



Children's House

Parent Handbook

Classroom Phone: 360.319.0587

Alexandra's Email: Alexandra.sands@cedar-tree.org

Administration Email: administration@cedar-tree.org

Website: www.cedar-tree.org

Cedar Tree Office: 360.714.1762

Revised August 2017

Table of Contents

<i>Welcome!</i>	5
Classroom Observations	6
Cedar Tree Mission Statement	7
Core Values	7
Montessori Philosophy	8
School Procedures	9
Parking	9
Arrival	9
Departure	9
Food	9
Snacks	9
Lunch	10
Toileting	11
Schedules and Napping	11
Special Days	11
Birthdays	11
Holidays	11
Communication	12
Phone	12
Email	12
Mail	12
Parent Orientation	12
What is My Child Doing?	13
Parent-Teacher Conferences	13

Financial Information	13
Income and Expenses	14
Re-Enrollment	14
Tuition and Fees	14
Withdrawing a Student	15
Materials Fee	15
Donations	15
Fundraising	15
Health and Safety	16
School Closure Due to Inclement Weather	16
Mid-Day Closures	16
Family Emergencies	17
Student and Teacher Allergies	17
Medications	17
Student Illnesses	17
Student Accidents	18
Traumatic Experiences	18
Children with Suspected Learning Differences or Special Needs	18
Items from Home and School	19
Clothing and Shoes	19
Extra Clothing at School	21
Toys from Home	21
Found Items	21

School-Wide Policies	21
Accident Policy	21
Anti-Bullying Policy	21
Confidentiality Policy	22
Discipline Policy	22
Enrollment Policy	23
Field Trip Policy	23
Non-Discrimination Policy	23
Non-Violence Policy	23
Student Dismissal Policy	25
Student Withdrawal Policy	25
School Photos on the Internet	25
Conflict Resolution	26
Child Abuse	27
State of Washington Approval as a Private School	27
Statement of Non-Profit Status	27
Statement of Non-Discrimination	27
Statement of No Religious Affiliation	27
Smoke-Free & Drug-Free Policy	28
In Closing	28



Welcome!

Welcome to Cedar Tree's Montessori Children's House classroom, for children ages three to six.

This is a special time in your child's life filled with wonder and curiosity. The curriculum is vast, including math, language, music, geography, practical life skills, sensorial impressions, botany, zoology, foreign language, nature studies and more.

In the following pages, you will find the answers to many of your questions about the school. If at any time you have a question or concern about your child or the school, please email your child's teacher at Alexandra.Sands@cedar-tree.org.

The term "Children's House" is "Casa de Bambini", translated from Italian. This was the name of Maria Montessori's first classroom in Italy, more than 100 years ago. It is a place where children take responsibility for their classroom and learning. It becomes a place they come to take care of, love, and respect.

Classroom Observations

We welcome you to our Children’s House preschool classroom. We invite you to observe the classroom in-action and see the methods, materials and culture.

As an observer, we ask that you read through these guidelines—they will assist you in understanding the Montessori classroom, provide you with the information to have an enriching observation experience, and allow the children to work within their environment undisturbed.

You will notice that most of the classroom is “sized” for the children in it. Shelves are low to ground and designed to be at the child’s eye/hand level, chairs and tables are smaller to accommodate “younger” bodies and to make the children feel at home. You will not see multiple desks and chairs, but instead see a classroom environment that reflects how children really work, play, and learn providing work spaces for individual and group activities at tables, on rugs, mats, and pillows.

Montessori classrooms welcome observations of parents and visitors, but usually not during the critical first three weeks of school. This is a time when the children begin to familiarize themselves with a new routine and a new environment. They are just learning new ground rules and the social aspects of sharing the classroom with many new “friends”. For this reason, we ask parents to avoid classroom observations right as the new year begins. Feel free to move to a different part of the room during your observation and do take a close look at the activities on the shelves and that the children are working with. In order to see the classroom as it normally operates, it is important to remain as unobtrusive and quiet around the children as possible. The children are, by nature, curious and will often engage a visitor in conversation. Please feel free to tell them, “I’m just being a watcher today!”

Look for these key elements of a Montessori classroom:

- Secure sense of independence
- Degree of concentration demonstrated
- Ability to choose one’s own work
- Respectful of each other and the classroom
- Positive social interactions
- Children of varying ages working together
- Peaceful and calm body movements

You are also free to “drop in” at any time to reassure yourself and your child that all is well. If you choose to make a drop-in visit, please do so quietly to minimize disruption. If you need to speak with the teacher during class time, please wait until the teacher is finished with the current child or lesson.

Cedar Tree Montessori Mission Statement

Cedar Tree Montessori cultivates a passion for learning, advances academic skills, and promotes peace and global awareness in a nurturing community.

Core Values

Academic Excellence –By teaching children in small groups and individually, Cedar Tree helps students naturally accelerate their learning. Independent research shows that students who attended Montessori through elementary school have significantly higher scores on tests associated with math and science compared with their non-Montessori peers in high school; academic skills of Montessori students are equal or superior to those fostered by a pool of other types of schools; and Montessori students tend to score higher on standard achievement tests.

Independence – The Montessori environment provides a sequence of developmentally appropriate academic and social experiences in which children naturally build their confidence, learning and communication skills through increasing levels of freedom and responsibility.

Community – Cedar Tree values and encourages community. We hold two parent education nights, two family gatherings, and two whole-school family picnics each year. In addition, we have work parties when needs arise. Chatting in the parking lot is a tradition at Cedar Tree, so don't hesitate to introduce yourself to a parent at pick up or drop off!

Diversity – Multi-age classrooms build the expectation that differences between people are normal and allow us the opportunity to learn from each other. Cedar Tree embraces families of any race, national or ethnic origin, religion, or sexual orientation.

