

Carmel Unified School District
Parent Handbook



transitional
kindergarten

at Carmelo School

Carmel Unified School District

Carmel Child Development Center at Carmel

transitional kindergarten

Transitional Kindergarten Schedule



early birds

8:45 - 9:00 - Arrival & Recess

9:00 - 11:15 - Instruction, including snack

11:15 - 12:00 - Specialists

12:00 - 12:20 - Lunch

12:20 - 12:35 - Recess & Dismissal



late birds

11:00 - 11:15 - Arrival & Recess

11:15 - 12:00 - Specialists

12:00 - 12:20 - Lunch

12:20 - 2:35 - Instruction, including sack

2:35 - 2:50 - Recess & Dismissal

Program Purpose

TK is the first year of a two-year kindergarten program that uses a modified kindergarten curriculum that is age and developmentally appropriate.

Program Philosophy

The Carmel Child Development Center (CCDC) provides a safe and nurturing environment while offering a developmentally appropriate program designed to develop each child's critical thinking, sense of competence and positive feeling toward learning. We believe children are active learners who learn best from activities that are concrete, real, and relevant to their lives. Our program is based on the premise that children learn about the world through social interactions. Children are encouraged to be active participants in discussions and explorations within the class.

Children flourish in an atmosphere that encourages freedom within boundaries. Routines and limits provide the child with security when they are defined, understood, and consistent. We believe multicultural and anti-bias curriculum experiences enrich the lives of all children by encouraging acceptance and appreciation of our similarities and differences. The program refrains from religious instruction and worship.

Frameworks and Curriculum

The Transitional Kindergarten curriculum must be aligned to the *California Preschool Learning Foundations* and the *California Preschool Curriculum Frameworks*.

Tools of the Mind curriculum is also utilized. It focuses on the development of Self-Regulation skills in preschool age students. It teaches proactive, positive classroom management techniques, mathematics and science activities, literacy development, and developing sustaining, mature, make-believe play for preschool aged students.

Anti-Bias Philosophy and Education

The fundamentals of our anti-bias philosophy and goals of our anti-bias education are:

- To foster a positive self-identity within the context of a group identity;
- To facilitate knowledgeable, empathic interactions with people who are different from oneself;
- To foster critical thinking about bias;
- To help children stand up for themselves and others in the face of bias

An anti-bias philosophy is integral to all aspects of daily classroom life to help children develop positive attitudes about differences. Teachers have the responsibility to:

- Create physical environments that include images of all our children, children of all races, working people of all genders and ages;
- Provide books and toys of similar diversity;
- Consider biases and strive to eliminate them;
 - Teachers offer girls as much physical freedom or use of large motor equipment as they offer boys.
 - Teachers allow boys freedom to express feelings.
 - Teachers to not automatically help more often, or do more for the girls than the boys.
 - Teachers are careful not to compliment girls more on appearance and boys on achievement.
 - Teachers intervene in conversations such as, "Girls can't play with that."
- Consider and respect individual learning styles;
- Provide activities which are developmentally appropriate for the children in their classrooms.

CCDC Campus Hours

Carmelo is open from 7:00am - 6:00pm. Classrooms and play structures which are not being supervised by Carmelo staff are off limits to students and families. We appreciate your support and commitment in ensuring our facilities are safe and secure.

Arrival + Departure

The teacher or teacher's aide will sign your student in and out at the beginning and end of the school day. The person delivering your child must make contact with a teacher before leaving. Likewise, the person picking up your child must inform a teacher of their departure. Departure times are 12:35 and 2:50. Please arrive at least 10 minutes before to ensure a timely departure.

Our goal at Carmelo is to help children understand how their behavior contributes to the formation of relationships with teachers and classmates, their ability to solve problems, and to experience success at school. It is the task of the teachers to teach children appropriate social behavior at school. The teachers may access support from the school district's school psychologist when necessary.

Parent Communication

Communication between parents, teachers, and other staff members is critically important to us at Carmelo. We have many formal channels of communication in place; our web page on

www.carmelunified.org, email directly with the teacher, and parent/teacher conferences in the fall and spring. Additionally, we have weekly emails, Back-to-School Night, and Open House. Being conscientious of the environment, we have implemented the procedure of sending parent notification, newsletters, and other communications via email and putting a copy on top of the sign-in sheets for everyone to see.

Of even greater importance are the daily communication parents and teachers have as their children arrive and depart. The Carmelo teachers are in partnership with parents to help promote each child's development and to consistently seek opportunities to discuss the many and various child-rearing issues as they arise. Teachers solicit support, suggestions, and feedback from parents and encourage parents to do the same with them. Teachers and families work together to help children participate successfully in the early childhood setting when professional values and practices differ from family values and practices.

Teacher-parent conferences are held twice during the school year, in November and March.

Appropriate Conduct

We always strive to maintain a warm, nurturing environment in which children feel welcome, comfortable, and have the opportunity to see adults modeling appropriate behavior. Accordingly, all parents on the premises or participating in any program activity must engage in proper conduct. Parents will be asked to leave the premises in the event of inappropriate behavior.

