

# A Caring Place Parent Handbook

**\*Please see updated Health & Safety Policy Document for changes due to COVID\***

Dear Parents,

“A Caring Place” welcomes you to our unfolding Montessori Environment. Maria Montessori said “Freeing the child to learn through his own efforts is the true beginning and end of early education. “A Caring Place” exists to help children grow physically, emotionally, socially and intellectually. Maria Montessori devised a method of education which stressed the importance of early education. She saw the importance of meeting the needs of the “whole child”.

The environments in which the child develops is crucial. We try to provide one which is warm, safe and stimulating. Each classroom, or prepared environment, “is child-size and child-centered. Children are given the chance to move, make choices, socialize and develop intellectually in a noncompetitive atmosphere.

Our concept of a Montessori Center is a place where parents and other members of the community can learn about the philosophy and methods of Maria Montessori and where children can have a happy and productive early learning experience.

## **History**

The school was founded in 1962, as The Carey School, to provide residents of the Windward Oahu area with a quality alternative in day care and early childhood education. It was owned and operated by the Carey Family. Caren Leder (Carey) work as the Director of the center from 1975-2015. Her daughters Jessica Macdonald and Tiffany Barker both attended the school as children and now run the school together as Director and Assistant Director. Effective October 2001 they formed a partnership to purchase the property and the buildings. Together they continue this family legacy, providing the highest of quality care under the new name "A Caring Place".

## **Admission Policy**

We provide Montessori instruction and child care programs for children from 6 weeks - 6 years of age without regards to race, color, sex, religion, national origin or ancestry. Children are accepted as space becomes available. Children with special needs are accepted. The director and parents assess the special needs and determine whether the school will be able to meet these needs.

## **Program**

The programs are licensed by the Department of Human Services to serve a maximum of 88 children. The Infant and Toddler is licensed for 24 children and the preschool (GCC) is licensed for 64 children.

In addition to the developmental phase of our child care services, we provide a nutritious hot lunch and two snacks (n/a infant). There is no breakfast program at this time.

Home lunch can be substituted for the allergic child or one who has dietary restrictions (there is no tuition credit for home lunch students.) Meals are served in a friendly family style (n/a infant).

## **Orientation**

All incoming students start with a phase in orientation in which the child is introduced to the new learning environment and caregivers. The orientation is conducted during the child's first week of school. The orientation schedule is as follows: 1<sup>st</sup> day child stays for one hour, second day child stays for 1-2 hours, third day child stays for 2-3 hours, fourth day the child stays for 4 hours, and the fifth day child stays for 6 hours. Changes to this schedule will be made at the center's discretion based upon how the child is adjusting to the program. If needed, the orientation schedule will be stretched out to allow for a more gradual transition. During the orientation week, the Caregivers and Teachers will conduct a Student History to gain a better understanding of the child's development and needs. When the child is transitioning to the next age grouping up, the same orientation process is followed.

Children with identified handicaps are integrated on an individual basis after consultation with parent and physician to determine how our program can best meet the individual child's need.

**All required forms must be completed prior to the first day.**

## **Staff**

Each class is directed by a Montessori Trained teacher. Montessori teacher training requires extensive course work and practice teaching. Assistant staff and child care aides must meet the D.H.S. requirements.

## **Check In and Check Out**

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As you enter the school with your child it is your responsibility to sign him/her in. the attendance sheets are located on the front counter for the children in Room I and Room II. Infants and Toddlers are located in the classrooms. Parents are to find their child's name and sign time in and initial. When you pick up your child you must also sign time out and initial. If any other person will be picking your child up from school and is not listed on your emergency card, you must call the school. A picture ID will be required. THE FRONT DOOR AND GATE MUST BE CLOSED AT ALL TIMES. Parents will provide all transportation to and from school. Children shall be secured in approved child restraint.

## **Accidents and Emergency Procedures**

A parent will be notified in the event of an accident or illness. All staff are certified in first aid and CPR. If we are unable to contact either parent, we will call the physician noted on your emergency card and his/her advise will be followed. In the event that emergency care is needed we will call 911 to transport to the nearest medical facility ( Castle Hospital) him/her assigned caregiver will accompany the child. Parents are expected to have someone available to pick up their child within, and no longer than, one hour from the time we called. We are not equipped to provide isolation from the other children any longer than that time frame. We are covered by a general liability insurance.

