



Metropolitan

Day School

HAND BOOK

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WHO WE ARE

The staff of Metropolitan Day School extends a warm welcome to the enrolled students and their parents. The first few years of a child's life are very important. We are glad that you have chosen to share your child with us during this crucial time of development. Our number one priority is quality care for all of our students.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

To a child each day is an adventure filled with new experiences. At Metropolitan Day School, our goal is to provide a safe and nurturing environment for children, while exposing them to a research-based curriculum designed to foster learning at all developmental levels. We believe that learning begins at birth and continues through one's lifetime. Infants, toddlers, and preschoolers will be guided through lessons specifically designed for their age and stage of development. Daily learning activities and selected materials will be used with individual academic goals and objectives in mind. Independent thinking, problem solving, listening, and following directions are skills that will be reinforced throughout the day.

OUR CURRICULUM

MDS is a child center program designed to offer a comfortable first step into a world of group education for young children. Our curriculum provides a stimulating and challenging experience for each student. Each child's progress is tracked to ensure that he/she is meeting his/her potential. We have chosen the Creative Curriculum as a framework of our program in addition to exposing our children to quality children's literature. We believe that active exploration is an important component in the lives of young children and it is through this exploration that children learn. The trained staff at MDS will monitor your child's activities through our prepared learning stations. These stations will consist of activities in the areas of math, reading, science, social studies, cooking, and character development. We know that high quality, early care gives children a competitive edge that will last throughout their lives. Our knowledge of how children learn coupled with a child centered research based curriculum will equip children with the knowledge and skills needed to become competent, lifelong learners.

OUR STAFF

Research tells us that life-changing learning happens between birth and age 5 years. We have carefully selected experienced staff that are qualified in child care and who share our belief in how children learn. The staff has received training by the director on the Creative Curriculum, Early Childhood Theory, and Stages of Child Development. Monthly staff training sessions on topics such as Connecting in Meaningful ways with Families, Purpose of Assessment, Developmentally appropriate activities and others topics designed to increase awareness of how children learn. We believe that a well trained staff is essential for the success of our program.

THE OWNERS

Metropolitan Day School is owned and operated by Janice Bell McShan and Ava Young. This mother/Daughter duo has a combined 35 years of experience in the child care industry. Both are graduates of Spelman College, with Bachelors and Masters of Arts degrees in Child Development and Early Childhood Education. Ms. McShan is a retired Director of Early Childhood Education for Birmingham City Schools. She also served as a adjunct professor of Early Childhood Education at Jeff State Community College for four years.

THE SCHOOL DAY

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Students are not permitted in the building before the scheduled opening time.

Parents are asked to park in the parking spaces provided and should not block the driveway in front of the building. Always turn off your engine, place your car in park, and never leave a child unattended. Students should be signed in when dropping off. Please do not allow any child, regardless of age, to enter the school unaccompanied. All students are to be taken directly to the designated classroom. We recommend that you tell your child that you are leaving and that you will return, and then depart in a resolute and positive manner so that your child sees that you feel good about his being at school. Our staff is very experienced and will do everything they can to distract your child and encourage involvement in the program. For the first several days, your child will be given extra attention during your departure time, encouraging him to trust and bond with his teacher. Upon enrollment, parents are to list the names of anyone other than themselves having permission to pick up their child. Initially, if may be necessary to ask for some form of identification, preferably one with a picture, from this person until we get to know them. We will not release your child to anyone other than an authorized individual even if we know the person asking to pick up your child. If you wish to make alternative transportation arrangements for your child on any given day, you must call the school or provide written authorization in advance. The Metropolitan Day School requests that parents not involve us in custody or visitation disputes in cases of divorce.

We cannot keep a parent from picking up his or her child unless we have a restraining order on file at the office. If you or someone that is picking up your child displays behavior that may put the child at risk, we reserve the right to contact an alternative pick up person.

Before leaving, be sure to check your child's designated area for his belongings.

Look for daily work your child has finished, soiled clothes, and any administrative correspondence from the school. Parents are to sign out their children in the same manner used at arrival time. If a student is picked up after 5:30 PM, there will be a \$1.00 per minute late charge. This fee is to be paid to the employee caring for your child at pickup.

We recommend children be dressed in washable, comfortable clothing to accommodate the wide range of activities at school. Sandals and jelly shoes are not suitable; shoes with traction, such as sneakers/tennis shoes are preferred.

Paint shirts or smocks are provided for paint and water activities. Please remember that children are taken outdoors daily (weather permitting) and should be dressed accordingly.

