

CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FAMILY HANDBOOK



Child Study Center: (415) 457-8811
Office: ext. 7468
Red Room: (628) 234-7785
Orange Room: (628) 234-7786
License #214005280



MARIN
COLLEGE OF MARIN

This handbook was designed to assist families with understanding the requirements to participate in the preschool program operated by the College of Marin (COM) Child Development Program. We look forward to serving you!

WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE PROVIDE

WELCOME



The COM Child Development Program provides high-quality early education for preschool-aged children, ages 2.9 through 5 years. The program offers an enriching preschool environment during the fall and spring semesters. We are open Monday through Thursday from 7:45 am to 5 pm, and Friday from 7:45 am to 4 pm.

Our play-based curriculum supports children's cognitive, social-emotional, and physical development. Children engage in age-appropriate activities that reflect their ideas and interests. Daily experiences include creative arts, music, dramatic play, block building, games, early literacy, sand and water play, math and science exploration, and large motor activities such as climbing and tricycle riding.

Nutritious meals are served daily including breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack. Meals are enjoyed family-style, with teachers joining children at the table to encourage conversation and build community.

The Child Development Program operates as a California State Preschool Program (CSPP), offering both part-day and full-day preschool options for the children of COM students, staff, and local community families.

Our classrooms serve as demonstration sites for College of Marin students studying Early Childhood Education, Pediatric Nursing, Child Psychology/Human Development, Behavioral Science, and related fields. Each year, students participate in child observation, research, practicum placements, and work study opportunities within our program.

We also offer parent education opportunities and collaborate with community partners such as the Early Childhood Mental Health Program, Parents Place, Help Me Grow Marin, Marin Child Care Council, and Raising a Reader. These partnerships support family engagement and promote healthy child development.

COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY

Marin Community College District is committed by law and policy not to discriminate on the basis of, or the perception of, race, ethnic group identification, ancestry, color, religion, age, gender, national origin, sexual orientation or expression, disability (mental or physical), marital status, medical condition, and status as a veteran, in any of



its educational and employment programs and activities, its policies, practices, and procedures. The lack of English skills and/or hearing/visual impairment will not be a barrier to admission or participation in educational programs.



PHILOSOPHY

Our program provides a model of excellence in early education for children, their families, and the broader community. Led by highly skilled and well-trained professionals, the team is deeply attuned to the developmental needs of young children.

We believe that every child can reach their fullest potential when given the time, support, and encouragement to discover who they are and how they relate to the world around them.

Our curriculum is designed to nurture children's natural curiosity through meaningful, hands-on experiences that promote growth across all areas of development such as language, social-emotional, cognitive, and physical. A thoughtfully balanced daily routine includes both structured activities and opportunities for open-ended exploration, ensuring that the diverse needs of all children are met.



GOAL

Our goal is to provide a welcoming and inclusive environment for families, inviting them to participate as equal partners in their child's early education.

We value and encourage family involvement in a variety of meaningful ways, including, but not limited to the following:

- Parent orientation to introduce families to the program and staff.
- Ongoing two-way communication between parents and staff to support collaboration and shared understanding.
- Desired Results Parent Survey and Ages and Stages Questionnaire assessment tools help us better understand children's growth, plan developmentally appropriate curriculum, and provide individualized resources to support each child's development based on the results.
- Parent-teacher conferences, held twice per year, provide an opportunity to review each child's progress and collaborate on individualized goals.
- Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) meetings, held four times a year, offer families a chance to provide feedback and contribute to the direction of the program. If you're interested in serving on this committee, we welcome your participation!

WHAT WE MODEL



A DEMONSTRATION PRESCHOOL

The Child Development Program is a demonstration preschool for students taking practicum courses in Early Childhood Education, Pediatric Nursing, Child Psychology, Behavioral Science, and other disciplines. As a demonstration preschool, we strive to model the following best practices:

An early childhood curriculum that is:

Play-based: Development of concepts, skills, and knowledge about the world through playful

explorations of the learning environment and through playful interactions with their peers. Children's self-initiated play and discovery learning inform the curriculum, which is organized to encourage children's play.

Relationship-based: Warm and respectful relationships among teachers, parents, and children support children's learning and wellbeing. Teachers encourage children's prosocial behaviors through positive guidance, which helps children develop their own internal controls, problem solving skills, and a positive sense of self.

Emergent: Teachers organize environments and experiences that support and incorporate children's emerging ideas and interests.

Integrated: All play areas are thoughtfully designed to help children grow in many areas at once.

Project-based: Children's studies are sustained and involve in-depth investigations.

Unified: Curriculum development is a team effort - all teachers contribute and collaborate.

Documented: Children's learning outcomes, not just their activities, are documented.

Teaching practice that is:

Reflective: Educators review their teaching experiences, assess how their actions affect children's learning, and then use these insights to refine and guide future instruction

Intentional: Teachers meet regularly to share their observations of children and to plan group and individual experiences that support learning in all domains.

Articulate: Teachers describe how their knowledge of child development informs their practice so that adult student learners understand how teachers reflect on, assess, and modify their practice.

Teachers work as a collaborative team to design, implement, and evaluate their curriculum based on:

Appropriate developmental expectations of the children

Child observation and assessment that is authentic (experiences that occur naturally/no tests)

ELIGIBILITY FOR STATE SUBSIDIZED CARE

Eligibility Criteria:

Child Protective Services (CPS) or At Risk

- Children referred by a social worker, doctor, or other professional because of concerns for their safety or well-being (highest priority for enrollment).

