

Peace Montessori School

Parent Handbook 2020 - 2021



Contact Information:

Director: Sharon Bryant Email: smbryant@bellsouth.net

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

Mailing Address: 1504 Fair Weather Ct., Apex, NC 27523

School Phone: 919-363-2461

Emergency contacts: 919-219-4996 Sharon Bryant

Dear Peace Parents:

Welcome to Peace Montessori School! The school is comprised of a wonderful community of families! You will be joining like-minded folks who recognize the special value that a Montessori education will offer your child. We rely on our parents as partners in the educating of their child. We will provide information and resources to help you maximize your child's experiences at the school and will communicate with you on a day-to-day basis regarding news and upcoming events at the school. As the Director of the school I welcome you to contact me regarding questions, suggestions or if I can be of assistance to you. My email address is smbryant@bellsouth.net.

Regards,

Sharon Bryant, Director

Philosophy:

At Peace Montessori we believe that children grow and learn through various developmental stages that encompass the whole child-physical, social, emotional and cognitive. Maria Montessori believed that children develop in a sequence or planes of development called the "sensitive periods". Our program offers prepared environments that are beautiful and orderly, allow for freedom within limits that foster independence, and encourage self-paced learning. Children experience learning through activities that engage the senses, include real life objects and experiences and allow for repetition to mastery. The multiage groupings allow for younger children to learn from observing older children at work. It also enables the older children become the leaders of the classroom, role models and mentors for the younger children. The role of the teacher is to prepare the environment for learning and observe the children at work. Observation and documentation are crucial for recording of each child's individual progress of learning in the classroom. Student development is individual in nature thus children are not compared to one another. Peace Montessori's program allows for success for all children, meets the individual child's needs and fosters a love of learning for life in each child.

Mission:

Peace Montessori's mission is to create a carefully prepared environment that addresses the whole child. We strive to enable children age two to age twelve to freely interact, reach their academic potential, and grow in peaceful harmony with their friends, family, and society.

Classes & Ages:

Peace Montessori offers programs for children from age two to age twelve. Low student to teacher ratios, consistent and certified staff members make the school an exceptional choice for your child. Special enrichment programs teaching Spanish, yoga, art and music are offered weekly except under Covid Procedures.

The Toddler house serves children from age two to three. The teacher to student ratio is one to five with a maximum of ten students and is instructed by a Lead Teacher and an Assistant Teacher.

We offer two Children's Houses that serve children from age three to age six. Classroom B can accommodate up to a maximum of 22 children with 2 teachers with a ratio of one to eleven. Classroom C square footage can accommodate 22 children with a ratio of one to eleven with a maximum of twenty-two students. The classrooms are instructed Montessori Certified Teachers and Assistants.

We offer three afternoon programs. A preschool art program and an Extended Day/Kindergarten program for children of age five and six. We also now offer full days to 2:45 for the Toddler Program. Lunch for these groups is 12:15-12:45. Children younger than the age of five are required to have a nap/rest time.

We offer a Lower Elementary program for children ages six to nine and an Upper Elementary program for ages nine to twelve. The teacher to student ratio is one to seven with a maximum of fourteen with a team of Montessori Certified teachers.

LE & UE Elementary	8:30-2:45
Part-time Children's Houses	8:30-12:00* & 8:45-12:15*
Preschool Art Camp & Kindergarten	8:30/8:45-2:45
Toddler	8:45-12:00 & 8:45-2:45
Before Care	8:00-8:30
After Care	2:45-5:00

*Classroom times are staggered to help with the volume of traffic at the school. When dropping off for the day, the Children's Houses and Toddler parents must walk their children to their classrooms.

Elementary Attendance Policy

School attendance is very important in your child's success therefore school absences need to be kept to a minimum. Peace Montessori School is a non-public school and is subject to attendance requirements We will accept no more than 10 excused absences in a school year. If your child misses school, please present a note explaining the reason for the absence or a note from your child's pediatrician within a two-day period. Students who are tardy for three days to school will be marked with one absence. Children that do not meet attendance requirements may be held back from moving to the next age level.

Discrimination Statement:

Peace Montessori admits children without regard to race, color, gender, or national or ethnic origin.

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.

