

Peace Montessori School 2010-2011

Parent Handbook

Contact Information

Director: Sharon Bryant Email: peacemontessori@bellsouth.net

Assistant Director: Susan Brown Email: Tookats@aol.com

School Address: 2190 N. Salem St. #103, Apex, NC 27523

School Phone: 919-363-2461

Emergency Numbers: 919-219-4996 (Sharon) Mornings
 919-523-0656 (Susan) Mornings
 919-215-5177 (Tina) Elementary Afternoons
 919-264-0363 (Anita) Kindergarten Afternoons

Please note that Peace Montessori does not have full-time office personnel. In the event of an emergency when an office call is unanswered, please call one of the emergency staff phone numbers listed above. In the case of a nonemergency situation, please leave a message on the office answering machine and your call will be returned as soon as possible.

Montessori

We encourage parents to read about the Montessori philosophy and to understand the child's classroom experience. Books are available at any public library. Briefly, Montessori believed that children learn a particular concept during "sensitive periods". The teachers prepare an enriched environment to meet the needs of the children in the classroom. Children are exposed to materials that illustrate a concept, and the child will study the materials (work) until the concept is mastered.

Class begins and ends with a short circle time. In between, the children are free to choose according to his/her own particular interest. We avoid interrupting a child engaged in work. The teachers assist each child as needed by observing and giving lessons as appropriate. Children often work together and help each other. Montessori materials are self-correcting, attractive, isolate a single concept and have an orderly progression in difficulty. Materials promote independence, have a control of error, and are designed so that the child can repeat them until the concept is mastered.

Social Graces

Maria Montessori believed that children should be taught manners. Children are taught to show respect for each other by walking around a rug on which a child is working. One uses a material until they are finished with it, and only then may another child use it. They learn to talk in a quiet inside voice so as not to disturb others. These behaviors, taught to the whole class establish the ground rules by which the class operates. Each polite activity ensures that the classroom atmosphere is one of respect for the rights of other people. Some manners are considered as old-fashioned, but we strive to teach them: please and thank you; wait until all are served before eating; ask before taking something; handshake a greeting of hello and goodbye; use walking feet in the classroom; etc. Children crave order, simplicity, and the discovery of natural law. Manners are a sort of natural law developed by civilization to simplify our relationships.

Arrival and Dismissal

Classroom A Children's House	8:45 - 12:15
Classroom A Kindergarten	8:45 - 2:45
Classroom B Elementary	8:30 - 3:00
Classroom C Children's House	8:30 - 12:00
Classroom C Kindergarten	8:30 - 2:45
Classroom D Toddler	9:00 - 12:15

We have staggered our arrival and departure times to help with the volume of traffic at the school. When dropping off for the day, Children's House A & C and Toddler parents must walk their children into the classroom.

Please be prompt when picking up your child each day. Late pickups interfere with the amount of time that staff members have to prepare their classrooms for the next day. Families that are continually late will be billed at a rate of \$2.00/minute past their designated pick up.

For safety reasons, please do not leave children unattended in parked vehicles and please exit the school grounds once you have picked up your child. This courtesy will free up spaces and help alleviate the cramped parking conditions for

incoming vehicles. It is also imperative, for safety reasons that children remain with their parent/guardian once they have exited a classroom or the playground.

Please note that it is school policy that teachers be informed in writing if there are any special instructions or changes concerning the drop-off or pick-up of a student. Please note that a child will not be released to another individual unless the teacher has a written request.

Entering & Exiting School Parking Areas

Please enter from the entrance/exit furthest away from the school (next to CEI). You may exit left or right from this location. It is a right only exit from the entrance/exit that is closest to the school (be warned that motorists do not drive 45 mph on N. Salem Street) making it unsafe to exit left at this location.

Parent Communication

We always strive to make our parents feel welcome at Peace Montessori. Good communication between you and your child's teachers is essential to your child's progress. Please contact a teaching staff member if you have questions or concerns that arise during the school year. Parent/teacher conferences are scheduled in the fall and spring. If you need to schedule an appointment to talk to your child's teacher please call the school to set up a convenient time. School notices and timely information will be sent home in your child's classroom folder. Please remember to check these folders on a daily basis for work, newsletters, and important classroom notices.

Observations

Parents are invited to observe a classroom by appointment. This procedure will ensure that classrooms have only one observer at a time. We ask that when observing that you sit quietly in a location that is designated by the teacher. Feel free to take notes and speak softly when a child approaches you. The calm and order of the classroom working needs to be respected by all observers. Arrangements for observations are scheduled from October through May.

The best times for observations are between the hours of 9:30-11:00. Observations are for adults only. Please make arrangements for child care in advance for the other members of your family.

Student Records

Student records are confidential. Access to these records are limited to staff members and parents. No other person will be allowed access to these records without written consent from the parents or legal guardians. Records that are requested from other schools will be mailed or faxed directly. Any parent that desires a copy of their child's records must submit a written request to the Director of the school.

If a child has had a previous school experience, copies of school records should be supplied when possible.

Admission Policy

Peace Montessori has a broad cross-section of children from different socioeconomic, religious, cultural, and racial and ability groups. As often as possible, the ages and sexes of the children are evenly distributed in each class.

Criteria for Eligibility

Children must be at least 20 months of age at the time of admission to our toddler program. Children attending the 3 to 6 year old program must be toilet trained.

Special Needs Children

Children with mild physical, mental, or educational difficulties are considered for admission when special care or attention is not required. Admission will be provided if changes to the program are not required and if the child does not pose a risk to himself/herself or others. A recent diagnostic assessment by qualified professionals which identifies the child's needs within a "mainstream" environment is helpful whenever possible.