Children with Exceptional Needs

- Children who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) may qualify for services.

Families Experiencing Homelessness or Seeking Permanent Housing

- Families who are homeless automatically qualify.
- Families who are in the process of finding permanent housing may also be eligible.

Income-Eligible Families

- Families whose gross monthly income is within state guidelines for family size.
- Priority is given to children from the lowest-income families first.

Current Aid Recipients

- Families receiving cash aid (such as CalWORKs/TANF) may be eligible.

Parental Incapacity

- Parents or guardians who have a physical, mental, or emotional condition that limits their ability to care for their child during the day may qualify.

Working Parents

- Families may qualify if parents are employed during the hours their child needs care.

Parents in Training or School

- Parents enrolled in vocational training or education programs that lead to a career may be eligible.



Families Receiving Other Public Benefits

- Families who participate in programs such as Medi-Cal, CalFresh, or WIC may qualify.

Parents Seeking Work

- Parents who are actively looking for a job may qualify for child care services while searching for employment.

ADMISSION PRIORITIES

The program is funded primarily through the California Department of Education, Child Development Division. The state mandates that children be admitted to the program according to the guidelines below.

First: Child is recipient of child protective services or at-risk of being neglected, abused, or exploited.

Second: Child has exceptional needs from income eligible family AND family meets a need criterion. Prioritize based on income ranking order.

Third: Eligible 4-year-old not enrolled in transitional kindergarten AND family meet a need criteria. Prioritize children enrolled in preschool as a 3-year-old, then within each ranking prioritize dual language learners, then based on earliest wait list date.

Fourth: Eligible 3-year-old AND family meets a need criteria. Within each ranking prioritize dual language learners, then based on earliest wait list date.

Fifth: College of Marin students and employee children not already in priorities 1–4.

Sixth: Family income is not more than 15% above income threshold AND family meets a need criteria. Prioritize exceptional needs children, then 4-year-olds, and then 3-year-olds. (limited to 10% of funded enrollment)

Seventh: Family meets eligibility criteria but does not meet the need criteria. Within each ranking prioritize 4-year-olds, then 3-year-olds.

Fifth: Full cost families are welcome as space allows, in order of application.

NEED: Families requesting full day services will be asked to provide proof of need for full day/full year services.



APPLICATION AND REGISTRATION

Step 1: Submit Preliminary Application

Available online: ss.marin.edu/cdp or

In-Person: Child Development Program office:
1144 Magnolia Avenue
Larkspur, CA 94939

(415) 457-8811 Office ext. 7468

Preliminary applications should be submitted well before the semester for which you are applying. Preliminary applications submitted late or after the scheduled registration dates will be accepted upon availability of space.

Step 2: Complete Registration Packet

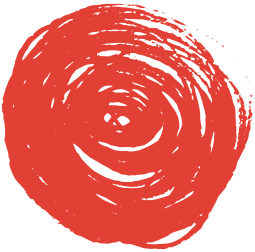
Registration packet will be mailed before registration to all parents who have submitted a Preliminary Application.

Step 3: Gather required materials

- Completed Registration Forms
- Emergency information
- Physician's report
- Up-to-Date Immunization records/updated blue immunization card/Updated immunization
- Class schedule, if enrolled
- Preschool Development and Routines
- Sunscreen Permission
- Consent for early childhood mental health consultation
- Field trip and photo permission forms
- Any other Licensing forms required at that time

Items of verification for state subsidized eligibility

- Employment and training verification for all adults in the home
- Proof of income, for all adults in the home (last 30 days)
- Proof of college registration
- Grade cards from previous semester
- If applicable, proof of homelessness, special needs, protective services, etc.
- Proof of residency





During registration, each family will go through the certification process which will determine eligibility for subsidized fees; discuss the childcare hours needed; and make sure that all necessary forms and verification forms are complete.

All families must submit all necessary documents and sign a contract that indicates the days and hours of care and the family fees, if applicable. If all required documents are not submitted and signed contract is not completed, your child will be unable to begin attending school.

Step 4: Register

Registration for enrollment is held before classes begin. The registration packet will indicate the dates and times of registration.

Complete all forms in packet before coming to registration. Current immunizations and physical examinations are required to register.

Note: The Child Development Program enrolls children from 2.9 years old up to first grade entry in order of priority. Waiting lists will be developed, if necessary, in order of priority (see Admission Priorities).

DETERMINATION OF FEES

Fees are set yearly by the California State Department of Education, according to the State Median Income (SMI) level. For complete details, ask to see the Family Fee Schedule, available at our Child Development Program office.

Family Fee:

Some families enrolled in the program may have a family fee based on their total countable income, family size and certified hours of care. Fees are determined using the Family Fee Schedule approved by the California Department of Finance.

- Families at or above 75% of SMI pay fees that gradually increase as family income increases up to a maximum of 115% of SMI.
- The family fee is based on the child who is enrolled for the longest period.
- The fee is not adjusted for excused or unexcused absences. Fees will be charged for all days that a child is enrolled, as indicated on the fee contract signed at registration. The monthly bill will be based on the contract.
- Changes to your contracts or cancellations must be made in writing **30 days in advance.**





ADDITIONAL COSTS

A **\$15 late fee** will be charged for any child picked up after their contracted hours of service.

For example, if the program closes at 5 pm and you arrive at 5:20 pm, you will be charged **\$15 plus an additional \$10** (\$1 per minute for the 20 minutes late).