Cooperation – Cedar Tree staff teaches and models peaceful problem solving skills. We assist children with language and strategies to resolve conflicts both in the classroom and on the playground. Children take care of the classroom environment, consider the impact of their words and actions on others, and frequently collaborate and help one another.

Global Perspective –We emphasize respect for nature and humanity as we share our planet's resources. It is our goal to demonstrate ways to protect our natural world and celebrate earth's natural and social diversity. We do this by minimizing our impact on the earth, and taking steps to become more energy efficient. We recycle, reuse materials, and clean with non-toxic, environmentally friendly products. Children participate in public service projects. The Montessori curriculum reflects a value for the earth and its diverse cultures and customs.

Montessori Philosophy

Below are some key concepts of Maria Montessori's philosophy.

1. Teachers should have a profound respect for each child's uniqueness.
2. Each child is born with a purpose to fulfill. If their physical, psychological, educational and spiritual needs are met, they will fulfill that purpose for the benefit of all of humanity.
3. We cannot know what that purpose may be, so we support each child's interests and passions and give each child the skills to pursue whatever path they choose. This means Montessori teachers must provide a rich educational environment, with lots of opportunities to "try on" experiences inside and outside of the classroom. The child's job is to construct the adult they will become.
4. Children who learn to understand and get along with others different from themselves are the hope for peace in the world. Conflict resolution is modeled, taught and practiced in Montessori classrooms. Teachers help children use this process in the classroom and on the playground.
5. Children pass through developmental stages in a certain sequence. Academic and social education should be appropriate for each stage of development.
6. Children learn through their senses. Montessori materials are multisensory. After many concrete experiences, children are ready to form abstract concepts. Children learn best by exploring a topic in depth, rather than experiencing shallow "coverage" of many topics. Presenting the "big picture" of concepts first helps children fit detailed knowledge into an existing structure.
7. Teachers believe that children naturally love to learn and are, for the most part, internally motivated.
8. Self-esteem is built by increasing independence. Montessori classrooms provide freedom within limits and independence with responsibility.
9. Children learn at their own paces and levels, following developmental stages. The teacher is a facilitator or guide, rather than an authority in the classroom. Much learning can take place in the absence of the teacher, with only an initial introduction.
10. Multi-age classrooms build diversity. They offer younger children the chance to learn from older students and older students the opportunity to nurture and help younger children and reinforce their own learning.

For a good article on Montessori schools in general, see:

http://www.montessori.org/sitefiles/montessori_101_nonprintable.pdf

School Procedures

Parking

It's been a Cedar Tree tradition for parents to talk in the parking lot at drop-off and pick-up. Chatting with other parents is an important way to build community! Many childcare swaps and playdates have been arranged in this way.

We are guests of Garden Street United Methodist Church. If parking is full due to a Church event, there is a second parking lot which belongs to the Church. Continue through the first parking lot, cross the alley and park in the gravel parking lot. The sign says "No parking"; however, that is only to discourage people not connected to the Church.

Arrival

Students arrive promptly at 8:45 am. You are asked to sign your child in and out each day at pick up and drop off. A teacher will be in the parking lot to greet you and your child with the Sign-In form. Brief goodbyes are encouraged as they're less painful for both parents and children. Teachers will assist if your child becomes clingy. If your child is crying, please be assured that he or she will settle in and become involved in a school activity in a short period of time. Parents will be called if the child is crying extensively or is upset, and together we can make a decision whether it would be best for you to pick them up.

Departure

Prompt pick-up is appreciated. We cannot release your child to anyone else other than you, the parents or guardians, without written permission on the Sign-In Sheet. You can give ongoing permission for pick up by listing friends and relatives on the student information form. If anyone other than these people are picking up, give a description to one of the teachers and the person picking up is required to show identification. This is required by state law.

Food

Snacks

Healthy food and filtered water is available for your child throughout the day. Children are free to sit at the snack table whenever they wish to have snack.

Parents take turns bringing groceries for snack. Please check the bulletin board in the hallway for your name and snack week. The teachers track which families have brought snack and will rotate families to give everyone the same number of turns bringing snack.

One example of a typical snack is a block of cheese, a bag of apples, and some rice crackers. Another example is nuts (no peanuts allowed) and fresh fruit or raisins. Cream cheese on bagels cut

into bite size pieces is another favorite snack. Kindly choose snacks that provide nutrition and avoid snacks that are high in sugar (Jello, cookies, soda, cupcakes, and doughnuts) as excessive sugar can adversely affect some children. Please do not send yogurt, even in individual plastic packets, as it is hard to clean out of our classroom carpet. Also, kindly refrain from sending popcorn or grapes as they are a choking hazard. Sunflower seeds and sunflower seed butter are good alternatives to nuts.

We do not have a microwave, so please don't send items that need to be heated. You will not need to send juice or drinks for snack. The children pour water for themselves at snack and lunch.

The school will provide the snack for the first week of school starting in September. This will give all the families a chance to settle in before it is time for them to take a turn.

Snack is not meant to take the place of breakfast in the morning. Please allow enough time for your child to eat before school.

Lunch

If your child is with us a full day, he or she will need to bring a lunch. Reusable and recyclable containers are consistent with our commitment to the environment at Cedar Tree. A sturdy lunch set will cut down on the number of non-recyclable packages that come to school.

Balanced, nutritious lunches (protein, grains, fruits and vegetables) will help your child learn and play in the afternoons. It is easiest for the children if lunch is in one container, such as a lunchbox, a single container or thermos. A bag or backpack is helpful to carry the lunch to and from home. (As with clothing, kindly choose items without advertising, action or movie characters.)

Please do not send juice, milk, yogurt or salad dressing as these are very difficult to clean up off the carpet. Also, do not send candy or chocolate bars for snack or lunch. Keep those items for an after-school treat. Chocolate chips in granola bars are fine. Please have the food ready to eat – we cannot cut up fruit, wash dishes or heat food at lunch. All uneaten food will be sent home so you can see what your child has consumed.