Light jackets and caps are appropriate in the spring and fall; heavy jackets, hats, scarves, mittens and even boots are appropriate in the winter. Water activities, occasional spills, and bathroom activities necessitate that an extra change of clothes be available for your child at all times. Please be sure to include a complete set--that means socks and underwear, too! Parents of potty trainers may want to provide several changes of clothing until training is complete. Remember that all extra clothes are to be replaced with the seasons. If wet or dirty clothes are sent home, please return a clean, labeled extra set the next morning your child attends. We do not provide clothes nor borrow clothes from other children. All personal items must be labeled with the child's first and last name. Loose items should be kept in a labeled bag (e.g., Ziploc or tote). All items should be placed in your child's cubby when dropped off. Parents are responsible for providing diapers and wipes for children who are not potty trained.

REST PERIODS

We require that everyone rest on mats after lunch. Each child's rest needs differ and we try to offer alternative ways of resting such as providing soft music, stories, etc., for those who choose not to sleep. All children are generally provided a two-hour rest time. If your child has a favorite sleeping toy, it is welcome at school. After your child has become adjusted, we will suggest that favorite toys are put away until rest time to assure that something so special is kept safe. On Fridays, or your child's last day of the week at school, parents should take the nap mats home for laundering. Please be sure to return them on Monday morning or your child's first day of the week at school.

SNACKS AND LUNCH

Parents must provide formula or breast milk for children in the nursery. Bottles are to be clearly marked with your child's name. Bottle covers should be labeled as well. Please be certain to inform your child's teacher what formula your child is using and any other pertinent dietary facts.

DAILY ACTIVITIES

Each classroom will have an activity schedule posted for your information. The children are provided with activities throughout the day that are appropriate for each age group. We will alternate between quiet and loud play, which is intended to promote the social growth of each child.

THE SCHOOL YEAR

HOLIDAYS

Tuition is payable regardless of holiday closings. Should a holiday fall on a date in which tuition is due, payment shall be the following day the center opens.

A listing of holidays in which MDS is closed:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday
- Presidents' Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Good Friday
- Veterans Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Day after Christmas

SCHOOL CLOSINGS

If the school must close due to weather emergencies, parents will be notified as soon as possible via local news station reporting systems, phone, text, and emails.

PHONE POLICY

When the staff is not available to answer telephone calls, messages may be left on the school's answering machine. The Director or the Co-Director will check for messages and return your call in a timely manner. If there is an emergency please call the school's emergency number given to you at enrollment.

TUITION AND FEES

PAYMENT DUE DATES

Parents shall pay according to the following schedule:
Weekly with payments due on Mondays or Tuesdays by 5:00PM. Any payments received after Tuesday will have a \$20 late fee. We do not accept any payments on Friday

REGISTRATION FEE

Parents shall pay a registration fee of \$100.00 upon enrollment, for each child.

ABSENCE AND LATE ATTENDANCE

Tuition is due and payable regardless of the child's absence. Tuition is not prorated based on late attendance or absence. A Parent-Provider tuition form with detailed tuition and fee information will be approved, signed, and placed in your child's records upon enrollment.

LATE PAYMENTS

A three day grace period is provided for all parents of MDS. However, on the fourth day of non-payment a \$25.00 fee will be added to the tuition payment. If non-payment continues pass the fourth day, a conference will be requested.

SCHOOL POLICIES

WITHDRAWAL

Withdrawal of your child for any reason requires written notice. This notice must be provided to the Director at least two (2) weeks prior to the effective date of the withdrawal. Failure to provide at least two (2) weeks' notice shall result in forfeiture of deposit.

GROUND FOR TERMINATION OF ENROLLMENT

Metropolitan Day School strives to provide an environment in which students will be nurtured and loved. Unfortunately, on occasion, there are situations that arise that hinder the school's ability to achieve this goal and require the termination of a student's enrollment. Grounds for termination of enrollment include, but are not limited to accounts that are persistently late or severely overdue (see "Tuition and Fees," above); disregard of Metropolitan Day School policies and procedures; abusive language; threats of acts of violence; and any act of sexual misconduct. Unless immediate action is necessary, the Director, within a reasonable time after an alleged violation has occurred, will present the student's parent (s) or guardian (s) with a written warning detailing the conduct that violates the standards of the school. If the behavior or offense continues or immediate action is merited, the Director shall determine whether the circumstances require the termination of enrollment. Notice of termination shall be provided to the parent(s) or guardian(s) in writing. Termination shall be effective immediately. However, if circumstances allow and if the Director determines that it would present no risk to Metropolitan Day School students, families, or staff, the Director shall have discretion to allow a reasonable time for other arrangements for care. In no case shall this time to make other arrangements for care exceed two (2) weeks.

