accommodate their illness.***

If a child becomes ill while at school, they will be isolated from the other children, and families will be called to arrange for the child to be picked up. If a child is considered too ill to attend school at drop-off, they will not be admitted to class.

Illness Exclusion Policy

| Child excluded if: | Child re-admitted if: |
|---|---|
| Temp of 100.4° F oral, 101°F rectal, or 99° F auxiliary | Free of fever for 72 hours |
| Temp of 100.4° F oral, 101°F rectal, or 99°F auxiliary, plus one of these symptoms listed below: Severe cold with yellow-green nasal discharge, sneezing, skin rash, sore throat, or swollen glands. | Free of fever for 24 hours and a note from a physician stating the child is not communicable |
| Severe cold with yellow-green nasal discharge, Cough | All discharge has ceased, and a note from the physician stating the child is not contagious |
| Conjunctivitis (pink eye) bacterial and viral | All discharge has ceased, and a note from the physician stating the child is not contagious |
| Head and body lice | After treatment and free of lice and nits |
| Ringworm of not communicable | After treatment and lesions are covered |
| Ringworm of head | After treatment, lesions are covered, and a note from the clinic or physician stating the child is not contagious |
| Skin lesions, impetigo, and scabies | Skin sores are healed, or a note from a physician stating the child is not infectious |
| Vomiting | Free of upset stomach and vomiting for 24 hours |
| Diarrhea (two or more loose, watery stools per day) | Diarrhea free for 24 hours |
| Fainting or seizures or general signs of an infectious disease to which the child has been exposed. | Note from the physician stating the child is okay to return to school |

Facility Health and Safety Sufficient and suitable clothing must be available so that children who are dirty or soil their clothing may be changed. Families will be asked to keep at least one seasonally appropriate change of clothes for their child at school.

Toileting facilities will be kept clean and supplied with toilet paper, soap, and towels accessible to staff and children.

Toileting equipment will allow children to use the restroom independently and wash their hands.

All rooms, equipment, supplies, and furnishings accessible to children will be cleaned and disinfected each day and as needed to protect the health of the children and staff and consistent with the health care plan guidelines issued by the state of Indiana.

Addendum

This policy was developed in accordance with IDOE, Johnson County Health Department, Governor Holcomb, and CDC guidelines to prevent the spread of COVID 19 and prepare for changes to school schedules due to COVID 19 community transmission in Johnson County or confirmed cases in Center Grove Montessori. This policy is effective in July 2020 and will remain in effect until further guidance from state officials and the local health department.

Suppose a family has an official concern regarding COVID 19 or the diagnosis of a student or direct member living in the home with the student. In that case, the parent or guardian must submit information in an email to the office and call the school immediately.

Enrolling a student if it is considered medically high risk is at the parent or guardian's discretion. Should a student be considered high risk, the parent or guardian may request the school meet the student's special needs. The school will determine if the staff can accommodate a student's special needs due to high risk.

If a family requests staff to implement additional safety procedures for a student, the family will need to provide a written doctor's note before consideration.

The school reserves the right to amend the school calendar and events at any time in the year based on community transmission of COVID 19 or other viruses and recommendations from local officials.

All families must sign a waiver holding harmless Center Grove Montessori for any contracted virus and damages or financial hardships due to the virus's contraction while enrolled. A student may only attend school with a completed waiver on file signed by both families/guardians (as applicable to that student).

The form of communication for all COVID 19 updates for the 23-24 school year will be via email.

All other communicable diseases and viruses: If a staff member or student is diagnosed with other infectious diseases or viruses, the school will refer to the school's General Illness Policy and reference Johnson County guidelines to determine action. The school will follow up with the staff member or student. The school has the final determination on the action.

Definitions

- Confirmed case COVID 19 - Confirmed laboratory test by a licensed physician of COVID-19, 'CO' stands for 'corona,' 'VI' for 'virus,' and 'D' for the disease.
- Doctor Note – Official and signed note by a licensed physician with test results, prognosis, treatment plan, quarantine guidelines, and return to school date. ***The school will only accept a note signed by a licensed physician and not by any other medical professional.***
- Community Transmission – A population infected with a virus in an area, including some who are not sure how or where they became infected.

- Face covering – Face mask made of any material that covers the nose and mouth. Not a medical grade.
- Staff – Any person with direct contact with children within the school that have been trained and hired by Center Grove Montessori.
- High Risk - Older adults (older than 65) and people of any age with severe underlying medical conditions might be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

Stay Home Guidelines

Staff or students are required to stay home and notify the school if they are experiencing any of the following signs or symptoms of contagious illness:

- Fever greater than 100 degrees F.
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Persistent and disruptive cough
- Does not feel well.
- Exposure to confirmed COVID 19 case where the staff member or student was less than 6 ft from the confirmed case, for more than 10 minutes, on more than one occasion.
- Diagnosed by a physician with COVID 19.
- Diagnosed with other illnesses referenced in the school's General Illness Policy.