We strongly discourage sharing food during lunch with the goal of eliminating trading food and the increased risk of exposing a student to an unknown allergen. We explain that you, the parent, packed that lunch just for your child and you expect them to be the only one to eat that food. Children may be allergic to food from other lunches. Since we cannot check all ingredients, Cedar Tree's policy is to allow each child to eat only food from their home

Toileting

Teachers will assist children as needed. Feel free to send your child to school in a pull-up if they need it. Please bring in a Ziploc bag with your child's name clearly labeled on it and include a full change of clothing.

Please check to be sure that your child has extra clothing throughout the school year. Keep this stocked up – especially pants and underwear, as the transition to school often creates a brief setback in potty training. Also, since we work with water daily, it is common for your child's clothing to become wet from working with water. Look for plastic bags on hooks with wet clothes to be taken home and laundered.

Schedules and Napping

Cedar Tree offers four schedules: a half day morning program three or five days a week and a full day program three or five days a week.

Our three day schedules are best suited for children entering school for the first time. Our five day schedules are most appropriate for children showing readiness and stamina to attend a longer day of school.

Half Day	8:45 am - 12:00 pm
Full Day	8:45 am - 3:00 pm

Special Days

Birthdays

The teacher will contact you before your child has a birthday to brief you on how we celebrate this event. It is not necessary for you to bring food or treats to birthdays, but please bring a few photographs of some stages in your child's life. You might be asked to tell a story or say a few things about your child that is unique about him or her. We will sing a song and your child will hold the globe and walk around a lit candle signifying the sun for as many years that have passed since they have been born. This is a typical Montessori birthday celebration.

Holidays

Montessori schools typically don't hold Halloween, Christmas or Easter celebrations. At our school, not all families celebrate these holidays. We respect all cultures and religions and therefore do not focus on any one in particular. However, we do promote exposure to a variety of holiday celebrations through sharing.

Children are welcome to share items from their families' celebrations of these or any other holidays. Oral sharing is another good opportunity for children to learn that not all families have the same traditions.

Communication

Pick up and drop off is a hectic time. At pick up, the teachers are connecting with the students and settling in for the morning lessons. At drop off, they are supervising children on the playground.

Teachers have time for a quick sentence, but if you have something involved to communicate, write a note and hand it to a staff member.

If you wish to have a conversation regarding your child's progress, kindly email the lead teacher. She checks her email at 8:00 am and 3:00 pm. While the lead teacher does have a school cell phone, she prefers to receive messages via email.

If you have questions about tuition, fees, fundraising, or scheduling attendance of your child, please call Cedar Tree's Office Administrator, at 714.1762.

Phone:

Children's House Lead Teacher: 360.319.0587

Cedar Tree Office Administrator: 360.714.1762

Email

Alexandra receives emails on her phone and checks them in the morning before school and after school. This is the quickest way to reach her is via text message at 360.319.0587.

Alexandra: alexandra.sands@cedar-tree.org

Cedar Tree Office Administrator: administration@cedar-tree.org

Mail

For all correspondence and tuition checks, please use the following address:

Cedar Tree Montessori
2114 Broadway Ave.
Bellingham, WA 98225

Parent Orientation

We provide a parent education evening for Children's House parents in September. We strongly encourage parents to attend this annual event as we will discuss Montessori philosophy, explain the classroom curriculum, and allow parents to mingle and get to know each other! Please make alternative arrangements for your children these evenings.

What is My Child Doing?

For some parents, asking their child what they did during the day may result in “I don’t know”, “Nothing”, or just a blank, quizzical stare. Please be assured your child had a busy day. They received lessons from the lead teacher, practiced works they have done before and cleaned them up for the next person, watched or helped a friend, played on the playground, eaten snack, sung songs and interacted socially.

There will be regular newsletters outlining what is happening in class. You can also ask for a meeting with the teacher at any time scheduled in advance. You will also hear what your child is doing at the parent-teacher conferences in the Fall and Spring.

If the teachers have a concern about your child, they will contact you. Most concerns can be easily resolved with an email or a meeting. If you do not hear from the teachers – assume all is well!

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent- teacher conferences are held twice a year. At the conference, you will receive a verbal report on your child’s progress. (Children completing kindergarten receive a written report before they graduate.) For your conference, you may wish to jot down a list of questions beforehand. If you have any concerns about your child, please don’t wait until your conference date to bring them up. A quick mail can help us collaborate on solutions to any problems that may pop up.

Please make other arrangements for the care of your child on conference days.

Parent conferences are scheduled on a Thursday or Friday. Sign-ups will be available before conferences so you can choose a convenient day and time. Conferences are twenty minutes long. If you feel you need more time after twenty minutes, we will be happy to schedule additional conference time for you on a different day.

Financial Information

Income and Expenses

Cedar Tree Montessori is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit. Our school income comes from four sources: tuition, donations, fundraising and rental of classrooms. As a nonprofit, we are also eligible to receive grants. Each fall, the Cedar Tree Board reviews the past budget and sets the new budget for the coming fiscal year (July 1 to June 30). The Board sets next year’s tuition in February.

We work hard to keep expenses down. We want school to be affordable. Tuition is 95% of our total income. Your tuition reflects the true cost of private education for your child. The Board does raise

tuition from year to year to match our increased expenses, typically \$20 to \$35 a month, for the following year.

Re-Enrollment

Returning families pay a non-refundable re-enrollment fee due in February in order to reserve a spot for your child for the following year. We charge a deposit equal to one month's tuition and a re-enrollment fee. This will allow us to calculate how many spots are available for families on our waiting list.

Parents who sign a tuition agreement in March will be financially responsible for the year's tuition.