All late fees will be **billed at the end of each month**.

BILLING AND PAYMENT

For initial full-cost enrollment, **there is a \$150 non-refundable materials fee to hold your child's enrollment slot.**

Family fees are due before providing service and are considered delinquent 7 calendar days after payment.

Fees are always due by the third Friday of the following month.

Please pay your tuition fees promptly. You can pay online, by check or cash with our administrative assistant. During our school year, each month tuition invoices are sent out by the second Friday of the month.

If you need to make payment arrangements, please inform our administrative assistant, Kahea Jackson.

Nonpayment of delinquent fees, after prior notification, will result in termination of service.

Questions about tuition billing, invoices, payments, receipts, waitlist, and payment plans can be directed to Kahea at kjackson@marin.edu or 415-485-9468.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All family records will be kept confidential. The files will be stored in cabinets that lock, which will only be accessible to the Child Study Center staff.

Parental permission is required, in writing, for any release of confidential records; participation of children in research programs; and for the use of children's photographs.



DAYS AND HOURS OF OPERATION

The Child Study Center follows the COM academic calendar and is open during the fall and spring semesters. The center is closed on holidays and semester breaks, as mentioned in the academic calendar. Based on parent demand, the center may be open during the six-week summer program. The program hours are as follows:

Monday through Thursday: 7:45 am–5 pm
Fridays: 7:45 am–4 pm

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ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

For your child's consistency of routines, please bring your **child to school by 9:30 am at the latest, so they can experience the entire breadth of the morning curriculum.**

To foster your child's success, a consistent morning routine is key. Arriving after 10 am disrupts their sense of belonging, the class schedule, and overall program operations. Please help us establish a successful school routine by ensuring your child arrives by **9:30 am.** or earlier, based on their contracted hours.

We will hold your child's hours to your family's **CONTRACT SCHEDULED HOURS** on file.

Children must be signed in upon arrival and signed out at pick-up time each day using Learning Genie, our digital attendance platform. Parents or authorized adults may use their personal smartphone or the school's iPad kiosk to complete this process. The exact time of arrival and departure and the full name of the adult signing the child in or out must be entered. This procedure is required by state law and serves as an important safety measure to ensure accurate attendance and accountability.

Only authorized adults with photo identification will be allowed to pick up children. If an adult arrives to pick up a child and the staff has reason to believe that the adult is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or there is no car seat for the child passenger, our Campus Police will be contacted.

Children should NOT arrive before their scheduled time. If additional hours are needed, they must be arranged with our Site Supervisors. For state subsidized families, additional hours will be based on the need.





Your family will be billed a **LATE FEE** when you arrive past closing time. It is critical that children be picked up by the end of **their contracted hours of attendance**. For full-cost families, after one warning late pick-up, additional late pick-ups will cost an initial late fee of \$15 at 5 pm PLUS a \$1 per minute thereafter. For state-subsidized families, after one warning late pick-up (up to three late pick-ups), your child can be dis-enrolled from the program.

Please arrive at the Child Study Center in time to gather your child's belongings and transition your child out smoothly.

If a parent does not show up or call within a reasonable time after closing, the teacher-in-charge will call all numbers on the family's emergency card. If no one can be reached, the Campus Police may be called for assistance.

Please consider the classroom schedule when arriving or departing. It can be difficult and distracting for the class, teachers, and the child entering to come into the classroom in the middle of a structured activity. For example, small group time, circle or large group time require the children to focus and be active members of the classroom community. The teachers are busy facilitating the group; thus they cannot take the necessary time to greet arriving children and assist with normal separation anxiety.

When possible, please avoid picking up children during nap time (daily between 1 pm and 2:30 pm) because it is distracting to children who are trying to rest.

The smoothest transitions generally require parents to stay a few minutes at both drop-off and pick-up times as children need time to adjust to change.

ATTENDANCE

Children are required to attend regularly during their scheduled hours.

Please call your child's classroom when your child is absent.

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ABSENCE POLICY

Excused Absence:

- Illness of child or parent/guardian, ailment, communicable disease, injury, hospitalization, or quarantine
- Appointment due to illness of child or parent/guardian, which includes doctor, dentist, mental health, counseling or therapy
- Court ordered visitation for time spent with a parent or relative as required by law (court order must be on file)

- Family emergency for unplanned situations of a temporary nature including court appearance, death, accident, hospitalization of a family member, no transportation, illness of sibling, sheltering in-place, fleeing domestic violence or natural disaster

Best Interest Days (maximum of 10 days per year)

Parent determines that another activity is better for the child to attend, such as:

- Visiting relative or close friend
- Vacation time with family
- Child attending a party
- Family moving
- Religious observance, holiday, or ceremony
- Personal or family business

ABANDONMENT OF CARE: Families are not allowed to be enrolled in a program if they are not using services. Child(ren) will be disenrolled when there has been no communication with the center for 30 consecutive calendar days.

HEALTH PROCEDURES

State law (SB 942) **requires a medical exam and a written record of a child's immunization dates at the time of enrollment.** If immunizations have not been updated by parents after 10 days, their child may be excluded from the program until proof is provided.

CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS TITLE 17, DIVISION 1, and CHAPTER 4 Subchapter 8:

Immunization against Poliomyelitis, Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus, Measles (Rubella), Haemophilus influenzae Type B (Hib), and Mumps.

§ 6020. Required Immunizations.