Behavior Standards

Safety

Rules for a safe school experience include:

- Children are expected to transition through daily routines cooperatively.
- Children are expected to follow directions provided by a teacher. For example, "Walk in the classroom," or "Keep paint at the easel."
- Children are expected to touch teachers and classmates in a gentle, respectful manner.
- Ongoing incidents of physical acts or bullying that inflict harm on others may result in observations by and consultation with the school district psychologist to develop a positive behavior plan.
- Children are expected to use language that is respectful to others.
- Ongoing use of language that is considered vulgar, hurtful, or inappropriate, may result in observations by and consultation with the school district psychologist to develop a positive behavioral plan.

Outside Playground Guidelines:

- Only adults are allowed to open any and all doors and gates.
- Children must tell a teacher when they need to leave the play area to go to their cubby, water fountain, bathroom, or to greet family members.
- The playground is age appropriate for children enrolled in each wing. Young siblings must be supervised by parents, and we ask that they not go on equipment intended for older children.
- The tire swing is closed unless a teacher is present.
- Younger wing children will be supervised while using the bathroom.

- All food must be eaten while sitting down in a chair or on a bench.

Inside Behavior Guidelines

- Children must be supervised by an adult at all times. When a family member leaves, children must be with a teacher and never left in a classroom alone.
- Children are expected to use gentle touches and words with people and materials.
- When children arrive at school each day they must wash their hands.
- All food must be eaten while sitting down in a chair or on a bench.
- Children must walk within the classrooms.

Discipline

Children participating in an active learning environment develop a sense of personal control (self regulation) and self-discipline. Teachers encourage children to use their words to solve disagreements. Teachers set clear limits for the children to use positive redirection. They explain logical consequences and use positive language. Teaching staff never use corporal punishment such as shaking or hitting and do not engage in psychological abuse or coercion. Neither threats or derogatory remarks, nor withholding food is ever used as a form of discipline.

If there is an ongoing problem with a child's behavior, the teacher will meet with the parent and site director privately. A conference with the psychologist, teacher and parent will be arranged to develop a positive behavior support plan, if necessary.

Health Policy

In the school environment where there are many children, illnesses can be easily transmitted from child to child. While we want children to attend school as consistently as possible, it is extremely important to avoid exposing classmates and staff to infectious illnesses. For some of our students and staff with chronic medical conditions, a common illness can cause serious complications.

Teachers are required to do a brief health inspection of each child upon arrival. Children who show signs of illness or infection will not be admitted for the day. Parents must come immediately or make arrangements for the child to be picked up if he/she becomes ill during the day.

Please keep your child at home if he/she has any of these symptoms:

- **Fever of 100.00 degrees or above**, without the use of fever-reducing medication
- **Nasal discharge that is profuse**
- **Pink eye** (inflamed red eyes or any eye discharge)
- **Any skin rash**, unless diagnosed by a doctor
- **Sores of any kind**, unless they can be covered with a bandage
- **Diarrhea or vomiting within a 24-hour period**, regardless of cause/frequency
- **Head lice** (the child may return after treatment if completely free of lice and nits)
- **The first 24-hours on an antibiotic**, for any reason
- **Relentless coughing**

All children must be free of these symptoms for at least 24-hours before returning to school. If you or your child contracts a communicable disease such as chicken pox, scabies, ringworm,

strep throat, pink eye, head lice, fifth disease, etc., please contact Carmelo as soon as possible so that other parents may be notified about the exposure.

Children who are ill may wait in the office until they can be picked up. A comfortable, supervised space will be made available for them. However, we are not licensed or equipped to treat children who are ill. Child Protective Services may be called if an ill child is left at school for a second time, for more than one hour.

Health Services

The implementation and coordination of health services is the responsibility of our District Health Specialist, who works under the supervision of the school district office in collaboration with site administrators.

At Carmelo, the duties of the Health Specialist may include making routine visits to our campus and providing health appraisals and counseling when necessary. Should health or developmental concern arise, parents will be notified and encouraged to meet with the Health Specialist.

Nut-Free Campus

There are students enrolled at Carmelo that have a life-threatening allergic reaction to peanuts and other nuts. It is extremely important that these children do not eat nuts or anything made with nuts. This means that all classrooms at Carmelo, including the infant room, Co-op, TK, and office areas are restricted nut areas.

Since student safety is our highest priority, we ask that you not send any food to school with peanuts, peanut butter or any other foods made with nuts/nut products of any kind. If your child eats any nuts or nut products just before school, please be sure your child washes his/her hands before coming to school. Tree nut proteins may be found in cereals, baked goods, crackers, cookies, candy, chocolates, energy bars, chili, African, Asian (especially Chinese, Indian, Indonesian, Thai and Vietnamese), and Mexican dishes. Thank you for your cooperation in making the school environment safe for everyone.

Nutrition/Lunch

Most children bring their own lunch to school, however a hot lunch may be purchased through CUSD. Lunches must be ordered by 9:00am. Free or reduced-price school district lunches are available for families who qualify on the federal eligibility income schedule. Applications can be obtained from the Carmelo secretary or the CUSD website. Please use ice packs to keep any lunch items cool, as lunches are stored in the children's cubbies.

