



## **2018 – 2019 Children's House Parent Handbook**

### ***Welcome to the Compass Montessori Children's House***

Compass Montessori School offers an exceptionally unique educational program for students ages three to eighteen. Thank you for making a conscientious decision regarding your student's social, emotional, physical, and intellectual needs in education by choosing Compass Montessori School.

#### *Mission Statement*

Using authentic Montessori methods, the Compass community aims to nurture the whole child and enrich the lives of each student from preschool through the twelfth grade. Compass will provide appropriate challenges and support to enable each student to prepare for the intellectual, emotional, spiritual, social, physical, and societal transitions appropriate to each student's inner vocation. Our goal is to foster competent, responsible, and independent citizens who love learning and respect themselves, other people, and their environment.

#### *Montessori Philosophy*

Montessori education is based on the ability for students to absorb and learn from their classroom, school and surrounding environment with the careful guidance of teachers and other experts. Montessori education carefully uses the natural tendencies and developmental characteristics of children and young adults to develop learning opportunities that lead from student's curiosity and exploration. Through precise observations, the teacher is able to introduce lessons and experiences when the student's attention, interest level, and receptiveness are at his or her peak.

#### *Multi-aged Classrooms*

Grouping students of different ages offers them the chance to function as both learners and leaders within a diverse community. This setting provides many opportunities for students to demonstrate their own cultural differences, personal skills, and expertise in a purposeful way. Furthermore, students can utilize a wide range of learning materials to match their needs. Respect, grace, courtesy and responsibility are the cornerstones of daily life in the Montessori classroom. Older students are encouraged to mentor younger students.

As the child advances through the materials, they continue to interrelate and build upon each other. Materials that were used in the Children's House return in Elementary as new aspects of the materials are taught.

### *A Children's House*

Maria Montessori called the 3-6 classroom the Children's House because she wanted to create an environment that was just for the children and would allow them to carry out the actions they have seen in their own homes. In an effort to create a true Children's House, we ask that you say goodbye to your children at the vestibule and pick them up on the playground. Parents will not be invited to enter the classrooms on regular class days. There will be occasional opportunities where parents may enter to help with specific projects. Parents are also invited to come and observe their child's class at some point during the year. Observations can be scheduled at the front office and begin after October 1.

### *Pick-Up by Authorized Adults ONLY*

**Students will be released only to authorized adults** noted in Jeffco Connect. If an emergency arises and authorized adults are unable to pick up the student, a parent or guardian should call the school or write a note with the name and description of an alternate individual. In such an event, the office staff will check ID before releasing a student. If no written or verbal authorization is given, we will attempt to contact the parent or guardian while the individual waits in the office. We will release a student only with written or verbal authorization. For the safety of all students, they will not be released to any individual who appears to be intoxicated with drugs or alcohol. Should any verbal or physical abuse erupt, the police will be summoned immediately. If a custody agreement exists for your child, please turn it into the office. Only current court orders will be honored and will be verified periodically with the police department.

***\*Please note on the sign in sheet any information such as your child is going to aftercare, medical information, early pick-up, or if someone else will be picking up your child.***

### *Drop-Off/Pick-Up*

Annual pick-up times are published on the school calendar. Children will be dropped off at the door of the vestibule preceding the entrance of the classrooms. Please make every effort to have your student to school on time. Enter through the front doors of the school and say good bye at the vestibule. Children who arrive after the drop-off window are considered late, and will need to be signed in at the main office. Children can be picked up from the playground during the scheduled dismissal time. Children not picked up during the scheduled pick-up window will be taken to after care and charged the drop-in after care fee. After care staff can be contacted at: 720-334-0166 (Before and After Care phone) or [speckham@compassk12.org](mailto:speckham@compassk12.org) (Serra Peckham-Before and After Care Director).

*We take tardiness very seriously because it is disruptive in nature and in addition to affecting the tardy child's learning; it also can have a detrimental effect upon the rights of the non-tardy students to uninterrupted learning. Students who are late feel uncomfortable, just like adults do when we walk into a situation that has already started. It interrupts the flow of their work day and makes them unbalanced as they rush to start their day.*

If you need to pick up your child during class hours, you will need to sign them out at the front office. A Compass staff member will then go and retrieve your child. Parents are encouraged to try to keep midday interruptions to a minimum as they can be very disruptive. If you must pull your child before dismissal time please try to do so at natural transition times such as after lunch or recess.