The required immunizations for admission to and attendance at a public or private elementary or secondary school, childcare center, day nursery, nursery school, family day care home, or developmental center shall be those set forth.

DTP (or DPT) means diphtheria and tetanus toxoids and pertussis vaccine, including DTaP vaccine. Tdap means tetanus toxoid, reduced diphtheria toxoid, and acellular pertussis vaccine. DT (or TD) and Td (or dT) means diphtheria and tetanus toxoids.

For pupils who have reached their seventh birthday, a history of any preparations containing diphtheria and tetanus toxoids and pertussis vaccine (DTP, DT, Td, Tdap, etc.) shall be acceptable as meeting the requirement for tetanus and diphtheria toxoids and pertussis vaccine that is set forth in Table 1.





Pupils who have reached their seventh birthday shall be exempt from the mumps immunization requirements. IMM-1080 Combination vaccines that include measles, mumps, and rubella components shall be acceptable as meeting the requirements for these vaccines § 6035. Conditional Admission.



Any pupil seeking admission to a given public or private elementary or secondary school, child care center, day nursery, nursery school, family day care home, or development center who lacks documentation of having received all the required vaccine doses against poliomyelitis, diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, measles, rubella, Haemophilus influenzae type B, mumps, hepatitis B and varicella (chickenpox), and has not obtained a permanent medical exemption or a personal beliefs exemption to immunization in accordance with Section 6051, may be admitted conditionally if:

He or she has not received all the immunizations required for his or her age group but has commenced receiving doses of all the vaccines, is not currently due for any doses at the time of admission (if he or she is due for any doses at this time they must be obtained before admission), and the pupil's parent or guardian is notified of the date by which the pupil must complete all the required immunizations;

or

He or she has obtained a temporary medical exemption from immunization in accordance with Section 6050, and the pupil's parent or guardian is notified of the date by which the pupil must complete all the required immunizations when the temporary exemption terminates; or

He or she is a pupil entering a childcare center governed by Education Code Section 8263(c), where a different deadline for obtaining all required immunizations may apply.

The public or private elementary or secondary school, childcare center, day nursery, nursery school, family day care home, or development center shall not allow the admission of any pupil seeking entry who does not meet the requirements for admission under Section 6025 or 6035. The principal or administrator shall advise the pupil, or the parent or guardian, to contact a physician or agency that provides immunization.

To look up California Immunization law, check www.shotsforschool.org/laws/ on the web.



Pre-Kindergarten



(any private or public child care center, day nursery, nursery school, family day care home, or development center)

Doses required by age when admitted and at each age checkpoint after entry¹:

Age When Admitted	Total Number of Doses Required of Each Immunization ^{2,3}			
2 through 3 months	1 Polio	1 DTaP	1 Hep B	1 Hib
4 through 5 months	2 Polio	2 DTaP	2 Hep B	2 Hib
6 through 14 months	2 Polio	3 DTaP	2 Hep B	2 Hib
15 through 17 months	3 Polio	3 DTaP	2 Hep B	1 Varicella
	On or after the 1st birthday:			1 Hib ⁴ 1 MMR
18 months through 5 years	3 Polio	4 DTaP	3 Hep B	1 Varicella
	On or after the 1st birthday:			1 Hib ⁴ 1 MMR

1. A pupil's parent or guardian must provide documentation of a pupil's proof of immunization to the governing authority no more than 30 days after a pupil becomes subject to any additional requirement(s) based on age, as indicated in the table above (Table A).
2. Combination vaccines (e.g., MMRV) meet the requirements for individual component vaccines. Doses of DTP count towards the DTaP requirement.
3. Any vaccine administered four or fewer days prior to the minimum required age is valid.
4. One Hib dose must be given on or after the first birthday regardless of previous doses. Required only for children who have not reached the age of five years.

Polio = inactivated [polio](#) vaccine (IPV) (oral polio vaccine [OPV] does not count)
 DTaP = [diphtheria toxoid](#), [tetanus toxoid](#), and acellular [pertussis](#) vaccine
 Hib = [Haemophilus influenzae, type B](#) vaccine
 Hep B = [hepatitis B](#) vaccine
 MMR = [measles](#), [mumps](#), and [rubella](#) vaccine
 Varicella = [chickenpox](#) vaccine

Instructions:

California pre-kindergarten (child care or preschool) facilities are required to check immunizations for all new admissions and at each age checkpoint.

Unconditionally Admit a pupil age 18 months or older whose parent or guardian has provided documentation of any of the following for each immunization required for the pupil's age as defined in the table above:

- Receipt of immunization.
- A permanent medical exemption.*



HEALTH POLICIES

Please communicate food allergies directly to the teaching staff, as well as on a medical form from your doctor. Information on allergies and medical limitations must be written on the emergency card.

Prescription medication will be administered by the Child Development Program staff only under the following conditions:

Medication is hand-delivered to the teacher-in-charge in its original prescription container, showing the doctor's name and instructions.

A medication form is signed by the parent and teacher-in-charge and is posted in the child's classroom.

Vision, hearing and dental screenings are offered occasionally to the children in each Center. Parents of children who need further screening will be notified and referred to their own physicians.

ILLNESS

If a child cannot participate fully in the program due to illness, they need to stay home. Going outside is a regular part of the program, and children will not be kept indoors during outside time.