Tuition and Fees

Families pay a registration or re-enrollment and materials fee per child. These fees are non-refundable. Our current tuition and fees can be found on your tuition agreement. Tuition discounts are available for enrolled siblings at the Children's House & Elementary levels and for paying in full by October 1st.

Tuition is due the first calendar day of each month and considered late on the 5th after 3:30pm. If you are writing a check on or after the 5th, please include the \$25.00 late fee.

Monthly tuition cost does not represent the number of hours that your child is at school but represents the costs of your child's education divided among 10 months. Therefore there are months (e.g. November, December, April and June) where children are not attending but full tuition is due. Tuition is not discounted for school or family vacation, illnesses or holidays.

Payment Options Include:

1. Place tuition payment in the box located in the entry at both the Broadway and N. Garden locations with a note in the memo of your check explaining what your payment is for.
2. Send your check in the mail to the Broadway location (address below) or use the mail slot at the Broadway location at your convenience (day or night)

Cedar Tree Montessori
2114 Broadway
Bellingham, WA 98225

3. Schedule monthly bank automated check using your banking institution (e-pay)
4. Direct transfer through Whatcom Educational Credit Union banking using the following info:
WECU Checking Account Number 326274 S7
WECU Address: 600 E Holly St, Bellingham, WA 98225.

Additional Information:

1. Tuition is due the first calendar day of each month. A late fee of \$25.00 will be charged for payments received or post-dated after the 5th.
2. Tuition is not discounted for school or family vacations, illnesses or holidays.
3. By signing this agreement, you are agreeing to pay monthly or annually until the annual tuition is paid in full.
4. There is a transition fee of one month's tuition for each student for all withdrawals.
5. An unpaid tuition balance will prevent Cedar Tree from relinquishing academic files, re-enrolling or continuing services to your child.
6. Cedar Tree Montessori does not discriminate on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin, religion, sexual identification or orientation.
7. All fees (material, PE and enrollment) are per student and non-refundable.

Withdrawing a Student

Enrollment may be canceled by a parent or guardian with thirty days written notice. In addition to tuition for days attended, the family will be responsible for the payment of a transition fee equal to one month's tuition. If the teacher believes that addressing the student's needs will be detrimental to the class as a whole, or if the student poses a threat to others or themselves, the director may request the family to withdraw the student immediately. In this case, tuition will be refunded only for days not attended, with no transition fee.

Materials Fee

There is a non-refundable annual materials fee of \$75.00 per child, which covers construction paper, lined paper, art supplies, books and other materials and supplies for the school year. This fee is due at the beginning of the school year for new families and in February for returning families.

Donations

Cedar Tree Montessori School is a state and federal non-profit organization. This means that any profits are channeled back into the school. Any time you make a donation to Cedar Tree, you can request a receipt and deduct this amount on your taxes. Our non-profit tax number, as granted under section 501 (c) (3) of the federal tax code, is 91-1953283. The school can write a receipt or letter of acknowledgement for your tax records.

As a non-profit organization, we are eligible for grants and matching funds from employers with these types of programs. Please let us know if your employer has such a program when you make a donation or contribute financially to a fundraiser.

Fundraising

The entire cost of teaching your children cannot be met through tuition alone. Fundraising brings in seven to ten thousand dollars a year. We have the following annual fundraisers:

Gather & Give Gala (Dinner & Auction)	Spring
Jog-a-thon	Fall
Read-a-thon	Winter
Scrip	Annual/Monthly
Scholastic Books	Annual/Monthly

We encourage 100% participation in these fundraisers at a level comfortable for each family. Our Gather & Give Dinner Auction has a large impact on our general operation budget and we need a 100% participation. In addition, we have campaigns for particular items or projects which vary from year to year.

Health and Safety

School Closure Due to Inclement Weather

You can listen to KAFE (104.1 FM) for school closure announcements, beginning at 6:00 a.m. The station also maintains a website of school closures. If Bellingham Public Schools close due to inclement weather, Cedar Tree will also close. If Bellingham Public Schools are on a delayed schedule, Cedar Tree will hold class during our normal hours. The website for school closure information for Bellingham Public Schools is www.bellinghamschools.org. Cedar Tree administration will also email to confirm if school is closed.

Even if Cedar Tree and the public schools are open, please use good judgment whether to venture out on snow or ice-covered streets. You and your child's safety is the highest priority.

Mid-Day School Closures

In case of a power outage, we have lots of windows for natural light. However, we are dependent on electric heat. If loss of electricity prevents us from keeping your children warm or if snow falls so rapidly during the school day that the teachers suspect cars will not be able to exit the parking lot, school will be closed early. Staff will stay with students until each one is picked up. We will attempt to contact parents or emergency contacts to pick up the children. Please make sure you have at least two emergency contacts besides immediate family members.

Family Emergencies

The gate at the top of the stairs is locked after all children have arrived, for safety of the children. If you have an emergency and need to pick up your child mid-day, enter the church from the parking lot level door, just around the corner from the gate. Come down the hallway and turn left at the stairs.

Allergies

If your child has an any food or environmental allergies, please let your child's teacher know. Also, let the Lead Teacher know if your child is allergic to scents, or to any other airborne allergens.

Medications

The Washington State Health Department does not allow us to administer any prescription drugs or over-the-counter medicine unless a specific procedure is followed.

If you wish us to give medication to your child, the medication must be in the original container and labeled with the child's name and dosage. You, the parent, must fill out the required paperwork in order to comply with state requirements. It also best if you can have your doctor write a note that includes the following:

- Name of the medicine, dosage, instructions for administration
- Name of the person authorized to administer the medication (usually a teacher)
- Date authorization starts, date authorization ends and what to do if a dose is missed

Student Illnesses

If your child becomes sick at school and needs to go home, we will first attempt to contact you, the parents, at the phone numbers that you have provided on your enrollment paperwork. Please contact your child's teacher and our office staff if these numbers change over the year.