School Preparedness Plan

This plan was developed to prepare and prevent the spread of COVID 19 and other highly contagious illnesses.

Daily Protocol –

- Student handwashing, using regular soap (as first choice) or alcohol-based hand sanitizer at regular intervals, logged by staff. This includes, at a minimum, during transition times, bathroom breaks, and before eating.
- Personal water bottles brought to school will be sent home daily. Cups used at school will be washed/sanitized in the dishwasher after each use.
- Spray sunscreen applied only.
- No medication is administered to students unless the controller medication is needed and accompanied by a doctor's note.
- Drop off and pick up for all classrooms done via a carline and processes communicated to families.
- Staff will clean and sanitize daily at intervals determined by the school with EPA-approved cleaning supplies following CDC guidelines.
- The cleaning company will clean weekly with soap and water, followed by surface disinfectants following CDC guidelines. Floors, doors, handles, bathrooms, kitchen, and commonly touched spaces other than classroom materials.

Families will be provided a list of items that can be kept at school, items that will need to be sent in and taken home daily, and items not allowed to be sent into the school.

Items to be left at school:

- Change of clothes, appropriate outdoor clothing, and shoes
- Spray sunscreen
- Small blanket, pillow, and comfort item (sent home monthly for cleaning)

Items to be brought to school and taken home daily:

- Personal use of water bottle
- Lunch

Items not to be brought to school:

- o Backpacks
- o Comfort items
- o Toys
- o Snacks and toys to share with others

Student Policy

The parent or guardian must notify the school if students are diagnosed with COVID 19 or have been exposed to the virus to the best of their knowledge. The school will maintain confidentiality with that family, and no discrimination or bias will be placed against the family.

The parent or guardian must keep the student home if diagnosed with COVID 19 for 14 days.

The parent or guardian must keep the student home if they display any signs and symptoms listed in the Stay Home section of this policy and return with a licensed physician's note stating the student can return to a school or childcare setting with the date listed.

In the event of a student confirmed COVID 19 diagnosis

- o The school will notify the Johnson County Health Department.
- o The student remains out of school for 14 days from diagnosis or a licensed physician's recommendations.
- o The student will return with a doctor's note stating that the student can return to a school or childcare setting with the date listed on the note.
- o If contact tracing is necessary, the CGM head of school will collaborate with the Johnson County Health Department or the appropriate health department.
- o The whole school, including families and staff, will be notified of the confirmed case or level of exposure and class. The student's name will remain confidential.
- o In the event of a documented positive case, the IDEO decision tree has the school closing for two-five days so the local health department or the Indiana State Department of Health can engage with your team to recommend further testing, cleaning, etc. Recommendations about prolonged closure will depend on the level of co-horting the school has been adhering to, the community level of disease, and the current infection burden impacting our hospital systems.

In the event of direct student exposure, COVID 19

Suppose an individual living in the same home as a student has been diagnosed with COVID-19 or is quarantined because of a possible COVID-19 diagnosis. In that case, the student should seek medical guidance from a licensed physician. The student will stay home for a minimum of two weeks unless otherwise provided information from a licensed physician. Return to school after documented infection with COVID-19 should be directed by the individual's licensed physician.

Community Transmission:

If the Johnson County Health Department identified that Johnson County is experiencing a moderate to severe community transmission, the school would follow local officials' guidelines for school closure. The school will refer to the Emergency Closure Plan and communicate to families via email.

Emergency School Closure Plan

If local officials require the school to close due to community Transmission of the virus or moderate to severe School transmission of the virus. The school will follow the Emergency School Closure Plan.

E-learning

Primary classrooms will transition to online learning for the remaining school closure. Lead guides and administration will develop the curriculum. Families will need access to a computer, internet, and pick up materials on site.

Elementary classrooms will transition to online learning 4-5 days a week for the remaining school closure. The Lead guides and administration will develop the curriculum. Students will have access to lesson plans and materials. Families will need access to a computer, internet, and pick up materials on site.

Financial Policy: Pandemic or confirmed case COVID 19

In the case of an emergency school closure, the school's financial obligations will remain the same; therefore, the tuition and fees policy will be in effect as follows.

Families who have paid ahead will be given a 25% refund on the remaining months in school.