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 a late fee of \$50 will be charged. 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 preschool \$175 extra-curricular activity fee and a \$200 Elementary activity/materials fee, \$200 Kindergarten fee. Fees include classroom materials, participation in weekly physical education field trips, once monthly pizza Friday in addition to other field trips to plays and special events. These fees have been combined for the year to simplify and alleviate weekly payments from home. (During Covid Procedures portions of these fees will be used to help offset cost of PPE supplies.

Arrival & Pick-up Policies:

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 driveway that is closest to the school (be warned that motorists do not drive 45 mph on N. Salem Street) and increased townhouse traffic makes it unsafe to exit left at this location.

Please be prompt when picking up your child each day. Late pickups interfere with the amount of time staff members have to prepare their classrooms for the next day. Families that are late will be billed at a rate of \$2.00/minute past their designated pick up time. **If you are running late due to an emergency, please call the school to let the staff members know your status. If the main line does not pick up, please leave a message.** If a child is left at the school past 5:15 pm the staff will begin contacting the alternate emergency contacts listed on your emergency form. It is imperative that this contact information is kept updated and accurate to ensure a secondary pick-up person in the event of an emergency.

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. It is dangerous for children to be running in front of the school during drop-off and pick-up. With automobile traffic and the large number of children entering and exiting the school unnecessary injuries can occur. Timely exiting is also a courtesy that will free up spaces and help alleviate the cramped parking conditions for incoming vehicles. It is 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.

Withdrawal/Termination Policies:

A \$300 deposit is required to hold an opening. Deposits will be returned to families when leaving the program with proper notice. A 60-day paid notice of withdrawal is required for any family needing to withdraw from the program during the school year. Deposit returns will be adjusted for monies owed to the school. Deposits will be returned within 45 days of exiting the school.

A student can be terminated from the school for repeated negative behavioral issues effecting the individual classroom and students. Students are given three warnings before termination. A student can be terminated without warning for physical aggression against other students or staff members. Also, elementary students with repeated unexcused absences and not meeting N.C. Non-public attendance requirements will be asked to leave the school.

PEACE MONTESSORI COVID-19 SAFETY PROCEDURES PER NC DCDEE (Department of Child Development and Early Education)

DROP-OFF/ARRIVAL PROCEDURE:

Drop off times have been staggered to allow for specific classroom arrival for screening of each child prior to the start of school. Children will stay in their classroom for lunch, rest, art camp and kindergarten. Play time will be each class individually and touched surfaces will be sanitized between classes.

Elementary: 8:30-2:45

Preschool B: 8:45-12:00 and 8:45-2:45

Preschool C: 8:30-12:15 and 8:30-2:45

Toddler D: 8:30-12:00 and 8:30-2:45

ARRIVAL:

-Child will be greeted outside at the door as parent & child wait by social distancing on designated sidewalk marks.

-Parent will be asked if child has been in contact with COVID-19 or exhibited symptoms of COVID-19?

Fever or chills-must be lower than 100.4

-New cough

-Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

-Fatigue

-Muscle or body aches

-New loss of taste or smell

-Sore throat

-Congestion or runny nose

-Headache

-Stomach or lower/upper GI illness

-Child will be signed in with their temperature/time being documented, hands sanitized, washed,

given a mask to wear (Toddlers will not wear masks due to their age) and enter the classroom. Teachers will wear masks.

Parents will not enter the school.

-Each classroom will remain with only their peers. We will not combine or move children out of their classroom. Snack & lunch will be brought and eaten in the classroom. Full day children will rest, do art camp or kindergarten extension in their same classroom.

SNACKS, LUNCH, WATER:

-Healthy snacks, water, and lunch will be brought from home.

PICK-UP:

-Parent will wait outside while socially distancing. A teacher will bring your child to you at dismissal.

Classrooms will be sanitized before and after school and frequently touched areas will be sanitized throughout the day. Children and staff will be washing hands throughout the school day.

IN THE EVENT OF ILLNESS:

-If a child exhibits symptoms of COVID-19 parents are to have the child tested. If negative, child will have to be fever free for 72 hours without medication and other symptoms need to have resolved before returning to school. If positive, the child will need to remain quarantined at home for a minimum of 14 days. Child must have a Pediatrician's note to return to school.