Please keep your child at home if he or she is showing symptoms of being sick or if he or she has a fever. This will prevent the spread of germs to others. A fever, runny nose, diarrhea, excessive coughing or skipped meals are all indications that a child is sick and should not come to school.

Please keep your child home until he or she has been fever-free (without the use of fever-reducing medication) and free from nausea or vomiting for at least 24 hours.

If your child contracts chicken pox, lice, H1N1 influenza, pink eye or strep throat, please call the school. We can alert other families to the symptoms. In case of lice, we will send home your child and send a confidential email alerting everyone in the class. If your child has lice, please comb out nits daily before school for two weeks. The school may send home your child if more nits are identified or may ask for a doctor's note stating your child is free from nits and lice.

At school, we teach the children to cough and sneeze into the crook of their elbows, rather than

cover their mouths with their hands. This reduces the possibility that germs will be passed while handling Montessori materials.

We have all children wash their hands with soap before lunch and snack. We do not have antibacterial soap at school. Antibacterial soap irritates many young children's skin. According to the health department, antibacterial soap may contribute to bacteria's increasing resistance to antibacterial drugs.

Student Accidents

The school staff seeks to maintain a safe environment for students, parents and staff. If you see anything unsafe, please report it immediately to a staff member for correction.

The school has purchased student accident insurance. Students are covered during school hours, on or off campus while engaged in school activities and while traveling to and from school. For example, if your child breaks their arm on school property, the school's insurance will pay for items not covered by your insurance, such as a deductible or unpaid percentage of medical bills.

Additional coverage is available but not necessary.

Traumatic Experiences

Please let us know if your child experiences the death of a family member, relative, friend or beloved pet. Separation, divorce, a new baby or the move of a live-in partner, friend or relative can be traumatic for children as well. Exposure to physical or sexual abuse and other violent acts can create strong reactions in children.

Children who have undergone a traumatic experience may act in unexpected ways. The parents, teacher and child can put together a plan for when the child feels overwhelmed at school. We will handle any behavior issues differently if we know the child has experienced emotional or physical trauma. Therefore, communication with the school is very important in these instances.

Children with Suspected Learning Differences or Special Needs

During a child's education, evidence of possible learning differences or special needs may arise. The child's teacher will meet with the parents to determine a course of action. Actions might include special accommodations at school and at home, testing to determine how to address the child's needs, in-class or at-home tutoring, and/or pull-out classes with special education at the local public school. If parents are not willing to pursue actions recommended by the Director, the family may be asked to find another school for the child.

None of the teachers are trained as special education teachers and cannot fully address the needs of all special needs students, beyond simple accommodations. Children deserve to know why they are not able to do the things other children do with ease. Without a reason, children often begin to label themselves negatively. Learning how the brain works and what the positive attributes of a particular learning disability or difference empower children to learn work arounds, celebrate their brains and assist teachers in adjusting work to fit each particular diagnosis.

Children with mild physical, mental or educational difficulties are considered for admission, five per classroom, and with both the administrator's and teacher's approval.

Consideration will be given to:

1. The child's probable success in a Montessori classroom
2. The teacher's ability and training to provide accommodations suited to the needs of the child
3. The amount of time teachers need to spend with the child for them to be successful

Reasonable accommodations will be made, provided that no changes to the overall program are required and that the child does not pose a risk to themselves or others. A recent diagnostic assessment by qualified professionals which identifies the child's needs within a mainstream environment is required. Periodic assessment may also be required during the school year and prior to re-enrollment.

If the program is not meeting the needs of the child, the teacher, the program or the other students in the classroom, the Director may require parents to find additional resources or support as a condition of the child's continuing attendance. If need be, the school reserves the right ask the family to find another school that better meets the needs of the child and will often make recommendations for their placement. See the section under enrollment and re-enrollment for additional information.

Items from Home and School

Clothing and Shoes

Here is a good rule of thumb: dress your children in as many layers as you are wearing, plus one more. If they become uncomfortable, they can remove one layer and still keep their core warm. A t-shirt over a long sleeve t-shirt is a good combination.

We will go outside every day to experience nature regardless of the weather. (A dangerous storm will keep us inside for safety reasons.) It is very important for children to experience all aspects of their world as the outdoor environment offers fresh air, play, freedom, and larger body movements.

This is also a time of social development and they need as much freedom to express themselves as possible. Therefore, it is crucial that your child have good-quality raingear and insulated layers for cool days to be worn under the waterproof outerwear. Also, please send a sweater or jacket on all

but the hottest days as the weather changes quickly in our region. Extra layers, warm socks and tall rubber boots are also helpful. It would be good if these items could remain at school so they are not forgotten at home. If one child does not have appropriate gear, then this prevents the whole class from being able to go outside.

Independence is the foundation of good self-esteem. For this reason, please send your children to school in shoes they can take off and put on by themselves. When children can successfully tie their own shoes, then they can wear them to school with a great feeling of accomplishment.

Please send your child to school in sturdy, weather-appropriate shoes that are comfortable for walking and playing. Flimsy shoes such as Crocs, flip flops, and sandals with no traction, and jellies are a hazard while climbing, running or jumping.

We suggest practical comfortable clothing, so your child is free to move and learn without feeling hindered by clothing. They will get dirty, so please do not send your child in overly fancy, or expensive clothing (party dresses) that will be a disappointment if it becomes stained. Shoes with buckles too small for children's fingers to unbuckle are best saved for special occasions other than school.

Please do not send your child with action figures on clothing or other distracting advertising or media features.

Comfortable elastic waists encourage success in the bathroom.

Long pants are best for two reasons. Our classroom is 10 degrees cooler than at the main level, and knees and shins can get scraped outside.