- o For families paying monthly, families will be expected to continue paying 75% tuition on the due date selected in Blackbaud for the entirety of the school closure.
- o Should a family choose to unenroll their child, they will be responsible for regularly scheduled tuition for two months from notification (per the school's General Financial Policy). Notification needs to be received by the school in an email, and will consider the notification date.
- o No refunds will be given on material fees, other associated school fees, or camp fees in any circumstance.
- o No refunds for registration fees paid for school enrollment or camp(s) will be given.
- o All accounts must remain current during school closure and subject to the general school financial policy and collections process.
- o Families will be responsible for the regular tuition schedule the month the school closes. Refund and tuition reductions will be applied to subsequent months during school closure.
- o If a student is absent due to COVID 19 "Stay Home" policy, the student will not be refunded for time out of school.
- o

Addendum II – August 2021

The Johnson County Health Department recommends all schools in Johnson County adhere to the following COVID-19 guidance:

- Any student, teacher, or staff member who tests positive for COVID-19 should complete a 10-day isolation period. If the individual is symptomatic but obtains a negative test result, they may return once symptoms have resolved.
- Anyone identified as close contact with an individual who has tested positive should complete a quarantine period. A close contact is defined as anyone who has been within 3 feet of the positive individual for more than 15 minutes in the 48 hours prior to symptom onset. Cases of physical contact, such as athletics or extra-curricular activities, will be handled on a case-by-case basis, as the need for quarantine will depend on the type of contact.

There are three options to return from quarantine per the CDC:

- **Return on day 15** - no enhanced precautions
- **Return on day 11**- must use enhanced precautions on days 11-14 (masked at all times throughout the school day, no exceptions; distance of at least 3 feet in the classroom; lunch to be eaten

separately because masks will be off while eating, must maintain a distance of at least 6 feet in this setting; symptoms monitored daily by parents and school staff)

- **Return on day 8**- must use enhanced precautions on days 8-14 and obtain a negative antigen (rapid) test on day 8 as long as the individual has remained asymptomatic while quarantined.
- Masks **must be worn** on school buses due to federal mandate. This **must be enforced** and buses should keep disposable masks on hand in the event a student does not have a mask of their own.
- It is strongly recommended that universal masking occurs inside K-12 buildings regardless of vaccination status when the positivity rate exceeds 2% in any one building. Masks will be worn until the positivity rate drops below 1%.
- Any individual who has been fully vaccinated will not need to quarantine due to exposure.
- Any individual who has tested positive within the previous 6 months will not need to quarantine due to exposure.
- If an individual presents with symptoms, and COVID-19 is suspected, the Health Department recommends obtaining an antigen test in order to determine how to proceed. School nurses should assess symptoms and risk factors in order to make this determination. These tests are available at no cost Monday through Friday at the Johnson County Health Department vaccination clinic located at Compass Park behind the Indiana Masonic Home. If the antigen test is negative, and the individual is symptomatic, the result should be confirmed by a PCR test. Schools should not accept antigen tests performed at home, only those performed at an authorized facility should be considered valid.

Addendum III - February 23, 2022

Children 2 (24 months) to 5 years of age:

- Children testing positive for COVID-19 should isolate at home for 5 days
- Children who are fever free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications and show improvement in symptoms may return on day 6 if they can correctly and consistently mask
- Children who cannot correctly and consistently mask should isolate at home for 7 days and may return on day 8
- The decision to return should be made by the child's parent and in conjunction with the childcare program. Families are their children's best and first teachers and as such know the capabilities of their child.

Children 5 and older:

- Children testing positive for COVID-19 should isolate at home for 5 days and may return on day 6 if fever free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications and show improvement in symptoms
 - Children should mask days 6-10 upon returning
- What to do if a Child Tests Positive in Early Child Care
- Children 2 (24 months) to 5 years of age:
- Children testing positive for COVID-19 should isolate at home for 5 days
 - Children who are fever free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications and show improvement in symptoms may return on day 6 if they can correctly and consistently mask
 - Children who cannot correctly and consistently mask should isolate at home for 7 days and may return on day 8
 - The decision to return should be made by the child's parent and in conjunction with the childcare program. Families are their children's best and first teachers and as such know the capabilities of their child.

What happens for children exposed to COVID-19?

- Children exposed to COVID-19, but without symptoms, no longer need to quarantine
- Childcare program should still notify families if a child or teacher tests positive in their child's cohort. This notification will allow families to be diligent in looking for symptoms such as fever, cough, nasal congestion, etc., indicating that the child should stay home.

These guidelines will be evaluated on a regular basis and updated as needed.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Volunteering

Family involvement is important to our school culture. We encourage all of our families to participate in and attend school functions. Being a small academic community, we rely on families to volunteer to make our after-hours functions a success. Simple projects may also be available to complete at home for those who cannot help in person.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Head of School

office@centergrovemontessori.com 317-883-0335

centergrovemontessorischool@gmail.com

Accounts

Guidance about Blackbaud and tuition: operations.cgmontessori@gmail.com

Lead Guides

**Holly James, Director of Montessori Curriculum, Lead Guide of Oak Classroom-
oakclassroom.cgmontessori@gmail.com**

Suja Adarsh, Lead Guide of Maple Classroom – mapleclassroom.cgmontessori@gmail.com

Pam Black, Lead Guide of Tulip Classroom – tulipclassroom.cgmontessori@gmail.com