



9510 Carmel Mountain Road • San Diego, CA 92129
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Parent Handbook

2023/2024

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Administration & Owners

Owners: Dan and Pauline Condrick
Executive Director: Arianne Condrick-Bettazzi
Director: Donna Taconi
Assistant Director: Sylvia Romero
Resource Manager: Carol Fugleberg

We are thrilled to be a part of your child's education. We want you to feel free to contact us with any concerns, questions, or issues. Our doors are always open; please feel free to call the office or email your child's teacher and we can always schedule a parent/teacher conference at your convenience. Parent feedback, both positive and negative, is imperative to the continued success of CMP.

Mission Statement

Carmel Mountain Preschool's mission is to provide a loving, supportive, educational environment where children participate in programs that promote individual growth and a lifelong love of learning.

CMP Philosophy

CMP has an eclectic philosophy that includes Reggio Emilia and Montessori influences. We value our teacher's autonomy while keeping whole child learning and intentional reflective teaching at the core of CMP. Activities revolve around children's learning and interests while fostering creativity, imagination, and exploration. We are a play-based preschool and believe most learning objectives can be accomplished through play. We strongly support science, nature, process art, gardening, tinkering, music and movement, and literacy. Our outdoor classrooms and our Glenn allow us the opportunity to be holistic, organic, and nature-based and this flows into our indoor classrooms. We strive to create natural and comfortable, homelike environments which allow us to support our diverse community. CMP staff are trained in Conscious Discipline and use these principles to support our school families in our classrooms.

CMP Core Values

CMP expects that our families support our Core Values which are:

- **We are a loving, fun and supportive family** - We respect and care for each other as a supportive, loving and fun family.
- **We put children first** - We place the best interests of children first in everything we do.
- **We are built on trust** - We practice integrity and have a foundation of trust.
- **We are organic** - We provide healthy, organic fruits and vegetables, and facilitate nature-based learning experiences in our outdoor classrooms and gardens.
- **We strive for excellence** - We hold high standards & strive for excellence in all we do.

Hours of Operation

CMP is open Monday through Friday from 7:00am - 5:30pm.

Carmel Mountain Preschool Holidays & Closed Days

We are closed on the following holidays for the 2023-2024 School Year:

- Fall Staff Development Days & Open House 8/9/23 - 8/11/23
- Labor Day 9/4/23
- Ice Cream Social 10/3/23-10/5/23 CMP closes 4:15pm for specific classrooms
- Indigenous People's Day 10/9/23
- Veterans Day 11/10/23
- Thanksgiving 11/23/23 - 11/24/23
- Winter Break 12/22/23 - 1/1/24
- Martin Luther King Day 1/15/24
- Staff Development Day 1/16/24
- President's Day 2/19/24
- Spring Staff Development Day 4/19/24
- Open House & Art Show 4/30/24-5/2/24 CMP closes 4:15pm for specific classrooms
- Memorial Day 5/27/24
- Summer Staff Development Days 6/12/24 - 6/14/24
- Independence Day 7/4/24
- Fall Staff Development Days & Open House 8/14/24 - 8/16/24

General Tuition Information

Weekly tuition is due on Monday, in advance for the week, and will be considered late if not paid by Friday. A late payment charge of \$25.00 per week will be applied to your account until the balance is paid in full.

Monthly tuition is due on the 1st of the month, in advance for the month, and will be considered late after the 5th of the month. A late payment charge of \$25.00 per week will be applied to your account until the balance is paid in full.

The full tuition payment (whether weekly or monthly) is due and payable regardless of the number of days attended, days CMP is closed, number of weeks in the month, or absence for any reason. Children who miss a scheduled day may not attend school on an unscheduled day.

For rates please refer to the current tuition schedule, available in the office.

Payment Type

ACH payment is the method of payment that we accept through Tuition Express.

Returned Payment Fees

All returned checks and declined ACH payments will be charged a \$25.00 processing fee.

Delinquent Accounts

A late payment charge of \$25.00 per week will be applied to your account until the balance is paid in full. Tuition more than two weeks in arrears may cause the child to be removed from the school until the account is brought current. If legal action is taken to collect delinquent accounts, parents or guardians are responsible for the payments of all costs associated with the collection of their debt, including but not limited to the following: any collections costs, court costs, applicable service fees, and attorney fees.