A warm hat that covers ears from wind in winter is essential and a soft cloth hat with a brim for sun protection is helpful during sunny days. If the forecast is for anything below 45 degrees, please send a warm, winter coat for your child. If the temperature drops lower, children must have a pair of mittens or gloves and a hat that covers their ears as well.

We work with heavy items and real glass and we want your child's feet to be protected. Outdoor and indoor shoes need to cover the child's foot completely – that means toes and heel covered.

Children will also need a pair of slippers to wear inside the classroom and rubber boots and outside shoes for playground use.

Kindly label your child's clothing with their first name.

Extra Clothing at School

Please send an extra set of shirts, pants, underwear and socks to use as emergency clothes. It is not uncommon for a child to change their clothes two to three times during a day, either due to toileting accidents, water play or outdoor mud. Check your child's hook daily for clothes that need to be dried or laundered.

Toys from Home

Toys need to stay at home or in the car. Past experience has shown that the presence of toys from home disrupts the atmosphere of the classroom. Remind your child that school time is for school work. Save that special toy in the car for a pick-up time treat. Jewelry, plastic watches, overly large hair ties or bows may distract your child or the other children.

Found Items

We have many small, appealing items on the shelf that may find their way home in your child's pockets. Often this is unintentional. If you find small items such as beads, cubes, or unfamiliar objects, please contact the teacher. The item may be a small, but essential piece of very expensive Montessori equipment. Thank you for your cooperation!

School-Wide Policies

Accident Policy

Minor accidents at school are treated promptly by the staff according to first aid protocol and state guidelines. All staff are required to hold current pediatric first aid and CPR cards from the Red Cross. In cases of emergency, the school will try to reach a parent or other person designated by the parent on the emergency form. In severe cases, such as anaphylactic shock or breathing emergencies, the school may call 911 first, and then contact the parents. There is a consent form to this end in the student information packet. The child will be taken to Peace Health Hospital emergency room.

The school carries student accident insurance, which covers children on and off campus during school events, regardless of school hours. Parents may be eligible for reimbursement of medical expenses by applying to the student accident insurance company. We advise parents to talk to the school administrator if they are interested. The school also carries liability insurance for children or adults who are injured on campus.

Anti-Bullying Policy

Everyone has the right to feel safe and secure at school. Bullying is prohibited at Cedar Tree. Any parent who believes a child has been bullied should talk with your child's teacher so that we can support your child at school.

Cedar Tree teachers or an administrator will talk with both children and contact parents of both. Behavior will be monitored with consequences set for reoccurrence. If there are repeated instances or if the teacher or administrator feels we are unable to stop the bullying behavior, the child may be suspended or expelled permanently.

What is bullying? A person is bullied when they are exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons, and they have difficulty defending themselves. Victims often have less status and may be different in some way from the bullies themselves (differences can include race, learning differences, physical abilities, etc.).

This definition includes three important components:

1. Bullying is aggressive behavior that involves unwanted, negative actions.
2. Bullying involves a pattern of behavior repeated over time.
3. Bullying involves an imbalance of power, ability or strength.

Confidentiality Policy

All staff and board members are asked to sign a confidentiality agreement. Staff and board members are allowed to share information about students and information from student files when doing so is necessary for the instruction of the child or if the child is involved in an incident when such information would be helpful to staff.

Discipline Policy

The growth of self-discipline is an important goal at Cedar Tree. Early in the year, the children and teachers set rules for a smooth classroom. Children are expected to be respectful of and cooperative with their classmates and teachers. Teachers show the same respect toward the students.

In the case of behavior that adversely affects the operation of the classroom, the teacher must intervene directly. We first try to redirect the child to the activity at hand. Sometimes a child may need to change their seat or activity. If this does not produce a change in behavior, the child may be asked to sit with the teacher until they can control their behavior.

Certain behaviors require immediate, direct intervention. Foul language, hitting, kicking, biting, or other violent behaviors are not permitted at school. The child will be removed from the situation immediately to prevent harm to others or themselves. We contact the parents of children involved after such an incident. The Director has the authority to take additional measures to prevent reoccurrences of the behavior, including suspension or expulsion.

Parents will be notified if there are frequent behavior issues. Often, children who do this are very frustrated and need some education about managing anger. Parents, teachers, and the student will develop a plan. Behavior contracts are one way of dealing with ongoing behavior issues. A contract

is developed with the child and parents and allows the child daily, consistent feedback about their behavior with consequences for both undesired and desired behavior. Consistency on the part of both the staff and the parents usually will clear up repeated undesired behavior.

In cases where there are frequent behavior issues, staff will meet with parents to share their observations and offer any resources that may address the problem behavior. In rare cases, parents may be asked to remove their child from the school to protect the other students.

Please report any repeated, unusual, harmful or violent behavior to the lead teacher responsible and to the Director. We will alert the other staff members by e-mail, word of mouth, or meetings.

Enrollment Policy

Class size is limited to 20 students. We have two or more teachers per class. We do this to ensure personal attention by the teachers. This low student-teacher ratio is optimal for preschool, and elementary-aged students, when so much academic and social development takes place.

Field Trip Policy

- All field trips must have two adults minimum supervising students.
- An adult supervisor will have first aid kit including all student medications (Epi-pens etc.).
- An adult supervisor will have a cell phone.
- An adult supervisor will carry parent contact (emergency) information.
- The school will publish field trip details in advance.
- Field trip permission slip must be signed by parent/guardian as part of the enrollment paperwork at the beginning of the year.
- Transportation to and from field trips may include: parent or teacher drivers, Whatcom Transit Authority buses, or walking.
- Parent drivers are required to provide Cedar Tree with a copy of the driver's current auto insurance and driver's license.
- Families will receive an email to inform them of all field trips.
- Student accident insurance covers students on and off campus.
- Cedar Tree Montessori requires all students under 4'9" to use a car seat or booster seat on field trips.