DISASTER EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

The Alabama Department of Human Services requires that we are always prepared for an emergency or disaster. Therefore, in addition to the daily items you bring for your child, the following items should be kept at school:

- Children not yet potty trained should maintain a week's supply of diapers.
- Bottle-fed children must provide an extra bottle and enough formula for three (3) days.

HEALTH PRACTICES

Medical Records

The Alabama Department of Human Services requires a medical history and an immunization record (or religious or medical exemption, if applicable) for every child in a licensed facility. Students under thirty (30) months must provide a physical exam form that certifies that they were seen by a doctor within the three (3) months prior to enrollment. All health forms are required before the first day of your child's attendance. In addition, MDS requires all children have their immunizations current prior to admission to the program and that immunizations be up-to-date at all times. Emergency Procedures A plan for the evacuation and care of the children in case of fire, tornado, serious accident or injury, or power failure shall be established and posted in a conspicuous place in the center.

Illness

Children are not to attend school if they have severe colds, undetermined rash or spots, fever, severe headache, upset stomach, diarrhea, or discharge of the eyes or ears. Parents should exercise caution and keep their child home should other unusual symptoms occur. The Metropolitan Day School reserves the right to request a written doctor's report when a question of a contagious disease exists. No provisions can be made for a parent requesting a child's restraint from outside play. Parents are notified to pick up children immediately if signs of illness occur during the day. Please use the following guide to determine when your child may return to school.

Chicken Pox- 7 days after onset of rash or until all lesions have crusted over
conjunctivitis (pink eye)- When child has been under treatment for 24 hours
Impetigo- 48 hours after beginning of therapy
Measles- 4 days after onset of rash
Mumps- 9 days after swelling is gone
Strep- 24 hours after starting antibiotics
Fever- 24 hours free of fever without medication
Diarrhea- 24 hours free of diarrhea without medication
Vomiting- 24 hours free of vomiting without medication

Toilet Training

Different children gain bladder and bowel control at different ages, just as they begin to walk and talk over a wide range of time. Waiting until your child is interested and ready is the real key to a smooth mastery of toileting. When you feel it is time to encourage your child to be toilet trained it is important to be relaxed about it. We will work with parents to be consistent and use the same, or similar, methods which prove most effective for your child. However, if a child does not respond to the teacher's efforts and repeatedly refuses to cooperate, we will not require that the child use the toilet. If a struggle develops, we may suggest delaying the training for a few weeks and together try to determine a more opportune time.

When training is in progress, be sure to send several changes of clothing (include socks and shoes, too) for those accidents which will occur. For boys especially, dress in clothing that is easy for him to manipulate. Avoid belts, buckles and layers of things to get through. Such clothing often causes the child needless frustration and panic. At three years of age most children are normally dry during the day, although at this age it is common for children to have accidents. We expect that most children will be trained before entering the three year old class.

HEALTH PRACTICES

Accident & Incident Reports

Safety is a top priority at The Metropolitan Day School. Still, there are times when a child will have an accident, or an incident will occur between your child and another child that is out of the ordinary. Your child's teacher will complete a report for you detailing what happened and the nature of the injuries. If any first aid is administered, the treatment will be described to you. A copy of this accident report, signed by the teacher in charge at the time of the accident, will be provided to you. A copy will be filed within the Director's office.

Medical Emergencies

In the event of a medical emergency or serious accident, we will immediately contact the parents. If it is impossible to reach either parent and should emergency treatment be required, the child will be taken to the hospital preference noted in your child's files, or to the nearest hospital if conditions dictate. Your authorization to contact your family physician and to take whatever emergency medical measures are necessary is part of the emergency release form.

DISCIPLINE

All students are to cooperate with the school staff. Teachers at The Metropolitan Day School are trained in using positive reinforcement as a means of discipline.

In addition, we attempt to redirect the child's actions. If a problem arises, the parents are notified for assistance and a possible conference with the child's teacher and the Director. Our goal is to find solutions and to provide the very best environment for your child. If we cannot achieve a mutually agreeable solution, the child will be asked to leave the school.

SCREEN TIME POLICY

Screen time is the use of television, videos, video games, and computers

Screen time shall be:

- Offered as a free choice
- Limited to no more than a total of 2 ½ hours per week
- Prohibited during meal or snack time
- Prohibited for children younger than 2 years

Computer use shall be limited to no more than 15 minute increments, except for school age children completing homework.

Daily schedules including daily screen time shall be prominently posted in each classroom.