Annual Registration & Materials Fee

An annual non-refundable registration fee is due at time of registration. An annual non-refundable material fee is due at time of registration. Annual registration fees are due March 1st for the Fall Session for continuing students.

Sibling Discount

Sibling discount is only on annual nonrefundable registration & materials fee, not tuition. Discount will be applied to annual nonrefundable registration & material fees for more than one child attending at the same time. See current tuition schedule.

Schedule Change Requests

All changes in schedule require a 60-day written notice by completing a new *Tuition Policy Agreement* and approval from the Director. No schedule changes are permitted for illness or holidays. We will facilitate schedule changes on a first come, first served basis and will accommodate schedule changes sooner than 60-days if possible.

Withdrawal from CMP

Withdrawal from CMP requires a 60-day written notice to the Director and a completion of a CMP Withdrawal Form. If no notice is given, tuition will be due and payable for the entire 60-day period. CMP does not accept withdrawals during the summer session. CMP students either commit for the entire summer session or withdraw before summer session.

Summer Withdrawal

CMP allows summer withdrawals only on two specific dates - the last day of the traditional school year (mid-June) and last day of summer program (mid-August). Specific dates adjust annually. When you choose to keep your child enrolled for summer, full tuition is due and payable for the entire summer period. CMP does not allow withdrawals during the summer program.

Registration Information

For your child's safety, we require that all of the forms from your Enrollment Packet be turned in prior to your child's first day of attendance. All forms that are not returned within two weeks of your child's start day will incur a late fee of \$25.00 per week until your registration packet is complete. CMP requests that forms be updated annually. Any forms not returned within two weeks of due date will incur a late fee of \$25.00 per week until your forms are returned.

Parents Right to Immediate Access Policy

Parents and guardians of a child in our care are entitled to immediate access, without prior notice, to their child whenever they are in care at Carmel Mountain Preschool as provided by law. In cases where the child is the subject of a court order we must be provided with a Certified Copy of the most recent order and all amendments thereto. The orders of the court will be strictly followed. In the absence of a court order on file with Carmel Mountain Preschool, all guardians shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law.

Communication with Parents

Communication between parents, teachers, administration, and students is essential for effective educational development. Your teacher will electronically share a daily memo outlining the day's activities as well as a class calendar of events. Additionally, there is a *Weekly Curriculum* posted on the parent board inside the classroom that outlines the early literacy unit, associated stories, songs and poems, as well as the letters of the week. CMP publishes a monthly *Newsletter*, which will be emailed at the beginning of each month. The newsletter can also be found on the Carmel Mountain Preschool website. Parents are also encouraged to communicate with the teachers about their child's day when picking up their child. If you have further communication needs please communicate with the administration.

Confidentiality Policy

For your child's safety, confidential and sensitive information will only be shared with employees who have a "need to know" in order to most appropriately and safely care for your child. Confidential and sensitive information about faculty, others parents, and/or children will not be shared with parents, as Carmel Mountain Preschool strives to protect everyone's right of privacy. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to: names, addresses, phone numbers, specials needs information, or health related information. California authorities with legal rights may review children's files upon request.

Requirement of Respectful Behavior

Carmel Mountain Preschool expects parents to be respectful of all children, families and staff at Carmel Mountain Preschool. We ask for respectful behavior from our families at all times. Carmel Mountain Preschool reserves the right to dis-enroll any family at any time without notice for any of the following behaviors. This includes behavior towards children, staff or other CMP families. It includes, but is not limited to:

- Use of inappropriate language towards or in front of staff, families, or children
- Unprofessional behavior
- Yelling
- Physical harm or intimidating behavior
- Threatening or intimidating language or behavior
- Harassment, including face to face contact and social media
- Speech that harms the school's reputation
- Gossiping about other children, staff, or parents
- Group text chains that are hurtful or negative towards other children, staff, or families
- Any activity or conversations that impede creating a positive, loving, learning environment for both our CMP students and staff