Our policy requires children must stay home from school for the following reasons:

- Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool)
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Earache
- Fever (101 degrees F or above)
- Gray or white stool
- Headache and stiff neck
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Infected skin patches
- Crusty, bright yellow, dry gummy areas of skin
- Loss of appetite
- Pink eye
- Tears, redness or eyelid lining
- Irritation
- Swelling and/or discharge of pus
- Severe coughing
- Pain related to any part of the body
- Child gets red or blue in the face
- Child makes high-pitched croupy or whooping sound after s/he coughs
- Severe itching of body/scalp
- Sore throat or trouble swallowing



- Noticeable increase in crying or distress beyond the child's normal behavior
- General signs of discomfort, such as appearing unwell or uneasy
- Unusual irritability, fatigue, or decreased participation in activities
- Vomiting
- Unusual spots or rashes
- Unusually dark, tea-colored urine
- Yellow skin or eyes
- Head lice or nits
- Lethargic and/or just seems unwell



Children who become ill at school **will be allowed to rest in an isolated area until an authorized adult can take them home.**

Please notify the teaching staff if a **child's injury or illness is extensive or highly contagious.** There may be times when a note from a physician will be necessary before **a child can return to the center.**

Special medical circumstances, including stitches, casts, etc., need to be communicated to the teaching staff and reviewed by the director to determine if the program can accommodate the needs of the child.

For any concerning symptoms, we encourage you to also contact your child's pediatrician.

ILLNESS

If your child exhibits any of the highlighted symptoms, please contact your child's classroom (pg. 21) so that we can inform other parents that their child may have been exposed to a contagious illness.

Children may return to the Child Study Center **24 hours** after symptoms have resolved without use of medication.

Children sent home with illness must stay home the following day. From there, they must be symptom free for **24 hours before returning.**

In certain cases, a doctor's note will be required before your child returns. In some cases, consultation from the Student Health Services nurse will also be sought.

NUTRITION

Breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snacks are served daily by the Child Development Program. Monthly menus are posted in classrooms.

Meals are served family style. Teachers assist the children as needed, and the children are encouraged to be independent at mealtimes by feeding themselves and asking for what they need. It is a pleasant time with lots of conversations.

The same meals with appropriate substitutions for dietary restrictions are served to all children regardless of race, color, national origin, age, sex, or ability.

SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURE

An emergency card is to be completed by the parent for every child, including persons and physicians, to be called if parent cannot be reached. Parents who are taking classes must keep an updated schedule card at our program, to be reached in case of illness or emergency. It is the responsibility of the parents to keep emergency contact information up to date. Failure to notify the Center of your location can result in termination of service.

If a child is injured during the program, the staff will:

Administer emergency first aid as needed.

Telephone the parent or authorized emergency contact.

Obtain further medical treatment, if necessary.

Complete and file an accident report.

In an emergency such as an earthquake, fire, or other natural disaster, procedures outlined in the [Emergency Guidelines Handbook](#) will be followed. The handbook is posted by the program's doors. A specific classroom emergency plan is also posted in each classroom.

If necessary, the teaching staff along with the Campus Police will escort children to a Red Cross emergency center. In the event of a disaster, contact Campus Police for the evacuation location.

If you need to speak with an officer and no one is in the office when you arrive, please call the police dispatch number (415) 485-9696 to determine the estimated time of return or to arrange contact.

Urgent: (415) 485-9696 Emergency, fire, and medical: 911

COM CONNECT EMERGENCY ALERTS

As an enrolled family in our program, we highly encourage you to sign up for our College of Marin Emergency Alert System. Police Services are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Sign up for COM Connect and review your contact information. You will be asked to provide an ID code—enter your M00#. Community Ed students and Marin community may sign up to receive emergency alerts at the [COM Connect open portal](#).



HOW WE WORK WITH YOUR CHILD



CURRICULUM

The Child Development Program is a developmentally based, child-centered program. The curriculum is based on developing skills and supporting the needs of the young child in terms of all key areas of development including:

Language: speaking and listening

Cognitive: thinking and learning how to learn, which also includes the emergence of pre-academic skills such as reading, science, math, etc.

Social: interacting with others

Emotional: learning about oneself, how to express emotions, how to develop self-regulation

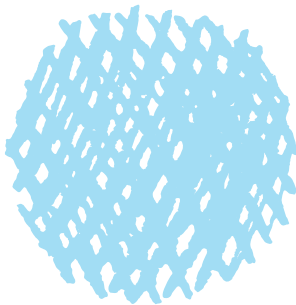
Gross and fine motor: developing strength, coordination, and balance in the large limbs (arms, legs) and learning how to control hand and finger muscles.

Developing trusting relationships is extended to include more adults and peers. In addition, the preschooler is ready for more cognitive stimulation, so the program provides many ways for children to wonder, question, solve problems, organize thoughts, and build upon their knowledge base to prepare them for pre-academic skill development.

Positive guidance is used to help children develop self-regulation.

Children are taught clear guidelines for acceptable behavior and conflict resolution strategies. Children are given acceptable alternatives to inappropriate behavior and are encouraged to express their thoughts and are always left with dignity. This consistent approach encourages empathy, builds trusting relationships, and creates a classroom community where all children feel valued.

Families are an integral part of a child's early education experience. The program staff recognizes that parents are children's first teachers, and that home culture has a positive and powerful influence on children's lives. The teachers provide culturally responsive care, which values and honors the family's contribution to the classroom community.



DAILY SCHEDULE

Each classroom has a daily schedule. The schedule is planned to provide the children with a balanced daily routine that is predictable, yet flexible.