#### *Before and After Care*

Information regarding this program can be found in the Before and After Care Welcome Letter and the Before and After Care Agreement form. Please inquire at the office for this information.

#### *Playground/Classroom Rules*

Compass Montessori uses the principles of Positive Discipline as their model for dealing with behavior issues. Parents are encouraged to inquire about, learn about and practice this method at home as well.

#### *Payments*

Tuition as well as Before and After Care payments are due the first day of the month. Please make checks payable to *Compass Montessori School* and indicate on the memo line the purpose of the check and the child's name. There is a \$20.00 late fee for checks received after the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month. If you are having trouble making your tuition payments please contact the accounting department. Annual tuition information is contained within the tuition agreement form.

#### *Kindergarten*

½ day Kindergarten is a tuition-free option when spaces are available. Full-day Kindergarten is available for a reduced tuition rate, as published in the tuition agreement form.

### **Health and Illness Policies**

#### *Medicines*

For the safety of all children, **do not** send over the counter medications to school. Licensing prohibits the administration of any non-prescription medications. For example: cough drops, Tylenol, children's vitamins, ointments, or any other products of a health/medical nature **cannot** be brought to school. The **only** exception to this rule is for medications that are in their original container accompanied by written authorization from the prescribing doctor and signed permission from the parent.

All medicines and treatments should be given to the clinic aide or authorized staff. An authorized staff member will store medicines in a cupboard or in a refrigerator, if needed, out of the reach of students, and will administer them at the appropriate time.

#### *Sunscreen*

Children who are over four years old may apply their own labeled sunscreen with staff supervision. Parents should apply sunscreen before children get to school if they so desire. Sunscreen sent in to school should be labeled with child's first and last name, and permission must be given on the permissions form for your child to apply his/her own sunscreen.

#### *Accidents and Illnesses*

Injuries, such as bumps, cuts, fevers and rashes may happen in the course of a student's day. If your student is hurt to the point that it disrupts his or her day, you will be contacted. If s/he has a temperature over 100°F+ during school, you will be contacted to pick your child up immediately. If your child demonstrates other signs of illness you will be contacted to pick your child up immediately. Please have plans for such occurrences.

#### *Communicable and Infectious Diseases*

If an outbreak of measles, chicken pox, or other communicable disease should occur, staff will post a notice by the classroom door. For the health and safety of all adults and students, the Director or the office staff may notify the Health Department upon confirmation of a communicable or infectious disease. Standard Precautions will be observed at all times. Please contact the school clinic aide if your student has contracted or been exposed to a communicable disease outside of the school.

#### *Medical Emergencies and Transportation*

Emergency phone numbers for Doctor, Dentist, and Hospital of choice are kept in each student's permanent file. Other important addresses and phone numbers are posted by the telephone. These include, 911, the nearest hospital, police station, health department, fire department, poison control center, and Compass Montessori Schools. Compass staff will attempt to notify parents as soon as possible if their student is seriously injured or needs medical care above and beyond what Compass staff is able to provide. As per the Emergency Care Consent Form, the student's physician, dentist, and other contacts may be contacted for instructions. Compass staff will take whatever steps necessary to obtain emergency care, which include but are not limited to calling paramedics, calling another physician, having student taken to the hospital of choice, having student taken to the closest emergency room or clinic with appropriate equipment. Any expense incurred will be borne by the student's family or family insurance. Please be aware that low-cost insurance is available through the school district.

#### *Allergies/Health History*

Please notify the main office before the first day of school and the classroom teacher of any food allergies or any allergies in general. Health risks your child may have should also be reported such as asthma, seizures, etc.