Applications, Deposits and Withdrawal Requirements

Applications may be obtained at the school or from the school's website. A \$250 non-refundable registration fee must accompany an application. Once an opening has been confirmed, a \$450 deposit is required to hold an opening. Deposits will be returned to families when leaving the program with a 60-day notice of withdrawal. Deposits will be forfeited to any new or returning family not providing a 60-day notice of withdrawal.

Please note that withdrawal notices are also required for the summer months when school is not in session. Notices can be mailed to the school address: Peace Montessori, 2190 N. Salem St. #103, Apex, NC 27523.

Enrollment

Enrollment of students is made on a first come basis given the following priorities:

1. Returning students are given first priority.
2. Siblings, former Montessori families and children from other Montessori schools are given second priority.
3. When space is unavailable at the time of an application, parents are given the option of being placed on a waiting list for a \$75 non-refundable fee.
4. When parents are notified that a space is available the \$250 registration fee and \$450 deposit must be paid within 10 days to hold the space.

Financial Policies & Additional Fees

Peace Montessori depends on tuition as its only source of funding. The tuition payment can be made monthly, biannually, or annually. When paying annually families will receive a 5% discount off of the tuition amount.

Monthly payments are due the first day of each month for a ten-month period, beginning August 1. After the fifth day of the month, payments of a late fee of \$25 will be required. Tuition payments that are over 90 days delinquent will be sent for collections unless special arrangements have been granted in advance by the Director of the school. A fee of \$75 will be charged for the handling of returned checks.

Additional fees required per student include a \$100 extra curricular activity fee (Spanish, yoga, and in-house science field trips) and a \$100 book/materials fee for Kindergarten and Elementary students.

Absences from the Program

No reduction or remission of fees is allowed for absences from the program. Peace Montessori requires a 60-day written notice for withdrawal from the program.

Re-enrollment Procedure

If you plan to re-enroll your child for the next school year, you must complete a re-enrollment form and return it with a \$150 non-refundable fee. The completed form and fee will guarantee you a space for the next school session.

Re-enrolled families must provide a 60-day written notification of withdrawal if they are unable to return for the next school session. This notice is also required during the summer months and can be mailed to: Peace Montessori, 2190 N. Salem St. #103, Apex, NC 27523.

Health and Absenteeism

As required by the North Carolina Department of Non-public Education, parents must provide copies of their child's immunization records before attending Peace Montessori.

Each year, parents are required to fill out an emergency form that should be updated with any changes that may occur throughout the school year.

When your child comes to school, please make sure that he/she is fully able to participate in all activities. Parents must inform the school about any possible food allergies that pertain to their child. Peace Montessori is a peanut free school that does not allow peanut products at school.

If your child is ill and is staying home for the day we request that the school is notified that your child will not be in attendance. The school must be informed immediately if there has been exposure to any form of communicable disease.

Please note that we do not have facilities to accommodate a sick child. A child with a temperature of 99 degrees or above, with vomiting or diarrhea must stay home until he/she is symptom free (not medicated) for a 24-hour period of time.

In cases of influenza a child must remain at home for a minimal of one week unless a note from the child's pediatrician is provided approving the child's return to school.

Emergencies

At the beginning of each year, parents complete an emergency form that lists telephone numbers where parents can be reached during the school day. Please keep these numbers current in the event of an emergency. If a child requires immediate medical attention the school will contact the parents and take the appropriate measures to seek medical help if necessary by referring to the preferred physician, dentist, or hospital as listed on the emergency form.

Medications

No prescription or over the counter medications will be given without written parental approval. Medication must be brought to school in the original container. We also request that the school be notified if your child takes any ongoing medications at home.

Clothing for Preschool Children

Each child will need two sets of seasonally appropriate clothing to be kept at school in case of small emergencies. Please label all clothing with your child's name for their cubby.

The children play outdoors each day, weather permitting. For safety reasons, please do not send your child to school in sandals unless a spare pair of closed toe shoes are left at school for your child to change into when going outside.

Inclement Weather

Peace Montessori will follow the Wake County Public School closings and delays. Please check WRAL Channel 5 for these postings or visit the Wake County website at www.wcpss.net for this information. Please do not call the school regarding inclement weather closings and delays.

Volunteers

We encourage family members with a special talent, career, hobby or interest to make arrangements with the teaching staff for a time to share this with the children at school.

There are numerous opportunities for parents to volunteer time at the school both in the office providing teacher support and in the classroom. Please share your ideas and innovative thoughts with us.

Snacks

The school's policy regarding nutrition is to provide healthy snacks. Due to the lack of kitchen facilities, children will be offered dry snacks consisting of crackers, cereal, and pretzels. Parents from Classrooms A, B, C are required to assist in providing snacks to compliment items offered by the school in lieu of payment of a yearly snack fee. Toddler Room parents are required to pay a \$35 yearly snack fee.

Classrooms with students with severe food allergies will provide a list of approved classroom foods that can be supplied for snack. Students with food allergies requiring an EpiPen will be required to provide their own daily snack and these families will not be required to participate in the provision of classroom snack.

***Please note that Peace Montessori is a peanut free school.**

Birthdays

Birthdays are very special. We welcome parents to help celebrate their child's birthday by providing a poster with photos representing each year of their child's life. Families will need to notify the teachers a few days in advance to schedule a birthday celebration. We welcome parents to bring in a special snack for the celebration such as muffins, cookies or small cupcakes with minimal icing. Children with severe food allergies requiring an EpiPen will be asked to bring in a special snack from home in order to participate in the celebration.

A Montessori birthday celebration uses a candle to represent the sun. The birthday child will hold a globe of the earth and will walk slowly around the sun candle, one revolution per year of age.

Handbook Revision 8/24/10