Non-Discrimination Policy

We do not discriminate on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin, religion, gender, gender identity, gender expression or sexual orientation in hiring practices and acceptance of students.

Non-Violence Policy

Cedar Tree strives to maintain a campus free of intimidating, threatening or violent behavior, including, but not limited to, verbal and/or physical aggression, attack, threats, harassment,

swearing, intimidation, or other behavior in any form or by any media that causes or would cause a reasonable person to fear physical harm to their person and/or property. Cedar Tree makes a reasonable effort to provide a safe workplace and learning environment on its campus. However, it cannot guarantee the protection of safety of everyone under every circumstance.

Cedar Tree will not tolerate violent behavior or threats of violent behavior directed at an employee, student, parent, guardian, affiliate, or visitor on Cedar Tree's grounds or during a school-sponsored activity. Such behavior is strictly prohibited and may result in corrective or disciplinary action, criminal charges when appropriate, or both. In the case of a student, who breaks this policy, the parent or guardian will be required to come to school or the place where the incident occurred if off campus and remove the student.

Any person who engages in behavior prohibited by this policy may be subject to exclusion from campus, arrest, prosecution, termination of their business relationship with Cedar Tree, and any other appropriate action. Students or adults who violate this policy during an off-campus activity may be terminated from participation in that activity and future activities. Reasonableness of a particular behavior will be determined by the Director or staff member in charge of supervision at the time of the incident. The Director has the discretion to take further actions.

Decisions of the Director under this policy may be reviewed by the Board if brought to the Board's attention within 14 calendar days.

Violent behavior is defined as any threat or act of physical aggression or of destruction or abuse of property. Threats include veiled, conditional or direct verbal or written threats intended to harass, endanger, or harm the safety of another and which would cause a reasonable person to fear physical harm to their person and/or property. Such behavior includes, but is not limited to:

1. Intimidating behavior which includes language or actions that unreasonably disrupt the work or learning environment, unreasonably causes undue emotional distress to another, or creates a reasonable fear of injury to persons or property;
2. Threatening behavior, which includes physical actions without physical contact or injury and implied threats to people or property;
3. Any behavior which involves any physical assault with or without weapons, throwing objects, damaging or destroying property, and specific or expressed threats to inflict harm to people or to destroy property, including vandalism.

Individuals who witness or have been subjected to any behavior prohibited by this policy or who witness the possession or display or use of any weapon should immediately report the incident to one of the following:

Emergency or life threatening situations: Call 911

Non-emergency situations: Cedar Tree Director

Student Dismissal Policy

Cedar Tree staff will work with each child to fulfill the needs of that child, and every effort will be made to provide a positive learning experience. Specific needs will be accommodated when possible.

Cedar Tree Montessori reserves the right to ask parents to find counseling, attempt behavior modification or seek other information or support and make additional support contingent on continued enrollment. The school also reserves the right to ask parents to make alternative arrangements for schooling if it is determined that a child's needs cannot be met, even with additional support. In the event that behavior becomes severely disruptive in the classroom or becomes a problem that poses an unsafe situation for your child or other children in the class, the Director may dismiss a student without asking for additional support first.

If a parent continuously interferes with the running of the classroom, a teacher's ability to do their job or a child's ability to learn, or disregards school policies, your child may be dismissed at the Director's discretion. If you, as a parent, are uncooperative in completing and returning forms, fail to pay your tuition on time, fail to follow any state or county regulations, or fail to follow any Cedar Tree policy or procedure, your child may also be dismissed, at the Director's discretion.

Student Withdrawal Policy

There is a financial hardship to the school when a family withdraws mid-year. The time and resources spent with the withdrawing family, and inviting and orienting a new family, taxes the school's resources.