## **Reporting of Illness, Injury, or Death**

Under HAR 17-891.1-41(c) and 17-895-45(c), all child care facilities and homes regardless of the ages permitted to accept and care for must report to the Department of Human Services Child Care Licensing Unit within one working day of occurrence the death of a child or employee, and any illness or injury received at the child care facility that results in a child's hospitalization.

## **Tsunamis, Hurricanes and Flooding**

We are currently within the evacuation limits. In the event of a natural disaster, we will begin evacuation procedure. In the event of a warning, the following steps will be taken to notify you:

1. Civil defense sirens
2. Radio announcements ( K-59 am)
3. Remind App notification sent out

Once you receive the alert, please come as quickly as possible or send someone for your child immediately. Don't panic, your child will be cared for by our competent staff until you pick him/her up. All families should have a plan beforehand. Please see our Emergency

Plan for more info.

## **Clothing and Items You Are Expected to P r o v i d e**

Please send your children in comfortable play clothes. Label all clothing and footwear with your child's name. During the winter and rainy season, please send, a jacket or sweater. **WE WILL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR SOILED OR LOST CLOTHING.** Footwear is only required on field trips. Each child will be provided with a plastic cubby basket.

You will need to provide

1. Extra changes of clothing 2-3 sets.
2. Rest blanket, no larger than crib size.
3. Light weight blanket to cover within the colder months.

Mark all items with large letters. No backpacks please. All contents must fit in the basket. All items are sent home weekly on Friday for cleaning.

## **Infant Toddler items to Bring:**

1. Disposable diapers min. 12 daily needed on hand.
2. Extra clothing 2 or 3 sets.
3. Rest quilt no larger than crib size
4. Bottles and supplies
5. Infants- baby food, formula, and/or breast milk

## **Diapering Procedure**

### **1.PREPARE**

- If you will use diaper cream, dispense it onto a tissue now.
- Bring your supplies (e.g., clean diaper, wipes, diaper cream, gloves, plastic or waterproof bag for soiled clothing, extra clothes) to the diapering area.

### **2. CLEAN CHILD**

- Place the child on diapering surface and unfasten diaper.
- Clean the child's diaper area with disposable wipes. Always wipe front to back!
- Keep soiled diaper/clothing away from any surfaces that cannot be easily cleaned. Securely bag soiled clothing

### **3. REMOVE TRASH**

- Place used wipes in the soiled diaper.
- Discard the soiled diaper and wipes in the trash can.
- Remove and discard gloves, if used.

### **4. REPLACE DIAPER**

- Slide a fresh diaper under the child.
- Apply diaper cream, if needed, with a tissue or a freshly gloved finger.
- Fasten the diaper and dress the child.

### **5. WASH CHILD'S HANDS**

- Use soap and water to wash the child's hands thoroughly.

- Return the child to a supervised area.

## **6. CLEAN UP**

- Wipe up any visible soil with damp paper towels or a baby wipe.
- Wet the **entire surface** with disinfectant; make sure you read and follow the directions on the disinfecting spray, fluid or wipe. Choose disinfectant appropriate for the surface material.

## **7. WASH YOUR HANDS**

- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water

## **Classroom Description**

### **Licensed Infant – Toddler Program**

To provide our community with the needed service of quality child care, we opened the Toddler program in September of 1987. We also understood the need and desire for an Infant program serving 6 weeks to 18 months. The Infant area cares for 12 infants with a 1 to 4 caregiver ratio. The Toddler program, ages 18-36 months also has 12 with a 1 to 6 caregiver ratio. The environments have been equipped to meet the physical, emotional, social, cognitive and psychological needs of this developmental stage.

### **Licensed Group Childcare Center**

This Program serves children ages 2 years to 6 years old.

#### **Toddler Too**

Parents have expressed an interest in a program that would provide for the developmental needs of the Transitional Toddler. Children entering this program must be between 2 and 3 years of age. There are 24 children with a staff ratio of 1 to 8. Children do not have to be potty trained for acceptance. This environment has been equipped with developmentally appropriate educational activities using the Montessori methods and presentation.

#### **Montessori 3-6**

Our Montessori 3-6 Program has up to 40 children with two teachers and two child care aides this is a fully equipped Montessori environment.

## Curriculum Program

A Caring Place uses the Montessori Methods of education for the young child. Children experience activities in the following areas: math, language, social studies, science , art music, health and physical education.

Our classroom environment is designed to both stimulate group activities and to allow the child special individual space as needed to develop. Lunch is served family style and children are encouraged to socialize at this time with staff and peers. At circle time, the children share their life experiences and new ideas. The environment, our lunch program, and circle time aid us in meeting our students social and developmental needs.