Social Network Code of Conduct

Social Media websites are being used increasingly to fuel campaigns and complaints against schools, teachers, and in some cases, other students and families. Carmel Mountain Preschool considers the use of social media websites being used in this way as unacceptable and not in the best interests of the children or the Carmel Mountain Preschool community. Any concerns you may have must be made through the appropriate channels by speaking to the classroom teacher, the director, or the executive director, so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately, and effectively for all concerned. In the event that any student or family of a child being educated at Carmel Mountain Preschool is found to be posting libelous or defamatory comments on any social network sites they will be reported and the family may

be asked to leave. In serious cases Carmel Mountain Preschool will also consider its legal options to deal with any such misuse of social networking sites.

Mandated Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse

Carmel Mountain Preschool employees are required by law to report any reason to suspect that a child is abused or neglected to Child Protective Services.

What to Bring To 1st Day of Preschool

A detailed list of items to bring on your child’s first day will be emailed to you after confirming enrollment. Please plan on items such as spare clothes, refillable water bottle, blankets for rest, and diapers/wipes if applicable.

Items Not Allowed at CMP

We do not allow the following items at Carmel Mountain Preschool:

- toys (unless for “share days”)
- candy
- any type of screens
- any type of recording device
- gum
- money
- medicine
- bottles
- guns
- spray sunscreen
- hand sanitizer
- swords, “war” toys, or weapons
- edible treats for birthday celebrations

Adjustment to Preschool

The first few weeks of school will be an adjustment for both you and your child. Some children adjust immediately, while others take a while to become comfortable. Prepare your child by discussing school and visiting school prior to their first day of attendance.

Short Goodbyes

The first goodbye can be difficult for both parents and children. The following tips will help the transition happen more smoothly. Quick and clear goodbyes are best, prolonged goodbyes generally cause additional anxiety for your child. Create a goodbye routine and be consistent. Be assured that if your child is upset when you depart, the teacher will be there to comfort them.

Schedule

7:00AM	CMP Opens
8:45AM-10:00AM*	Morning Snack (CMP supplements with organic fruits & veggies)
11:45PM	Lunch (provided by the Parent)
12:30PM-2:30PM	Rest Time
2:15PM-3:45PM*	Afternoon Snack (CMP supplements with organic fruits & veggies)
5:30PM	CMP Closes
	*Specific snack time during that range differs by class

Breakfast and Lunch

Children are allowed to bring their breakfast to school if they arrive before 7:30AM. Acceptable foods include items such as: cereals, fruit, toast, eggs, granola bars, milk, and juice. Please use your best judgment to provide your child with a nutritional breakfast. CMP discourages sugary breakfast items such as donuts or cookies.

All children are required to bring a nutritional lunch. Acceptable lunch foods include items such as: sandwiches, fruit, cheese and crackers, milk, and juice. CMP discourages sugary food items for lunch. CMP does not allow candy or gum. If you are in need of lunch suggestions, please feel free to ask office staff or your child's teacher.

Carmel Mountain Preschool is a *peanut free preschool*. When packing your child's breakfast, snacks, or lunch please be mindful of food containing peanuts.

Dropping Off and Picking Up Your Child

When you drop your child off each day you are required by California State law to sign-in with your full digital signature. Before you leave, please make sure that you check-in with the teacher so they are aware that your child has arrived.

When you pick up your child you are required by California State Law to sign-out with your full digital signature. Please make sure that you check-in with the teacher so that they are aware that your child is departing.

After a fourth missed sign in or out per month, I understand my account will be charged a \$25 signature fee for each additional missed signature.

When coming and going to the CMP parking lot, we encourage you to hold your child's hand and proceed cautiously. Give your child the gift of your full attention when you pick them up from school. It is the greatest gift you can give.

Carmel Mountain Preschool reserves the right to terminate its services to those who disregard the sign-in and out policies.

Late Pick Up

Please pick your child up before 5:30PM. If you are late, there will be a charge of \$50.00 per child for each 15 minutes, or portion thereof, past 5:30PM. This late fee will be charged to your account.