At lunch time, children and teachers eat together. This provides another occasion for teachers to engage children in conversation. Food is not shared. We stress that parents pack the lunch they want their own child to eat. It is a good idea to keep lunch fairly small. Please avoid sweetened food and beverages.

Starting your kids off right by packing school lunches with nutritious foods that taste good will help them to establish healthy eating habits for life. Information on the USDA's guidelines and serving sizes are available upon request.

Outdoor Policy

Outdoor play is an essential part of our daily curriculum, as weather permits. It is important for parents to provide the appropriate clothing, shoes, and outerwear for the weather conditions.

Children should wear clothing that is dry and layered for warmth in cold weather. In warm weather, children often participate in water play activities outside. There are both sunny and shady areas of the playground. Children are also encouraged to get plenty of drinks to replenish body fluids. Parents are encouraged to provide sunscreen or sunblock with UVB and UVA protection of SPF 15 or higher to apply to exposed skin. Parents apply sunscreen before children arrive at school. Teachers will reapply as needed (only with written parental permission to do so) on hot, sunny days in the afternoons.

Emergencies

CCDC has regular fire and earthquake drills throughout the year. We have teacher representatives on the district's Emergency Preparedness Committee, and our staff has CPR and First Aid training every two years.

Property

All classroom materials and personal property are to be respected and handled with care. If a child uses materials in a destructive or inappropriate manner, he/she may lose the privilege of using the materials and be directed to choose a different activity.

Clothing

Children should wear comfortable, washable play clothes to school. They must always wear shoes and at least one outer layer. They participate in a wide variety of activities at CCDC and often get dirty and/or wet. Please make sure all clothing, including jackets, are well marked with your child's name.

Toys from Home

Please do not have your child bring toys from home unless it is your child's special sharing day (of which you will be informed). Toys from home often get lost, broken, or fought over.

Birthdays

Birthdays are joyous celebrations and are greatly anticipated by each child. The teachers enjoy classroom celebrations, so please contact your child's teacher to set up the best time for a classroom celebration. Talk to your child about what type of treat he/she would like to share. Some alternatives to cake and cupcakes are muffins, frozen yogurt push-ups, yogurts, and frozen juice bars. It's a good idea to have your child participate actively in selecting or making the birthday treat. Another alternative is to have the children decorate the treat or special napkin here at school.

If you are having a party at home, please do not put invitations in the cubbies. Our student directory lists mailing addresses, emails, and phone numbers will be available in the office.

Holidays and Other Celebrations

Conversations about holiday traditions or events initiated by children are encouraged by teachers, monitored for bias, and inclusive of all children in the class. Parents are not allowed to use cubbies to distribute invitations, gifts, etc. Only Carmelo staff, the CPO, and district-approved articles may use cubbies for communications. This includes all holidays.

Parent participation is always encouraged. As part of our anti-bias curriculum, we invite parents to come into the classroom to share their family's holiday traditions with their child's class. It is important for children to learn about how other families celebrate. All parent presentations and activities will be planned through the classroom teachers in advance. All food brought from home for presentations or celebrations will be consumed at school during snack or lunch (not sent home in cubbies). Gifts are occasionally made by children with the intention of teaching the joy of giving and will be sent home. The child will choose the recipient.

Parking

Please note our 5mph speed limit sign posted at the entrance to our parking lots. Remember to drive in slowly and pull out carefully. There is parking available in the back of our school. This lot is accessed off of Schulte Rd, at the entrance of Carmel Valley High School.

Always hold your child's hand when going to and from your car. Please don't let him/her run ahead of you as he/she may inadvertently run in back of a car that is starting to back out. If you will be standing in or by the parking lot talking with other adults, please either hold your child's hand or make sure he/she is already seated safely in the car with the doors closed. Please make sure the gate is latched behind you. Please do not teach your child to open the gates. Only adults should open gates and doors. Your child's safety is our number one concern, so please take extra care as you come and go at Carmelo.

Grievance Procedure

If a parent has a concern or problem of any type with the program, philosophy or related issues, it is vital that it be discussed and resolved to the satisfaction of all parties.

- Parents should first address their concern to their child's teacher.
- If the concern is not resolved by the teacher or does not relate to the teacher's responsibility, the parent should voice the concern to the Child Development Director.
- If the concern is not resolved by the Child Development Director, the parent should contact the District Office.

Equal Access

District programs, activities, and practices shall be free from discrimination based on race, color, ancestry, nationality, national origin, ethnic group identification, age, religion, marital, pregnancy, or parental status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity or expression, or genetic information; a perception of one or more of such characteristics; or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics. The district provides equal access to designated youth groups, such as the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and others.

The district's coordinator for nondiscrimination manages the district's efforts to comply with state and federal nondiscrimination laws and to answer inquiries regarding the district's nondiscrimination policies, as well as policies related to sexual harassment, Special Education, 504 Plans, and the National School Lunch Program. The coordinator may be contacted at:

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