## Child Care Service / Hour of Operation

A Caring Place is in operation 12 months per year. We are open Monday through Friday from 8:00 am-4:00 pm. See our calendar for holidays and vacation dates. The following schedules are available:

Full Day.....	8:00 am-4:00 pm daily
MWF Full Day (Infant & Toddler program only) .....	8:00 am-4:00 pm
Half Day.....	8:00 am-12:00pm daily

All of the above schedules are served both lunch and snacks. Parents will provide lunch for children on special diets or who have food restrictions. Parents are to provide meals for the infants until ready for table food

The school closes promptly at 4:00. However, if you are late in picking up your child, he/she will be taken care of until you arrive. A late pick up fee will be assessed for all late pick ups.

**Habitual tardiness shall result in termination of services.**

## **Health and Medical Requirements**

Each child is required to have a DHS Form 908 and a DOE Form 14 with a TB clearance. This form is available at your physician's office and must be updated.

Any recommendations regarding special care should be noted by your physician e.g. no cow's milk, food allergies etc.

Attendance records are kept on all children. Parents are required to call the school if your child is absent and must report any illness. If your child is sick or has a contagious disease he/she should not be in school.. We shall assume that a child is ill when he/she cries and complains of pain (earache, toothache, headache) even in the absence of a fever. Please see our Ill Child Policy for details.

We do not give any "over the counter" medication. Only medication prescribed for the child by a physician, in its original container and with a current date, will be administered at school. Forms are to be signed by the parent with directions and times to be given.

Infant/Toddler children will be given prescribed/ recommended medication. Medication must be in its original container and display a current date.

We will not apply sunscreen at school. Please apply before school and provide a hat or other sun clothing if needed.

## **Financial Arrangements and Change of Schedule**

Tuition payments and questions relating to schedules are handled by the Director only, during the hours of 8:00 am - 4:00 pm.

Payments are due on the first of each month and must be paid no later than the 5th. There will be a service charge for all returned checks. the procedure for changes and withdrawals is explained in the financial agreement.

All tuition rates are based on a yearly tuition that has been divided into equal monthly payments. Registration is done yearly for all new and returning students.

All changes of service will be four weeks' notice prior to the effective date of change.



## **Bulletins**

A monthly bulletin is prepared during the first week of each month to notify you of activities, special interests and current happenings. Bulletins are posted on the school website and sent out via the Remind App. Please take the time to read these monthly.

## **Fund Raising**

The children will not be exploited in activities that would be detrimental to our children or the program. We do take part in a semi yearly fund raiser in which proceeds are used towards new playground equipment or additional supplies to supplement our program.

## **Birthdays and Special Occasions**

All treats must be store bought in its original container. **No homemade treats.** For birthdays, please communicate directly with your child's teacher to coordinate. For holiday celebrations, please follow the sign-up guidelines as they are sent out on the Class Dojo. All treats need to be dropped off with your child on the morning of the celebration.

## **Excursions**

Excursions are planned at the discretion of the teacher. Excursions are planned to supplement or enrich the child's life experiences. Infant and Toddler programs go on walks in large strollers. An excursion permission slip will be sent out prior to all trips. If you do not want your child to participate you must make other arrangements for that day. The extended day children, 4 1/2 and older, walk to the Kailua Library every other week. NO beach excursions.

## **Transportation**

Students shall not be transported in vehicles by center staff. During excursions, transportation will be provided by commercial bus service (excluding infants and toddlers).

## **Parent Conferences**

This is your opportunity to meet your child's teacher one on one to discuss goals and ideas. Your input and understanding of our program is essential in meeting your child's needs. The conferences are scheduled mid-year and at the discretion of the teaching staff. All information on children attending our program is confidential and releasing it requires a signed permission form unless it is an emergency.

## **Returning of “Borrowed Materials”**

Montessori learning environments are filled with tiny and beautiful objects which sometime find their way into pockets. If you should see your child at home with something you suspect is from school, we would be most grateful if you would return it.

Clothing that has been borrowed from other children or lost and found needs to be washed and returned as soon as possible please.

## **Special Problems**

Daily progress reports will NOT be made by the school. However, if a problem arises before your scheduled conference, the teacher will notify you and schedule a meeting. Unsatisfactory conduct by students will be handled on an individual basis. Disruptive and destructive behaviors may result in separation or withdraw from our program. If you feel the need for a special conference, please call for an appointment.