### *When to Keep a Sick Student Home*

We ask that all parents follow the “Golden Rule of Health.” Place yourselves in the role of other parents; would you want your child exposed? We encourage you to use your own judgment in sending your child to school. Remember, a child that is not feeling well is not going to have a good day at school. We don’t have staff available to stay with sick children. Please remember that a child who is too sick to take part in normal school activities, would be more comfortable at home. For the protection of your child and his/her schoolmates, it is advised that children be kept at home if the following symptoms are present:

- Skin rash or sores
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Flushed Face
- Inflamed eyes
- Chills
- Taking antibiotics for less than 24 hours
- Earache
- Uncontrollable coughing
- Fever of 100 or more
- Heavy Nasal Discharge
- Stomach ache or nausea

If a child becomes sick at school, parents, or caretakers will be called. It is expected that the parent, or another designated adult, will pick up the child within the hour. Children sent home due to any symptoms described above can return to school when they have been free of symptoms (without medication) for a 24-hour period and have returned to their “usual self”.

### **Meals and Snacks**

**If your child has a food allergy, please notify your child’s teacher before the 1<sup>st</sup> day of school.**

#### *Snacks*

Compass Montessori encourages good health by asking parents to participate in bringing snack and food preparation supplies for a week or two during the year. Parents can sign up for their week(s) at Back-to-School Night or by contacting their child’s teacher. A shopping list and basket/bag will be provided.

#### *Lunch*

Compass Montessori encourages good health by providing a nutritious farm to table lunch program. Contact the office or visit our website for more information on participating in this wonderful lunch program.

If your student will be bringing their own lunch, we ask that parents provide a wholesome lunch for their student with very little sugar, artificial ingredients and no beverages. Water and glasses will be provided as well as dishes and silverware. All children will eat using school provided place settings. Due to the limited time and a large number of students, microwave meals are strongly discouraged.

### *Birthdays*

Birthdays in the Children's House are celebrated through a ceremony sometimes called, "celebration of life". This is a Montessori celebration where children walk around a sun on the floor carrying a globe. This gives them a concrete example of the passage of each year of their life. Between each trip around the sun, your child will be given the opportunity (with help if needed) to share the story of their life that year and the picture of them at that age.

Your child will have an opportunity to celebrate their birthday with their classmates on or near the day of their birthday. We do celebrate summer birthdays as well. Your child's guide will let you know in advance when they hope to celebrate your child's birthday. They will send home a packet containing a page for each year of your child's life, which will include a spot for a picture and a description. Consistent with the intention behind the celebration of life ceremony, please come up with a couple of special milestones for each year, such as places your child went, things they learned to do, favorite foods, etc. Jot down something for each year of their life and make plans to send the posters in on their scheduled celebration day. We will keep the posters hung in the classroom for the week and then return them to you.

The birthday celebration will last about fifteen minutes and will begin at 2:45. Parents may join the class to observe the ceremony, but are not required to be there. Your child may bring a small treat to share with the class. Please remember, no peanuts, peanut products, or hard candy and we also try to avoid overly processed foods as well as artificial colors, flavors and sweeteners.

### *Daily Attire*

Children are expected to wear clothing suited for work and play, and independent movement. In an effort to bring focus and attention to the work in the classroom, we are asking that you **avoid sending your children with clothing, lunch boxes, shoes etc. that contain characters, cartoons, or tv/video/commercial based themes.**

Indoor shoes are recommended for all children. These should be comfortable, rubber soled, slip-on shoes that the child can put on independently.

### *Dressing for Outdoor Activities*

Outdoor activities are a part of our daily return. Please send your children with weather appropriate attire. These items may include coats, hats, mittens, boots, and snow pants. Please make sure to label all of these items. Students may be kept inside, with appropriate activities, if weather does not allow for outside activity, or if the temperature falls below 27°F with the wind chill or rises above 100°F, unless a specific activity is authorized.

### *Spare Clothing*

Compass will maintain back-up supply of clothing in various sizes for children who need to change their clothes during the school day. Please wash and return any back-up clothing that comes home with your child the next school day.

### **Independent Toileting**

It is required that children enrolled at Compass are independent in toileting, meaning a child is aware of their body and can go to the bathroom on their own. The adults in the classroom rarely step in to assist, unless it is absolutely necessary. An adult will hand the child their spare clothes if they have an accident, but the child will be responsible for changing themselves. If your child shows that they are unable to use the toilet independently or has three or more accidents a week, we will meet with the parent/s and try to come up with a plan and if the plan does not work, your child may be asked to come back to school when they are ready.