Authorized Pick Ups

Only persons listed on your *Emergency Form* and *Registration Form* will be permitted to pick up your child. These authorized persons must first check-in with the office, show photo identification, and receive a pass before proceeding to your child's classroom. Authorized persons are required to follow the same sign-in and out procedures as parents. Parents should inform office of any non-parent pick up.

If you would like to allow an individual who is not listed on your forms to pick up your child, you may fill out an Authorization for Pick-up Form (available from the office). This form is to be used for short term authorization (i.e. when grandparents are in town). These authorized persons must first check-in with the office, show photo identification, and receive a pass before proceeding to your child's classroom. These authorized persons are required to follow the same sign-in and out procedures as parents.

Notification of Absence

We ask that parents notify their teacher directly via email if your child will not be in attendance as a courtesy.

Medication & Sunscreen Policy

CMP does not dispense any medication with the exception of asthma inhalers or EpiPens. Parental permission forms for the application of sunscreen and/or diaper cream must be completed prior to administering. Sunscreen will be applied before children go out for afternoon playground time unless otherwise instructed. Please check expiration dates before bringing to CMP - expired items will be disposed of properly.

Illness Policy

Children may not attend school if they have any of the following symptoms:

- Temperature of 100 degrees or above
- Diarrhea or Vomiting
- Discharge from the eyes or nose
- Head Lice
- Rashes of unknown origin
- Presence of contagious disease
- Other symptoms or behavior indicative of oncoming illness

If any child develops any of the above symptoms while in our care, we will isolate him/her and contact the parents for pick up.

It is CMP's policy that your child is symptom free and/or on antibiotics for at least 24 hours before returning to school. Please request an antibiotic that is given twice daily from your child's doctor, as Carmel Mountain Preschool cannot dispense medication.

Keep in mind that when children are ill, their immune responses may be lowered, leaving them more susceptible to other illnesses. Additionally, when children come to school ill, teachers and other children are exposed to illness, creating an unhealthy environment.

If your child has been exposed or contracted any contagious diseases or infections such as (but not limited to) chicken pox, whooping cough, or strep throat, please keep your child at home and contact the office to report the condition.

CMP reserves the right to deny services to a child who is ill.

Lice Policy

Children with nits or lice will be sent home. If a child is sent home with lice they will need to have their head checked in the administrative office upon returning to preschool before going to class. Your child and siblings will need to be re-checked in the administrative office ten days after being sent home with lice. For more information on lice treatment see our lice blog at <https://carmelmountainpreschool.com/its-lice-season-what-do-i-do/>.

If any child has lice or nits while in our care, we will isolate him/her and contact the parents for pick up. CMP reserves the right to deny services to a child who has lice.

Biting

Experimenting with biting is common for toddlers and 2-year-olds who use it as a form of non-verbal communication and are still learning self-control impulses. We expect a partnership with the families to make efforts to curb the biting. The teachers will also be implementing lessons to mitigate the unwanted behavior. If it becomes a reoccurring issue, a family meeting with the director will be held to come up with an individualized action plan. If the biting behavior does not resolve within a reasonable amount of time, a student may be asked to leave the preschool in order to keep the other students safe.

Ouch Reports

Should your child get hurt during the course of the school day, a Carmel Mountain Preschool staff member will complete an *Ouch Report*. The *Ouch Report* will be put in your child's art folder and can be picked up when you pick up your child. If the Ouch Report requires a call, the administration office will call one of the parent/guardians to inform them of the situation. If the child needs to be picked up, we will continue to call all contacts on the emergency card until we reach a contact. If you feel it necessary to have an in-depth discussion or meeting about the *Ouch Report*, it is most appropriate to talk to the administration or schedule a meeting or telephone conference when the teacher is able to focus on the conversation, versus the other children in their care.

Incident Reports

Should your child be involved in an incident during the course of the school day, a Carmel Mountain Preschool staff member who observed the incident will complete an *Incident Report* and submit it to the administration. The teacher will briefly speak to you during pickup about the incident, your child's role, and plans to mitigate future incidents. If you feel it necessary to have an in-depth discussion or meeting about the *Incident Report* it is most appropriate to talk to the administration or schedule a meeting or telephone conference when the teacher is able to focus on the conversation, versus the other children in his/her care. If it becomes a reoccurring issue, a family meeting with the director will be held to come up with an individualized action plan. If the behaviors do not resolve within a reasonable amount of time, a student may be asked to leave the preschool in order to keep the other students safe.