The staff at the school will use “ time out “ as needed for any discipline problems. Corporal punishment is not allowed.

The staff member who remains until closing has been asked to refer any problems to the Director. It is unlikely that this staff person will be able to give a valid assessment of the problem.

If a family problem occurs, we would appreciate your notifying the Director regarding any special handling of the situation.

## **Communication**

Our goal is to provide the best possible child care available. This service can only be accomplished by observation, evaluation and feedback. We are utilizing the Class Dojo (Teachers) and Remind App (Director/office) for communication. Each teacher is available to speak with parents as needed.

We strongly encourage all of you to bring any concerns to your child’s teacher or the attention of the Director.

Infant parents are required to fill - out daily reports (feeding guide) . Please use the comment section to inform caregivers of any special instruction and information.

### **Grievance - Conflict Procedure**

When, and if, a conflict or situation arises please follow the steps below. Proceed through all the steps carefully and fully. Please review the Parent Handbook, financial Statement or any other information provided you by the school so that you will understand the school policies clearly.

Step 1 - Speak directly to your child's teacher at an appropriate time and place. Make an appointment.

Step 2 - Speak to the Director, at an appropriate time.

The Director will make a final nonnegotiable decision based on all the information obtained and school policies.

### **Release of Student Information**

Student records and information shall be kept confidential. The release of any information shall only be permitted upon written consent by the parent or guardian to the named person or agency or if an emergency arises. A Student Information Release Form will be provided.

# INFANT SAFE SLEEPING POLICY

## GUIDELINES FOR SAFE SLEEPING STRATEGIES FOR CHILDREN UNDER ONE YEAR OF AGE

The American Academy of Pediatrics has established sleep environment strategies that reduce the risk of sleep-related infant deaths, including Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and Sudden Unexplained Infant Death (SUID) that occur during sleep. The following is recommended and will be implemented for children under the age of one at A Caring Place:

- **Place your baby to sleep on his back for every sleep.** Babies under one year of age should always be placed on their backs to sleep during naps or in accordance with the written instructions on file from a healthcare practitioner for alternate sleep positioning\*. However, if your baby has rolled from his back to his side or stomach on his own, he can be left in that position if he is already able to roll from tummy to back and back to tummy. If your baby falls asleep in a car safety seat, stroller, swing, infant carrier, or infant sling he should be moved to a firm sleep surface as soon as possible.
- **Place your baby to sleep on a firm sleep surface.** Such as a crib, bassinet, portable crib, or play yard. Use equipment that have not been recalled.
- **Keep soft objects, loose bedding, or any objects that could increase the risk of entrapment, suffocation, or strangulation out of the crib.** Pillows, quilts, comforters, sheepskins, bumper pads, and stuffed toys can cause your baby to suffocate.
- **A clean, tightly fitted crib sheet shall be used to cover the crib mattress.**
- **Physically monitor and periodically check on sleeping children who are less than one year of age.**
- **Do not let your baby get too hot.** Keep the room where your baby sleeps at a comfortable temperature.
- **Crib sharing is not permitted.**

\*If you would like to choose an alternate sleep routine for your child under the age of one, a physician's note is required.

# A Caring Place

## Illness Policy

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Symptoms  
observed \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Temperature \_\_\_\_\_ Time taken \_\_\_\_\_

Time parent was called \_\_\_\_\_ spoke to parent \_\_\_\_\_ left message \_\_\_\_\_

Time parent expected to pick-up \_\_\_\_\_

A Caring Place is a well-childcare facility. At no time do we provide sick childcare. The following illness policies will be strictly enforced, for the health, wellbeing, and safety of all concerned. Parents are responsible for checking the health of their child before arriving at school. In the event a child becomes ill and needs to be picked up, the parent(s) will be called and are expected to come pick the child up within one hour (60 minutes). If your child has a contagious illness or has any of the following symptoms, they will not be permitted at school: fever of 100.0 degrees or more, sore throat, runny nose, congestion, rash, severe cold symptoms, respiratory infection, diarrhea, or vomiting. Children found with head lice will be excluded from school until they have been properly treated and are lice and egg free. If your child is found to have any of these symptoms and is sent home or reported absent due to illness they are excluded the next day and:

**-child must receive a negative covid test AND be 24 hours symptom free before returning**

**\*home tests must be 2 tests taken 48 hours apart**

**or**

**-be excluded for 10 days from the start of illness AND be 24 hours symptom free before returning.**

For Covid positive exposure or diagnosis, please consult with the Director for exclusion guidelines and contact tracing. Please see the Hawaii State Department of Health fact sheets for recommended inclusion/exclusion guidelines for infectious diseases. This School Illness Policy supersedes any medical clearance. A Caring Place reserves the right to request a doctor's note for return to school. Please also note, if your child returns to school and requires more care than we can provide, they will be sent home. If your child is ill please report it to the office. I understand and agree to the above policies.