The major events of the day include:

Snacks and meals – shared family style, meals and conversation together create a warm, homelike environment for children and staff.

Large group - a time to build a sense of community in the classroom by sharing stories, songs, dance, games, etc.

Small group – groups of six-to-eight children look forward to being together every day with the same teacher to build specific skills and explore themes that are interesting to them.

Outside/play/exploration – our program offers children the choice of being indoors or out for play time. Play is children's work. It is the time that they learn the most about themselves and the world around them.

Nap/rest – all full-day children are required to participate in either nap or rest. It is a quiet time where children can rest their bodies, read, nap, or quietly play with toys, depending on each child's individual needs. It is important for parents to communicate their child's unique needs to the teaching staff.

FIELD TRIPS AND PHOTOGRAPHS

Field trips require Parent Permission Forms. Most field trips are within walking distance, which minimizes transportation risks and takes advantage of the rich educational opportunities on campus as well as the beautiful natural environments.

Occasionally, our program may schedule and conduct bus and/or van fieldtrips. **Parents will be given prior information before we conduct those special trips to nearby parks, museums, or other family-friendly places.**

Parent Permission Forms for campus walking field trips and photography of children are included in your child's registration packet and should be signed and returned promptly.

POSITIVE GUIDANCE

Discipline through positive guidance helps children develop self-control. The teaching staff understands that children need clear, consistent limits, with positive messages to help them regulate their own behavior.



It is essential that all children feel safe at school. Our teachers accept discipline as a normal part of the day, and spend a good deal of time using the following positive guidance strategies:

Redirecting – to help children find something more acceptable to get involved in

Modeling acceptable behavior – through words and actions that show children what to do instead of the unacceptable behavior

Giving children **words** to label their feelings

Guiding children to a **quiet spot** when they need space to gain control of their actions

Refraining from words or actions which might cause children to feel bad about themselves. **Children are never shamed but left with dignity.**

CLOTHING

Parents should dress children in comfortable play clothes and shoes. Children will be encouraged to enjoy many kinds of experiences at school, and some of them will be dirty, wet, messy, and stained. Please avoid fancy clothes that could get soiled.

Please bring two sets of extra clothes labeled with the child's name in case of toilet accidents, water play, or messy projects.

Shoes should be flat and have rubber soles. It is not safe for children to attend in high heels, flip flops, or slippery shoes.

Jewelry is discouraged, as it can be a safety hazard.

TOYS FROM HOME

Please keep your child's personal toys at home to prevent loss or conflicts during the school day. If your child has favorite interests or themes, let us know and we'll do our best to incorporate them in classroom activities.

CELEBRATION AND HOLIDAY POLICIES

The Child Development Program takes immense pride in the diversity of the classroom community. The holiday policy is intended to honor the unique traditions, religious beliefs, and holiday celebrations of all families.





It is difficult to celebrate all the holidays important in the cultures represented in the classrooms without having some families feel their beliefs are being excluded. It is essential that the teaching staff remain objective, as it is important for all children and families to feel equally valued. **Therefore, the program does not generally celebrate holidays as a classroom event. This means teachers will not use class time to initiate activities focused on a particular holiday.**

Children's comments, questions and enthusiasm about events and celebrations that are meaningful to them are welcomed. If children ask questions, they will be answered in a matter-of-fact way with simple language. Children will be encouraged to talk to their family members if they would like more in-depth information about religious holidays or beliefs.

Below are some examples of holidays that the staff do not plan specific curriculum or activities to celebrate:

Birthdays	Halloween
Valentine's Day	St. Patrick's Day
Easter	Mother's Day
Father's Day	Cinco de Mayo
Las Posadas	Thanksgiving
Chanukah	Kwanzaa
Christmas	Rosh Hashanah
	Lunar New Year

BIRTHDAYS

A child's birthday will always be acknowledged verbally if a child shares information about their special day. Birthdays are an important day in many families, and the teachers are happy to hear about the celebrations that take place at home. **Birthdays will not be celebrated at school for a variety of reasons:**

- Some families do not celebrate birthdays.
- Some children have birthdays when school is not in session, so they never get their "special day" at School.
- Some families cannot afford to provide goodies for the whole class, and we do not want to create a hardship for any family.
- Some families are very busy and occasionally a treat gets forgotten, which can be hard on a young child.

Your understanding and compassion regarding the celebration policies are appreciated.

BRINGING CULTURE INTO THE CLASSROOM

Children, families, and teachers can learn a great deal about cultural traditions from one another. Having exposure to other cultural experiences increases acceptance and tolerance of that which is unfamiliar.



Families are encouraged to share family traditions that are meaningful to them with the class. Sharing customs and traditions of one's culture can be a way to build and strengthen the connection between home and school, as well as reinforcing a child's cultural roots. Some examples of how families share their cultural traditions are parents bringing in an item, music, food, or story to share with the children. Please talk to your child's teacher to plan an appropriate time and method of sharing your family traditions.

The physical classroom environment should also reflect the children and their home cultures. We welcome the donation of household items that can make culture more visible. Some of the kinds of things that work well are as follows:

- Fabrics
- Wall hangings
- Telephone books, magazines, menus in your home language
- Cooking utensils for the house area
- Dishes
- Plastic food
- Empty boxes of food that can be taped and used in the house area
- Clothing and shoes

PARENT COMMUNICATION AND PARTICIPATION

COMMUNICATION

The Child Development Program views parents as partners in the education of young children. Parents are encouraged to express ideas, concerns, and observations directly to the staff. Good communication between parents and teachers is a vital part of a successful program.