Any positive case will be reported to Wake County Health Department and all parents of exposed classmates will be notified. Any quarantine of exposed students will be decided by the Wake County

Health Department. If classroom is quarantined then on-line instruction will be provided for that period of time.

Health, Safety, and Nutrition Policies

Illness:

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 or peanut processed products. Please check the back labeling on granola type bars to ensure that they were not processed in a plant processing peanuts.

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. A physician must properly treat children with pink eye or a cough due to an upper respiratory illness before returning to school.

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

Medications:

No prescription or over the counter medications will be given without written parental approval. A NC DCDEE Prescription form must be completed and signed. Individual forms are required for each medication brought to school. 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.

Fire, Tornado, Lockdown, Evacuation Drills & Playground Safety Inspections:

Fire, Tornado and Playground Safety inspections are conducted on a monthly basis. The school conducts Lockdown and Evacuation drills on a quarterly basis

Inclement Weather Closures:

Peace Montessori will send out emails announcing inclement weather closures and delays. A message will also be recorded on the schools' phone at 919-363-2461.

Child Accident and Emergency Procedures:

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.

Cell phones are difficult to trace and misinformation could be given in an emergency. In the event of an emergency 911 will be called on the landline at the school. This will directly pinpoint the center's address for immediate fire and rescue response.

Evacuation routes are posted showing paths of exit for each classroom. Teaching staff members line up the children and exit the building in an orderly fashion. Once arriving at the designated safe zone children are asked to sit as a group and the lead teacher will call the roll to make certain that all the children at school that day are accounted for. Students will not be allowed to return to the building until an all clear is given by the Director.

Nutrition:

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 peanut free 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 \$50 yearly Spanish fee. **The school requires that full-day students bring a healthy lunch from home. Please no prepackaged Lunchables, cookies, candy, nor**

juice pouches (water and milk are healthier alternatives). Please use reusable containers to keep trash to a minimum. Food can be sent in a thermos to stay warm. Please remove from the lunchbox and leave a note not to refrigerate. 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 or peanut processed products. Students with food allergies requiring an EpiPen will be required to provide their own daily snack. These families will not be required to participate in the provision of classroom snack.**

Social Graces:

Peace Montessori believes 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.

Discipline Policy:

Redirection and positive reinforcement are effective methods of behavior management of children. The teaching staff model and teach verbal communication as a means of conflict resolution between children. They also assist the children in developing good self-concepts, problem solving abilities, and self-discipline.

Child Abuse:

Everyone has a duty to report in cases where there is suspected abuse of a child. Staff members suspecting child abuse and/or neglect by a parent, guardian, custodian or caretaker must immediately report this information to the Director of the school to facilitate filing a report to Social Services Department.

Sanitation:

Peace Montessori is cleaned each weekday by its staff members. All washable surfaces are sanitized and bathroom areas are disinfected with bleach solutions. Rugs are vacuumed, tile areas are mopped and trash and recycled materials are disposed of. Professional cleaning is done twice a month. Rugs are shampooed twice a year.

Clothing

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 and label outdoor coats.

Toilet Training:

Children must be toilet trained and independent dressers to attend the Children's House for ages three to six. The Toddler part-time program works individually with each family regarding toilet training of their child. Parents provide diapers, clothing, and cleansing wipes necessary for their child's daily toileting needs.

Outside Play:

The children play outside 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.

Nap & Rest Policy:

All preschool age children attending a full-day program will be required to rest daily. The school provides individual mats and sheets for resting.

Celebrations: (Under Normal Operating Procedures)

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.

Volunteering: (Under Normal Operating Procedures)

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.

Communication and Conferences:

We always strive to make our parents feel welcome at Peace. 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.

The US Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Asbestos Hazard Emergency Act (AHERA) requires all schools to inspect building materials for the presence of asbestos. AHERA excludes schools from the inspection requirement if the school was constructed after October 12, 1988, and has a signed statement from the architect or project engineer responsible for constructing the school stating that no asbestos-containing building materials were specified for use in the construction of the school. Our school has been provided such a statement, and is, therefore, exempt from the requirement to conduct an asbestos inspection.

Peace Montessori Tax ID 01-0780223

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