Parent signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Parent Acknowledgement and Receipt of the Parent Handbook

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the A Caring Place Parent Handbook. I understand that it contains important information on policies and procedures. I understand that it is my responsibility to familiarize myself with the information and that I agree with the policies and rules of the school. I further understand and acknowledge that A Caring Place may change, add or delete any policies or provisions in this handbook as it sees fit in its sole judgment and discretion. I acknowledge and understand that this Parent Handbook supersedes and replaces any and all prior handbooks or materials previously distributed.

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*Please sign and return this form to the office.

# Emergency Plan

A Caring Place has the following policies and procedures in the event of an emergency. For more information on emergency preparedness, please visit the HI-EMA website [dod.hawaii.gov/hiema/](http://dod.hawaii.gov/hiema/) or contact them at 733-4300.

Of major importance, when and if a disaster or emergency occurs, is your assistance in ensuring that your child understand the need for purposeful behavior and cooperation under such circumstances. While I am present at the school, I will direct all emergency actions to be taken. In my absence, the senior person in charge will direct the staff and children.

Fire drills will be held periodically. Children will exit all buildings in an orderly fashion, under staff supervision and gather at the fence lines of the playground. In the event our facility is damaged by fire and not habitable, we will call for you to pick up your child/ children as soon as possible.

If a localized situation (loss of power, water, flooding, etc. ) should require closing the school, parents will be called and asked to pick up their child/ children as soon as possible or send an authorized alternate to pick up their child/ children. The school will remain open until all children have been picked up.

## **Hurricane or Tropical Storm**

WATCHES are issued by the National Weather Service 48 hours prior to the arrival of storm effects. Hurricane or Tropical Storm WARNINGS are issued when one of these storms could affect Oahu in 36 hours or less. When a WATCH is issued, we will monitor the storm and make decisions to close before the issuance of a WARNING. In an Island wide emergency, the school will remain open until all children have been picked up.

## **Flooding, Tsunami, and Earthquakes**

Our school is now in a tsunami evacuation/ flood zone. Should an earthquake of significant magnitude occur on Oahu, our school could be damaged. We can also anticipate considerable disruption to our road networks. Following an actual earthquake, when the shaking has stopped, we will first treat and care for anyone who is injured and then evaluate the structural integrity of the school. If the buildings are sound, we will remain in place and listen on our battery operated portable radio for the HI-EMA instructions.

In the unlikely event the school is made unsafe or we are forced to evacuate, we will gather ourselves and our survival kit and attempt to move to an emergency shelter designated for this area by the Civil Defense. Our nearest Hurricane Shelter is Kainalu Elementary School and our nearest Tsunami Shelter is Kalaheo High School. Please listen to radio announcements for shelter information.

## **Ballistic Missile Threat**

The Hawaii Emergency Management Agency (HI-EMA) has indicated that the safest response to a ballistic missile threat is to "Get Inside, Stay Inside, and Stay Tuned" and that the proper action for schools is to "Shelter-in-Place." They have also advised that parents should do the same and Shelter-in Place and avoid picking up their children. We will shelter-in-place in our Infant Toddler building which is constructed of concrete block. We will have a standard emergency kit prepared and easily accessible by all staff. Once all children have been brought safely inside, we will await further instructions from the HI-EMA. Communication may be cut off or minimal during an attack. We will do our best to contact you with updates. We will post updates to the parent's page of our website.

All families should make emergency plans ahead of time. Pick a person who is nearest to the school to pick up the child/ children. Have a meeting place for all family members. Prepare a home survival kit and know the assigned shelter for your area. Please check the school's website for updates during an emergency at [acaringplacekailua.com](http://acaringplacekailua.com).

General rule- If an emergency WARNING of any kind is issued before our normal school day begins, the school will be closed. Please listen to the radio for closure announcements on KSSK 92.3FM. Keep in mind that if the public schools are closed, we will be closed as well. If the school is ordered to be closed during regular school hours, a staff person will remain until all children are picked up.