***Wearing clothes that can be taken on and off independently helps avoid accidents.***

### **Rest/Nap Time**

All children are required to rest or nap for 30 minutes. Preschool children will be provided with a cot or mat. Please provide a fitted sheet that will fit a mat that is 27" x 23" x 60", a small travel size pillow with a removable cover, a lightweight blanket, and a pillowcase to keep all of the above bedding in. It will be sent home on Fridays to be laundered. **Please be sure to clearly mark all of the above items with your child's name.**

### **Personal Belongings**

At the beginning of school, teachers will help students to learn where their belongings such as inside/outside shoes, coats, lunches and backpacks should be stored. After a while your child will be expected to care for their belongings on their own. Please clearly label all students'

belongings including lunch boxes and containers, hats, gloves, slippers, scarves, jackets, shoes, sheets and blankets. **Label, Label, Label.**

### **Attendance Policy**

State law requires that you authorize your child's absence from school and notify us in advance or at the time of the absence. Your call to us will save time and help protect your child. Students should only be absent from school in the case of illness, unusual family situations, or emergencies. A parent or guardian should call 303.982.6732 before 8:30 a.m. to report absences and late arrivals. If your student is going to be absent more than one day, you may indicate that on the first day's call. If you anticipated only one day's absence and it turns out to be longer, you need to call the school each successive day. Compass Montessori School will comply with all Jefferson County School District policies regarding absenteeism, including contacting Jefferson County School's Student Outreach Office when required.

### **Adult Cell Phone usage:**

Please be respectful of our environment, we ask that you not be on your cell phone when you enter our community. Please end your conversations before entering our rooms and respect the other people around you who are working. Please silence your phone or have it on vibrate while in our community.

### **Discipline**

The school promotes 'teamwork' with parents on discipline matters. We are using the principles of Positive Discipline at school, and encourage parents to do the same at home. While at school, students are expected to carry themselves in a way that allows each student a safe and peaceful learning environment. State law and Jefferson County policy states that certain behaviors can lead to suspension and, possibly, expulsion. See the Jefferson County Student Conduct Code for specific behaviors and consequences. All parents and students are required to read the Jefferson County Code of Conduct, and sign off that they have done so at time of registration.

### **Issues Resolution**

Building a trusting bond between parents, students, and teachers is the cornerstone of a meaningful personal and educational relationship. Please speak directly with your child's teacher if you have any questions, comments, or concerns. If you are not satisfied with the response, feel free to discuss your concerns with the Principal, who may arrange additional meetings as necessary. In addition, if parents are concerned about specific unresolved issues related to the preschool, Before Care or After Care they could call Jefferson County Social Services at 303.271.4069 and/or file a complaint at The Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Child Care, 1575 Sherman St., Denver, CO 80203-1714 or call (303) 866-5958 or 1-800-799-5876. Further unresolved issues can also be brought to the Board of Directors through the

established grievance policy. In the event the student or parent is having difficulty adjusting to any part of the school or its program, a special conference will be called to discuss alternatives.

### **Family Service Commitment**

Due to the limited financial resources available to charter schools and to promote a sense of community, we rely heavily on parent and family assistance to keep the school running. Families of enrolled students are asked to complete 50 hours of community service per academic year. Assistance will be needed for a variety of school activities. Discuss classroom community service opportunities with your student's teacher and school-wide opportunities with the office staff. Families who are unable to meet the 50 hour request for service may 'buy out' their time. Contact the CMEF for more information about service hours. A child's enrollment is not contingent on these requests, but they greatly benefit the school.

### **Registration and Admission to Compass Schools**

#### *Enrollment*

Enrollment information is available on our website and follows the Jeffco public school lottery procedures.

#### *Enrollment Process Priorities*

The enrollment process is as follows: Student who apply in the first round lottery are placed in spaces available. All remaining applicants are placed on a waitlist by lottery. Priorities are as follows: currently enrolled students have first priority, students of CMS employees have second priority, siblings of currently enrolled students have third priority.