This is achieved through daily contact, formal and informal parent conferences, and parent meetings. If a parent wishes to speak to a teacher at length, it will be necessary to set up a time when the teacher is not scheduled to be with the children.

PARTICIPATION

Parents are encouraged to visit and observe their children in the program. The program observes an open-door policy, which means parents can drop in at any time. Parents are welcome to participate in the program in whatever way they can.

It could be anything from making suggestions, to helping serve snack, singing a song, reading a story, helping with an art project, making something at home to enhance the classroom, attending parent meetings and/or social gatherings, or being involved in other school activities.



Please let the teachers know when you are available, or if there are any specific skills or knowledge you would like to share with the classroom community.

Siblings and/or other family members can visit the enrolled child if the parent accompanies the family member for a short visit time (30 minutes maximum) AND abides by all policies and procedures of our Child Development Program and COM.

PARENT CONFERENCES

Parent/teacher conferences are scheduled twice during the academic year. This is a time when teachers share information about the child's development based on observations documented in the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP). Parents may request a conference at any time.

PARENT WORKSHOPS

At least once per semester, our program holds parenting workshops to support our parents in their role and responsibility of caring for their children.

PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

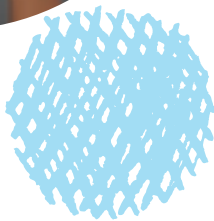
Our Child Development Program features a Parent Advisory Committee (PAC). The PAC includes parent officers, a COM student representative, and the director of the Early Childhood Education and Child Development Program who serves as the faculty advisor.

The PAC meets four times per year to highlight parent participation and/or discuss parent concerns and to plan activities that will meet parent needs and interests. The committee also makes recommendations on program operation, long-range planning, and evaluation.

With the Child Development Program in mind, the PAC meet with the positive goals

- To find resources and ways to enhance children's learning environments (low or no cost materials),
- To appreciate our children's families and teachers (teacher appreciation and parent cafes),
- To raise funding for new equipment or repairs for our classrooms (through auctions or fundraisers), and
- To promote market visibility for our COM Child Development Program (enrollment).

PAC meets four times per year, and dates can be found on the school calendar. We would love you to be involved!



PARENT/GUARDIAN RIGHTS

According to Section 101218.1 of Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR), Parents/guardians have the right to enter and inspect the childcare facility in which their children are receiving care, without advance notice to the provider. (Parent/guardian must present identification; entry and inspection are limited to the normal operating hours while their children are receiving care.) The law prohibits discrimination or retaliation against any child or parent/guardian for exercising the right to inspect.

According to Section 101218.1 of Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR), Parents/guardians have the right to enter and inspect the childcare facility in which their children are receiving care, without advance notice to the provider.

The law authorizes the person in charge of the childcare facility to deny access to guardian under the following circumstances:

the parent/guardian is behaving in a way which poses a risk to children in the facility, or the adult is a non-custodial guardian, and the facility has been requested in writing by the custodial guardian to not permit access to the non-custodial guardian.

WHAT TO BRING ON THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

A family photo for the classroom

LABELED Extra Clothes

- 3 underpants/panties
- 3 pairs of socks
- 2 pants
- 2 shirts
- 1 extra sweatshirt
- 1 pair of walking shoes

LABELED Rest/Nap Time Comforts (a mat, sheet, and blanket will be provided)

- Small pillow if desired
- A soft/stuffed toy

(Please see Arrival and Departures for tips on saying "goodbye.")



HOW YOUR CHILD WILL THRIVE AT OUR PROGRAM

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURES

Tips to make the “goodbye” easier on you and your child

Plan to stay 5–10 minutes

Establish a routine together, such as reading a book, playing with blocks, or something else that your child enjoys. If you don’t, your child may start their own routine which may include screaming, clinging, etc.

When it is time to leave, tell them that you are leaving, then go. Prolonging “goodbye” makes things worse. **PLEASE DO NOT EVER SNEAK OUT**, as it can affect your child’s ability to trust the new environment.

Tell your child that you will be back (or if someone else is picking up, tell your child who it will be). If your child is old enough to understand a daily routine, tell them when you will return—for example after lunch, nap time, during afternoon snack, etc.

Tell your child that the teachers will take good care of them and that they will be safe. **TRY TO LOOK CONFIDENT AS YOU LEAVE. IF YOU LOOK WORRIED, YOUR CHILD WILL THINK THEY HAVE SOMETHING TO WORRY ABOUT!**

Let the teachers know if you need help leaving. They are happy to help but do not want to impose on your time together.

It is normal for kids to cry or feel sad (you too!). It could last for a day or a month. Some kids do not show any signs of sadness for a couple of weeks, then tears come. This could be considered the “honeymoon phase.” Just know that it is all normal and that the teachers will help you through it. Feel free to call our classrooms anytime to check on your child.





ASSURANCES

The Child Development Program provides the following assurances:

1. The program will meet all applicable state, federal, and local laws, including the Child Abuse Reporting laws.
2. The program will not include religious instructions or worship, nor will any funds be used for the support of any private or faith-related school system.
3. COM abides by the requirements of the Fair Employment Practices, Affirmative Action Employment, and the Department of Labor Regulations governing the minimum wage law.
4. The use or disclosure of financial or other information maintained in the individual basic data file concerning enrollees and their families will be limited to purposes directly connected with the program administration. No other use of this information may be made without the parent's prior written consent.