Rest Time

Children learn and play hard throughout the day, therefore we provide them the necessary time to rest and/or sleep. Rest time is schoolwide from 12:30PM - 2:30PM every day, except for kinder-prep students. During this time, relaxing music is played and the lights are turned off. Children are not required to sleep, although they are required to rest quietly on their mats without assistance. Please note that CMP provides a nap mat which is disinfected weekly and families provide two child-sized blankets. "Lovies" and mini pillows are also permitted. It is the family's responsibility to launder these items weekly and bring them back the following week. Children who are 3+ and fully potty independent may sign up for third party enrichment classes offered during the first hour of rest, then return to their classrooms for the last hour of rest time to their mat. CMP will not offer any activities or entertainment during rest time. If families do not want their child to rest, they can pick up their child at the beginning of rest time and bring them back to school at 2:30PM when rest time ends.

Dress Code

We encourage parents to dress their child in appropriate play clothes and shoes. “Dressing for success in preschool means dressing for a mess.” Busy, creative, learning play can be messy regardless of the age of your child. Please dress your child in play clothing that is washable and durable so that they can enjoy activities without fear of soiling an outfit. CMP does not take responsibility for clothes or shoes that are soiled, stained, or ruined. If you have any questions regarding the dress code, feel free to inquire with your child’s teacher or the administration.

Potty Training Policy

Potty training is a large step in your child’s life and we want to make sure that they are ready. Some of the signs of readiness are:

- Your child asks to go potty
- Your child tells you when they have a wet/soiled diaper
- Your child stays dry for long periods of time

If your child is showing these signs at school, the teachers will let you know. If you detect these signs at home, please let us know. Together we will establish a starting date. Parent/teacher communication is very important at this time.

Potty training is a full-time job. The most important key to successful potty training is consistency. Potty training will not be accomplished unless your child is wearing underwear at all times (except at the beginning during naps and overnight) for two full weeks (including weekends). If during the two weeks there is no progress, your child may need to go back into diapers and we will try again in a few months.

CMP has a mandatory underwear policy, which means that potty training at school will require students to wear underwear. CMP does not follow the underwear-less potty training technique.

Extra clothes will be needed during potty training. Please make sure that your child has the following in their cubby:

- 4 pairs of easy pull on and off pants, underwear, shirts, and socks
- Extra pair of shoes
- Diapers for naptime until they are no longer needed

In the beginning your child may not tell you when they need to go potty. Try having them go in 20-minute intervals. Begin gradually increasing the time between intervals. It is expected that potty training for bowel movements may take a little longer.

Potty training is a big part of your child’s development and takes a lot of work. Working together, we can make this growing experience happen easily and quickly.

Birthdays

Each child at CMP will be celebrated on their birthday with a birthday book from CMP and a birthday crown from their teacher. If you wish to enhance the celebration for your child we ask that you make arrangements with your child's teacher and bring in a **non-edible treat**. **If you bring in an edible treat for your child's birthday the teacher will give you the choice to donate it to the staff or take it back home.** You are welcome to bring in a fun art project, a gift for your child's class, or come in to read a book. For additional information or clarification, please speak with your child's teacher. A list of non-edible suggestions are available on our Pinterest page and on our blog.

Conscious Discipline

At Carmel Mountain Preschool we use a program called Conscious Discipline. Conscious Discipline is an evidence-based, trauma-informed approach. It is recognized by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration's (SAMHSA's) National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP), and received high ratings in 8 of 10 categories in a Harvard analysis of the nation's top 25 social-emotional learning programs.

We use age appropriate guidance by encouraging the children to use words to express their feelings to other children and teachers. We encourage children to learn to control their own behavior and to follow patterns of acceptable behavior when interacting with others. When inappropriate behaviors do occur, we believe that it is important for children to understand why the behavior is unacceptable, and how to modify that behavior. Time outs are not used at CMP. Conscious Discipline's use of Cozy Corner or Cozy Cube may be offered to help a child regulate back to their Executive State.