Before the start of any school year, if priority status has been given to a sibling of an enrolled student, and the original student then withdraws, the sibling's enrollment status will be changed to non-sibling.

### **Required Forms and Documents**

The following forms and documents are required for admission to Compass Montessori School:

- Emergency Contact Form
- Permissions Form
- General Health Appraisal Form
- Tuition Information and Agreement Form Updated Immunization Record
- Before and After Care Agreement

All forms must have appropriate signatures, be updated annually and be on file at the school.

#### *Immunizations and Medical Records*

As per registration requirements, Compass will maintain a personal file for each student. An examination, including health information and immunization record (or signed exemption form)

is required for each student. Students are permitted to attend school only after all documents, data and signatures are on file.

### *Emergency Numbers and Change of Address Notification*

Please notify the school immediately if you change your address, telephone number or any emergency contacts and numbers. This information is critical in case of an emergency. Children will be released only to authorized adults posted in the students' file, unless a parent or guardian has called the school or written a note with the name and description of an alternate individual. In such an event, the teacher will check ID before releasing a student. Please keep phone numbers, addresses, and emergency contacts updated via JeffcoConnect.

### **Students with Special Needs**

Compass Montessori Schools shall comply with all Jefferson County Board of Education approved policies and regulations, and the requirements of federal and state laws concerning the education of students with special needs. Compass Montessori Schools are also in full compliance with the American Disabilities Act. Please make sure a transition meeting with the current school takes place before determining final enrollment at Compass.

### **Withdrawing Students by Parents or Guardian**

Parents or guardians are required to give a 30-day written notice if withdrawing their student from Compass Schools or any tuition and/or before and/or aftercare deposits may be forfeited.

### **Classroom Placement**

Your child's classroom placement is something that we take very seriously. We take many factors into account so that our classrooms are balanced by grade, gender, learning styles, and social dynamics. The teachers at both the outgoing level and the incoming level meet to discuss the best classroom placement for each child who is transitioning to the next level. This is a lengthy process and a great deal of consideration is given to each transitioning child. As a parent, if you have a suggestion for classroom placement, please talk with your child's current classroom teacher about your thoughts. Your suggestion will become one of the factors that are considered during the teachers' transition meetings.

### **Scholarships and Free or Reduced Lunch**

Some children may qualify for free meals or for reduced price meals. To apply for free or reduced price meals, use the Free and Reduced Price School Meals Application, which is available at the office and on our website.

Limited scholarships are awarded based on financial need for preschool, full day kindergarten, and before and after care. If you would like to be considered for one of these scholarships,

please complete an Information Release form which will enable your Free and Reduced Price School Meals Application to be used for consideration.

Tuition Scholarships will be awarded in September of each year. Eligibility will be based on need. Scholarship recipients must maintain a good attendance record. Failure to do so may result in scholarship suspension or revocation.

### **Schedules and School Closures**

The School Calendar is published on the website at [www.Compassmontessori.org](http://www.Compassmontessori.org) and also is published in our weekly and monthly correspondances.

#### *School Closures and Snow Days*

If the Wheat Ridge or Golden Jefferson County schools are to be closed due to storm and road conditions, Compass schools will be closed. Please do not call the offices to ask if school will be closed. This information will be broadcast over the following radio stations: KHZ (560), KHOW (630), KNUS (710), KOA (850), KIMN (950), KKBB (1090), KDEN (1340), KOSI (1430), KLAK (1600) or local TV stations.

#### *Snow Schedule on days when Jefferson County delays the start of school*

Students will arrive 1.5 hours after their scheduled start time on days determined to be delayed start days.

#### *Pick up schedule in case of heavy snow or cancellations*

Early release days due to inclement weather are dismissed 1.5 hours earlier than their scheduled release time.

### **Communication**

Compass Montessori Schools have an open door policy. Feel free to call the school with any **questions, concerns, or comments**. Staff will address your specific situation or direct you to the appropriate person. Please bring student concerns to your student's teacher and school-wide or policy concerns to the Principal.