SMOKING POLICY

Smoking is prohibited:

- At all times in Child Care Centers-including before and after hours of operation
- Within 10 feet of any entrance or exit
- In any vehicles used by centers to transport children
- Within sight of the children

"No Smoking" signs shall be posted in facilities and vehicles used to transport children. If a staff member consumes cigarettes before the work shift begins or during a break away from the child care center premises, the staff member shall be required to wash his or her hands thoroughly. Staff and volunteers should avoid bringing cloths that smell of smoke into the building, or onto the playground.

EMPLOYEE HEALTH POLICY

No employee shall be permitted to work at the CHILD CARE CENTER while experiencing any of the following symptoms:

- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Jaundice
- Sore Throat with Fever
- A lesion containing pus such as a boil or infected wound that is open and draining and cannot be covered

All employees shall report such symptoms to their CHILD CARE CENTER supervisor and shall not return to work until symptoms desist.

Any employee diagnosed with a communicable disease that can be transmitted by foods or other means or who is a carrier of organisms that cause such a disease shall not be allowed to work in a CHILD CARE CENTER in any capacity in which there is a likelihood of such person transmitting disease to other persons.

Common Communicable Diseases (The Big "6"):

- Hepatitis A virus
- Norovirus
- Shigella, spp.
- Enterohemorrhagic or Shiga toxin-producing Escherichia coli
- Salmonella Typhi
- Nontyphoidal Salmonella (NTS)

NUTRITION POLICY

- All food served in Child Care Center shall comply with USDA recommendations for Meals and Snacks.
- Water shall be available at all meals and snacks
- No sugar sweetened beverages shall be served to children.
- Only 100% juice
- No more than 6 ounces per day
- Only served at meal or snack time
- Only for children over 12 months
- Milk with 1% or less milk fat for children 2 years and older (unless medical documentation is provided for child)
- Food items that shall be served at least once a week
- Orange vegetable- for vitamin A
- Dark green vegetable-for iron, Vitamins A and C, and fiber
- Legume- for protein, iron, B vitamins
- At least half of grains served each week shall be whole grains
- Menus shall be
- Posted in view of parents and food preparation staff
- Prepared at least 2 weeks in advance
- Special diet needs and food allergies shall be kept on file in food preparation areas and in the children's eating area
- Documentation of amended menus must be corrected in writing and any substitutions shall be of equal nutrient value.

POLICY FOR PREVENTION OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Common Communicable Diseases

No employee shall be allowed to work while having an illness diagnosed by a health practitioner due to:

- Norovirus
- Hepatitis A virus
- Shigella spp.
- Enterohemorrhagic or Shiga Toxin-producing Escherichia coli
- Salmonella Typhi
- Nontyphoidal Salmonella (NTS)

Detection of Illnesses

In order to control the spread of communicable diseases in the child care center, it is important that the caregiver recognize illnesses early. Isolate the child immediately and contact a parent or guardian so the child can be removed from the center as soon as possible. Staff should be alert to the following symptoms:

1. Severe coughing

A. Child gets red or blue in the face

B. Child makes high-pitched croupy or whooping sound as he coughs

2. Breathing trouble especially important in an infant under 6 months old

3. Yellowish skin or eyes

4. Pinkeye/Conjunctivitis-tears, redness of eyelid lining, irritation, followed by swelling and discharge of pus

5. Unusual spots or rashes

6. A lesion such as a blister, boil, pustule or infected wound that is open or draining

7. Feverish appearance

8. Lethargy

9. Diarrhea

10. Vomiting

11. Unusual behavior

A. Child is cranky or less active than usual

B. Child cries more than usual

C. Child feels general discomfort or just seems unwell

D. Child pulls at ears

E. Child has difficulty swallowing

12. Frequent scratching of the body or scalp (may be a sign of scabies).

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY POLICY

- Each child shall have an opportunity for the appropriate amount of active play each day. Active play shall take place outdoors when weather and environmental conditions permit. When the weather and/or environment do not permit outdoor activity, active play shall take place indoors.
- 3 yrs and older (preschool children) - At least 90 minutes per 8 hour day
- 12 months to 3 yrs - At least 60 minutes per 8 hour day
- Infants to 12 months - caregivers shall make provisions for the promotion of physical development on a daily basis, including varied activities appropriate to each child's development.

Daily schedules including physical activity time shall be prominently posted in each classroom.

- Children who exhibit out of control behavior during active play may be given a time-out of no longer than 5 minutes. Children cannot be made to remain indoors or seated as punishment for earlier classroom behavior.