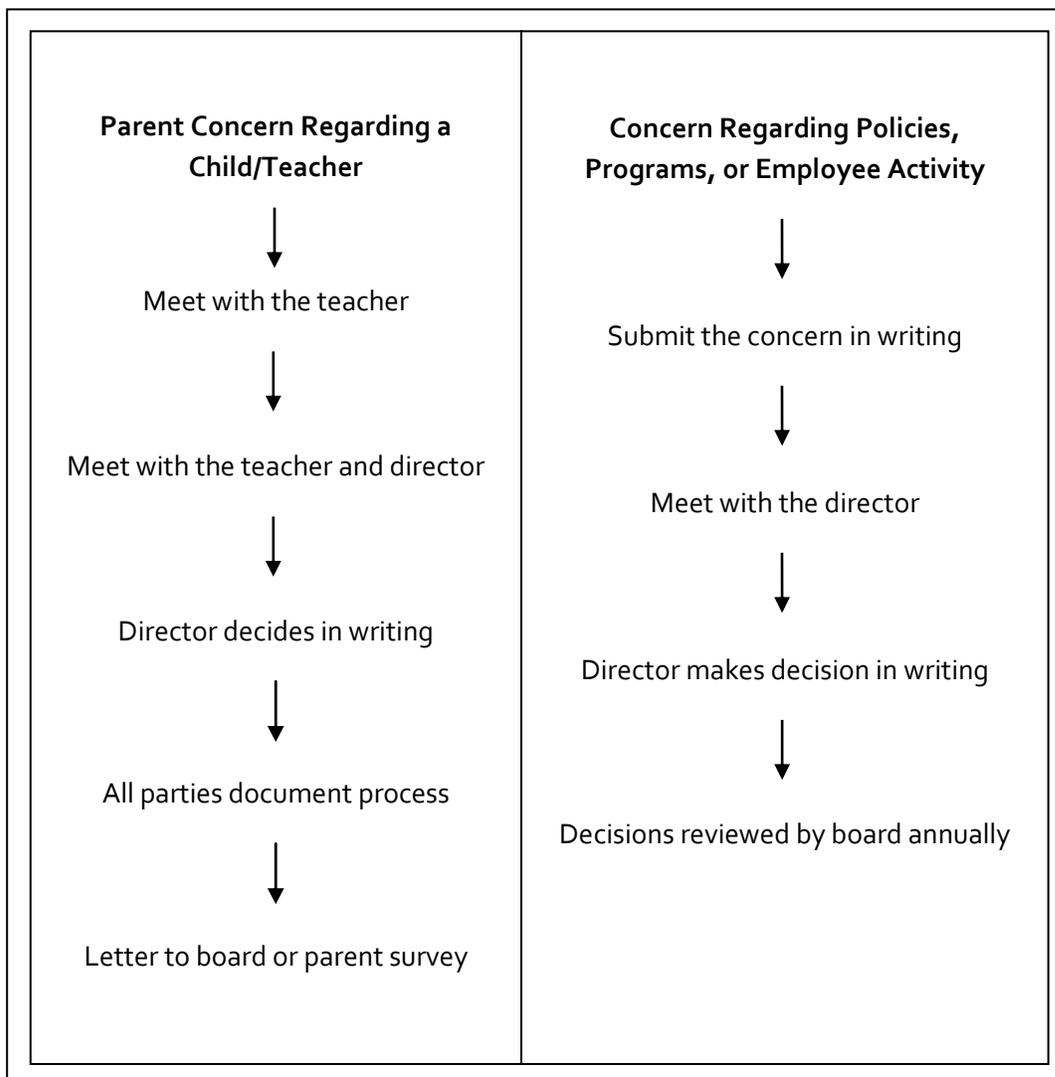
The Board decided to initiate a "transition fee" to help us with these situations. Enrollment may be canceled by a parent or guardian with thirty days written notice. In addition to tuition for days attended, the family will be responsible for the payment of a transition fee equal to one month's tuition.

School Photos on the Internet

We have a policy at school that we do not upload photos to the Internet, without family approval. By checking "Yes" and signing our Photo Release form, a parent allows Cedar Tree to use photos taken of students for use only in school-related publications, including our web site, school newsletter, and brochures. This permission does not authorize use on Facebook, or other websites other than our own. Please do not post pictures taken at school events on the web, unless you have permission from the parents of the children pictured.

Conflict Resolution Model

If you have a conflict with your child’s teacher, kindly contact her to arrange a meeting. Often, conflicts are resolved in this manner. In the event you have tried several times to resolve the conflict, but the resolution is not acceptable to you, schedule a meeting with the Director and the teacher. If the problem cannot be resolved to all parties’ satisfaction, the Director will make the final decision. If you are unhappy with the decision, you can write a letter to the board or speak with the vice-president of the board whose job it is to serve as liaison to the parent community. Here is a chart that summarizes this process.



Child Abuse

State law requires teachers to report all known and suspected incidences of child abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services. Child abuse or neglect is defined as any injury, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or negligent treatment or mistreatment of any child by any person such that the child's health, welfare or safety is harmed. Hitting a child hard enough to leave a mark is considered child abuse. School policy prohibits teachers from using corporeal punishment to discipline students.

Please see our discipline policy above.

Our employee policy contains rules to prevent sexual mistreatment of students and employees. These include fingerprint and backgrounds checks on all employees and dismissal for employees engaged in inappropriate sexual behavior.

Education and conversations at home about your child's changing body, and establishing body boundaries about good and bad touch are effective measures to protect your child from physical and sexual abuse. Ask your librarian for good, age-appropriate books on this topic.

State of Washington Approval as a Private School

We are approved as a private school in the state of Washington. In order to comply with state requirements, we undergo fire inspection, maintain copies of important records, submit enrollment information to the state including ethnicity and immunization status, file credentials, and guarantee a minimum of 1,000 hours of instruction in standard curriculum areas. By obtaining state approval, your child's education at Cedar Tree will be accepted at any other public school in the U.S.

Statement of Non-Profit Status

Any time you make a donation to Cedar Tree, you can request a receipt and deduct the amount on your taxes. Our non-profit tax number, as granted under section 501 (c) (3) of the federal tax code, is 91-1953283.

As a non-profit organization, we are eligible for grants from other nonprofit agencies. If you have a grant idea or know of grant funds available to schools, please let us know.

Statement of Non-Discrimination

Cedar Tree Montessori School admits students from families of any race, color, national and ethnic origin, religion, gender and gender expression or sexual orientation to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded to or made available to students of the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin, religion, gender, gender identity, gender expression or sexual orientation in hiring practices, or in administration of its educational policies, administrative policies, financial aid and loan programs, or any other school programs.

Statement of No Religious Affiliation

Cedar Tree Montessori is not affiliated with any religious organization. Cedar Tree does not teach religious doctrine.

Cedar Tree Smoke-Free, Drug-Free Policy

Cedar Tree Montessori is a tobacco and drug free campus. Tobacco (cigarettes, cigars, pipes, snuff, chew, etc.) is not permitted anywhere on the property — indoors or outdoors. The illegal possession, use or distribution of drugs or alcohol by students, parents and employees is a violation of this policy. Use of tobacco or drugs at school is grounds for dismissal for employees and enrolled families.

Because smoking and drug use cause serious health risks, we want to model healthy lifestyle choices to all students and prevent any chance of students suffering health issues related to second hand smoke.

In Closing...

We are happy that you have chosen us as a school for your child. We hope to make the years here at Cedar Tree Montessori educational and enjoyable for you and your family. If you have any remaining questions or concerns, at any time of the year, please call or talk in person with the teachers or office staff. Together we will make school an exciting, rich experience for your child and develop in them a life-long passion for learning.