#### *WAG and MAG*

A Month at a Glance and Week at a Glance distributed on a regular basis, and contain important information, announcements and upcoming events. This is a valuable source of information about each classroom, as well as school-wide happenings.

#### *Website*

Compass' website is [www.compassmontessori.org](http://www.compassmontessori.org). This wonderful and extensive site will give you up-to-date details around curriculum, calendar, schedule and other important details.

### *Special Events*

Occasional E-mailings are required to inform parents of special events, such as speakers, elections, or changes in school policies.

### *Student/Parent/Teacher Conferences*

Student/Parent/Teacher conferences are held in the fall and spring of each school year. Should you have an immediate concern, you may request a conference at any time. Please call the office to schedule an appointment with your student's teacher.

### *Visitors and Community Service Assistant*

Parents are encouraged to visit the school. Staff will conduct tours on a monthly basis. Parents are also encouraged to observe classroom activities during times set aside on classroom calendars. Please check in the main office to schedule visitations. Classroom observations are limited to one adult at a time and by appointment only. Please enter the campus grounds and classroom areas with respect. After 'normalization,' students are expected to self-regulate and manage their time during the school day with guidance from their teacher-facilitators. Normalization, generally, occurs after about six weeks. Your student's teacher can help parents understand the Montessori environment through a guided observation process. Please contact office staff to make arrangements in advance to visit or tour the schools, and schedule observations with the teacher and office staff.

All visitors and community service assistants will sign the visitors' book located in front of the office at each campus. The date, signature, home address, and purpose of the visit will be logged in the book.

### **Field Trips, Going Out and Special Activities**

Field trips are not an integral part of the education of your young student. Young children are better served by bringing parts of our community to them in the safety and comfort of their classroom environment. Few if any field trips will be taken at this level. Any information regarding field trips will be sent home in advance.

### **Health and Safety**

Compass Montessori Schools comply with all local and state rules and regulations by providing an environment that is free of all known health and safety hazards in accordance with all Social Services, the Health Department and School District rules. We make a conscientious effort to correct any situation that could endanger the health and safety of students and adults at our school. Please help us identify any safety hazards.

### *Tornadoes and High Winds*

When a tornado or high wind warning is issued, students will be taken away from windows and into an interior hallway. Teachers will indicate that students need to get into the tucked position. For high winds, teachers will decide if it is safe for students to stay in the classroom.

### *Fires and Fire Drills*

All students and staff will practice fire drill evacuations on a regular basis. Two different routes or evacuation plans will be posted in the hall by each classroom door. Staff will familiarize themselves with these plans and be ready to execute them when the fire alarm goes off. Fire extinguishers will be easily accessible, in the event a small fire breaks out. There is no smoking allowed in the building or on school grounds.

### *Locating a Lost Child*

Teachers will first check out their classroom and surrounding area. The Director or Principal will be notified immediately if a child is lost and begin a search. Parents will be informed of the circumstances. Teachers post outside their classroom a daily schedule of children's activities and whereabouts from arrival to dismissal. This schedule is also available in the office.

### *Reporting Student Abuse*

All Compass Montessori staff members are required, by law, to report any known or suspected student abuse or neglect to the proper Social Service or law enforcement agency and Principal. To avoid any misconceptions, please inform your student's teacher as to the nature of any birthmarks, cuts, bruises, or scars.

### *Asbestos Inspections and Abatement*

The schools have conducted an extensive inspection and evaluation of asbestos containing materials in its buildings. The results of this work established the basis for our plans to control or remove asbestos from school buildings. Our work also brings us into compliance with the Federal 1986 Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act. The results of inspections and evaluation have been summarized in an asbestos management plan for the school. The plan is on file at each school building and at the Facilities Building. You are welcome to review our asbestos management plan at any time during regular business hours.

### *Alcohol, Tobacco, Other Drugs and Weapons*

Alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, non-prescription drugs, illegal substances, or weapons will not be allowed in the school, on the grounds of Compass Montessori Schools nor at any Compass sponsored activity. Use, possession, or purchase of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, illegal substances, or weapons by students will result in an automatic suspension or expulsion from school and possibly the school district.