STAFF

CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Ruthie Reeder, M.A.

Ruthie oversees the Child Development Programs on the Kentfield Campus and brings over 25 years of experience in early childhood education. She earned her M.A. in Early Childhood Education and holds a Program Director Permit from the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. Ruthie is dedicated to ensuring the program reflects best practices in early care and education, maintains compliance with all quality standards, and engages in continuous program improvement. She also leads staff development, fosters strong community partnerships, and supports the creation of special programs that enrich the learning experience for children and families.

SITE SUPERVISOR

Derry Gutierrez

Derry is responsible for the daily operations of the classrooms. He holds a Site Supervisor Permit from the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. He's an active member of the teaching team, and in addition oversees staff schedules and meetings, enrollment, registration, shopping, parent communication and implementation of program standards. Derry is a skilled multi-tasker!





LEAD TEACHER

Gretchen Ott

Gretchen holds a B.A. in Child Development and holds a Child Development Site Supervisor Permit. She brings over 25 years of experience in early childhood education, including more than 20 years at her previous school where she grew as a teacher, mentor, and colleague. She values building strong connections with children and families, fostering a supportive and inclusive learning environment, and making learning engaging, playful, and meaningfully challenging.



Helen Morales,
Teacher

TEACHERS

With over 25 years of experience, the Children's Center teaching team is made up of certified professionals who hold Early Childhood Education (ECE) credentials issued by the State of California. Each teacher brings a unique blend of experience, knowledge, and personal strengths to the classroom, creating a rich and responsive learning environment for young children.

They are highly trained and experienced educators who lead classroom planning, mentor associate teachers and student interns, and ensure that the curriculum reflects developmentally appropriate, inclusive, and culturally responsive practices. They are deeply committed to fostering strong partnerships with families, supporting children's individual learning goals, and maintaining the highest standards of quality. They also play a key role in mentoring COM students pursuing careers in early childhood education, contributing to the professional development of the next generation of educators.



Jeanette Malouf,
Teacher

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Kahea Jackson, Admin Asst. for ECE & CDP

Kahea is responsible for all fiscal, billing, data reporting, clerical duties such as word processing, mail distribution, copying, filing, campus communication, and a host of other tasks assigned by the Program Director in the support of the Child Development Program.



ASSISTANT TEACHERS AND STUDENT TEACHERS

Each classroom may have assistant teachers and student teachers, as well as work-study students. These assistants, under the guidance and supervision of the teachers, learn effective teaching strategies while adding their unique experiences and often enthusiastic approach to the classroom.



Child Development Center School Calendar 2025-2026



2025

Friday, August 15 Meet and Greet, 10 am-12 pm
Monday, August 18..... First Day of School and Parent Orientation, 4 pm
Thursday, August 21 Closed: Convocation
Monday, September 8..... Parent Advisory Meeting, 4 pm-5 pm
Monday, September 1 Closed: Labor Day
Tuesday, November 11..... Closed: Veterans Day
Thu and Fri, November 27-28 Closed: Thanksgiving (and day after)
Tuesday, December 2 Parent Advisory Meeting, 4 pm-5 pm
December 22-31 Closed: Winter Break

2026

January 1-2..... Closed: Winter Break
Monday, January 5 CSC Reopens
Thursday, January 15..... Closed: Convocation
Monday, January 19 Closed: MLK Day
Monday, February 2 Parent Advisory Meeting, 4 pm-5 pm
Friday, February 13..... Closed: Lincoln Day
Monday, February 16 Closed: Washington Day
Tuesday, May 5..... Parent Advisory Meeting, 4 pm-5 pm
Monday, May 25..... Closed: Memorial Day
Friday, June 19 Closed: Juneteenth National Freedom
Thursday, June 4..... Year End Celebration, 11 am-1 pm
June 5-30..... Summer Break

RECEIPT AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF FAMILY HANDBOOK

I have received a copy of the (year) Child Development Program Family Handbook.

I have reviewed it on this date and agree to the policies & procedures of the COM Child Development Program (CDP) on

As an enrolled family of the COM CDP, as stated by the COM CDP Family Handbook,

- I agree to comply and abide by the policies and procedures of the Child Development Program and College of Marin.
- I agree to uphold and follow the regulations and standards of the Child Development Program.
- I agree to stand by the enrollment requirements and tuition fee policies of the Child Development Program.
- I agree to attend the family orientations, open house gatherings, welcome night meetings, family conferences and other meetings required of me to attend by my child's teachers or the program director.
- I agree to inform my child's teacher and staff IN WRITING of any change in our family's contact information, emergency information, designated pick-up persons, health and nutrition status, and other pertinent information important to my child.
- I agree to comply by all health and safety protocols and guidelines followed by the CDP, during the ongoing pandemic and cooperate with the Marin Public Health, Center for Disease Control guidelines, community care licensing, CA Department of Education, and United States Department of Agriculture and I will help my child comply and cooperate as well.

Furthermore, I agree that if I, or a family member, behaves in a manner that are in conflict with the CDP, philosophy, program policies, and/or I am potentially harmful and detrimental to the overall well - being and safety of the children, families, and teaching staff of the CDP, I understand that I will be asked to leave the program premises and may be terminated from the program.

Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

I prefer communication about my child and my child's program through the following means:

(Check ALL that apply) ☐ Email ☐ Phone ☐ in Person ☐ Other (Specify)

Director: _____ Date: _____