If a child becomes consistently violent, disruptive to effective classroom instruction, repeatedly uses inappropriate language, and/or endangers the health, peace, safety, and well being of CMP's students, teachers, or parents, a parent meeting will be called to discuss a course of action. It may be required that the parents and teacher create a *Plan of Action Agreement*. Parents must abide by the terms and conditions set in the agreement. CMP reserves the right to terminate its services at any time to any child for behavioral issues. Moreover, CMP reserves the right to terminate its services to a child who, and/or whose parent(s) persistently disregard school rules and policies.

Speech-Language Pathology, Occupational Therapy & Behavioral Observations

CMP has a speech-language pathologist, an occupational therapist and a behaviorist who do observations in our classrooms. They may observe your child in the classroom and possibly provide feedback and/or recommendations to staff that fall within the scope of speech/language and occupational therapy.

Emergency Plan

CMP has a detailed emergency and evacuation plan, which is viewable in the office.

Healthy Schools Act

The healthy schools act of 2000 requires all schools and child day care centers provide parents or guardians of children who are enrolled at the facility with annual written notification of expected pesticide use. The notification will identify the active ingredients in each pesticide product and will include the Department of Pesticide Regulation's School Integrated Pest Management web site for further information on pesticides and their alternatives. (<http://www.schoolipm.info>)

Maintaining Our Healthy Environment

To help keep our classrooms naturally disinfected, we use essential oils. For cleaning purposes, we use Young Living Thieves Essential Oil Household Cleaner to help kill germs, and in our classrooms we have diffusers to instill scents that help create a healthy environment.

Our entire school is equipped with a special HEPA air filtration system with Air Scrubber Plus to naturally reduce germs and smells. This technology reduces over 90% of the pathogens in the air along with other health benefits.

We utilize a ZONO sanitizing unit to sanitize our toys, nap mats, and anything else that doesn't breathe.

Field Trips

School sponsored field trips utilize commercial school buses with seat belts for transportation. All children attending field trip must be age three or older, potty-trained, and have a parent signature on class field trip permission slip. If a field trip is scheduled on a day your child does not regularly attend, parents are encouraged to meet their class at field trip or communicate with office to see if their child can add that day. Children who choose not to attend the field trip will need to stay home from school.

Audio & Video Monitoring Policy

CMP has a video monitoring system throughout our facility, including our playgrounds and classrooms. We have the ability to view and listen to activities on our premises, which is for the safety and security of our staff and children. This system is for administrative, internal purposes, and not for live stream parent viewing. We keep video records for one week. Due to confidentiality of other students, parents are not able to view these videos without a court order.

Staff Changes

It's likely that your child will have a teacher change during your child's career at Carmel Mountain Preschool. We have a higher employee retention than the preschool industry average. We are constantly striving to improve employee retention but statistically people in our job market change jobs every three years. We will do our best to make the change as easy as possible for your child and family. Please feel free to address your questions and concerns to our administration.

Non-Solicitation Policy

Families that tour or enroll at Carmel Mountain Preschool agree not to solicit, employ or enter into any contract with any employee of Carmel Mountain Preschool to perform childcare or similar services under any circumstances that might interfere with their role or employment at Carmel Mountain Preschool. If a family employs or contracts with any employee of Carmel Mountain Preschool or person who was employed with Carmel Mountain Preschool within one year of the date of such employing or contracting, that family is responsible for paying Carmel Mountain Preschool a placement fee of \$1,000. CMP employees are not allowed to babysit for CMP families. No exceptions can be made as it creates a conflict of interest and can lead to favoritism of children/families and provides opportunities for breaches in confidentiality and privacy. We ask CMP parents to maintain a strictly professional relationship with CMP staff.

I have been given ample time to read, understand, and familiarize myself with Carmel Mountain Preschool’s 2023/2024 Parent Orientation Handbook available on Carmel Mountain Preschool’s website under “Resources” listed as a form.

I have read, understand, and will adhere to Carmel Mountain Preschool’s 2023/2024 Parent Orientation Handbook:

Student’s Name _____ Classroom _____

Parent’s Signature _____ Date _____

Parent’s Signature _____ Date _____