

Counterpane Montessori

Policies and Expectations

Daily Schedules

Primary students (3 to 6 year-olds), Lower School students (6 to 12 year-olds) and Upper School students (12 years and up) are expected to be in class from 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM Monday through Friday. Please check the Calendar Overview for school closing dates.

Arrival and Departure Times

There is no supervision of students prior to 7:30 AM or after 3:30 PM. If the student remains after 3:30 PM, they must be enrolled in the after school program (CAPS). Please refer to the CAPS registration form.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures

All students should be dropped off at the front entrance. For security purposes, Counterpane's front door is opened at 7:30 AM and locked promptly at 8:00 AM when the school day officially begins, and staff and students start classes. Whenever your child is tardy, please park your vehicle in a parking space (not at the curb), ring the bell, walk your student into the lobby, and sign them in. The children then walk themselves to their classrooms.

Pick-up for all children is at the front entrance at 3:00 PM. Parent/teacher conversations must be arranged for times other than drop-off or pick-up. If you have a question, a concern, or a happiness to share, park your car and come into the school. If it is a more time-consuming matter, please make an appointment to speak with us.

Drive slowly on the premises – children and animals are unpredictable. Student parking is restricted to the parking area near the cottage. No cars may be parked along the curb in front of the building, as it is a fire lane. If you are planning to pick up your child before 3:00 PM, please notify the school so your child can be ready. When you arrive at the school, park your vehicle and check in at the front office; a staff member will then escort your child from their classroom to the front lobby.

Extended Day

The CAPS program, which is from 3:30 PM until 6:00 PM, is for ages 3 and up. It is limited in size and is designed to accommodate only those families in which all parents work outside the home and require care for their children beyond school hours. Students must register and be accepted into CAPS. There are additional fees for this program.

Holiday Celebrations and Birthday Parties

Holiday celebrations and birthday parties are special occasions that should occur at home, not at school. Please refrain from handing out invitations on campus. Counterpane acknowledges special dates and each child's birthday but not with a party or refreshments. We strictly adhere to this policy.

Lunches

Counterpane School is dedicated to providing an environment that is safe for all children. In order to protect students with food allergies, no shellfish, peanuts, or tree nuts are permitted on campus. Please be as health-conscious as possible when helping your child plan his/her lunch menu for the week. Allow your child to prepare his/her own lunch, with guidance. Sweets and most chips are to be enjoyed at home. Water is the only beverage Primary and Lower School students are allowed to bring on campus. Individually labeled refillable water bottles are strongly recommended for every student, as they are not allowed to leave their classroom or the playground to get water.

Emergency Procedure

In case of an emergency, every effort will be made to reach the parents and the child's doctor. If this fails, the school will seek medical attention for the child under the signed Medical Release to ensure that your child receives timely care. Parents will be responsible for and must assume all charges for or related to medical services for their child(ren).

Scheduled School Closings

Counterpane is closed on Labor Day, Thursday and Friday of the Thanksgiving holiday, Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday, Presidents' Day, and Memorial Day. We are also closed for three weeks between quarters and typically seven weeks in the summer.

Unscheduled School Closings

Weather and other emergencies may require school closings. In the event of severe weather, please follow the Fayette County School System. Do not call teachers as they are also scanning the radio or television listings for school closings.

Technology Philosophy – Technology is used to provide an educational experience in an age-appropriate way. Upper School is the only community using individual computers. Primary and Lower School students should not bring any personal technology to school.

Reviews

During the first three weeks a new student is in the classroom, the teacher will communicate weekly to the parents about the student's progress and adjustment to the environment.

Parent Participation

Our school is made up of a diverse group of teachers and parents who have chosen commitment to a shared group of values and expectations for our children. As a not-for-profit school, we rely upon the assistance and participation of our families so that our learning communities may flourish. All families are expected to participate. Refer to the Parent-School Covenant for details and opportunities.

Norms and Expectations

Counterpane's mission is to assist the development of students as academically and creatively engaged, community-sensitive, responsible people who know themselves well. It should be understood that our success in this mission is more a function of the self-discipline and the attitude of the student than of the student's "intelligence quotient." An understanding of the following points is crucial in order to be successful in this environment.

Initiative – Students must understand themselves to be the driving force behind their intellectual growth. Counterpane teachers and staff are facilitators for students' intellectual pursuits; they are not the source of initiative, which must come from within each student.

Self-discipline – Self-discipline, not teacher-imposed discipline, is the sure sign of a maturing learner. Each student will be given the freedom he/she earns or the structure he/she needs to fulfill the responsibilities to the best of his/her individual ability.

Academic Progress – Academic progress is monitored by the teacher but is driven by the individual student. A student's progress from one level to the next is based on academic readiness, not chronological age or "seat time." Upper School students may complete their course-work in three years, four years, or may need five years. Counterpane refuses to advance or graduate a student who has not proven academic readiness by an end-of-course grade of at least 75 in all college preparatory work.

Academic Environment – Counterpane offers an academic opportunity, not a social opportunity. Therefore, the daily focus must be an intellectual one. It would be counterproductive for students to pursue a social agenda in this environment. Although we encourage social activities outside the school, Counterpane is ultimately a place for academic learning. Building community to that end is our priority.

Romantic Relationships – An environment must be safe before it will encourage intellectual risk-taking. Counterpane is too small an environment for romantic involvement between students. Privacy is not possible with these numbers and such emotional exposure makes students vulnerable. Therefore, we insist that students maintain collegial relationships, which will ensure a dynamic environment in which they may be brave and open with their thoughts.

Academic Integrity – Counterpane students are responsible for completing all work to the best of their ability and are honor-bound not to lie, cheat, steal, or tolerate those who do. They are to ensure the integrity of their own work as well as that of their peers.

Shared Responsibility – The ideal environment is one that facilitates learning, quality work, timeliness, cleanliness, kindness, and quiet, focused work habits. Students and teachers are equally responsible for sustaining and nurturing such an environment.

Parents' Support – Your contract with Counterpane implies you have researched our program and our goals, and have made an informed decision to place your child in this environment. It is imperative that the family support decisions made by the school regarding their child, which are made to prepare students for future academic success as well as success in life. Parent initiative to stay in touch with their child's progress is essential. Please see the attached Parent-School Covenant.

Substance Abuse

Student use of drugs, alcohol, and/or tobacco (including vaping or e-cigs) is never permitted and can result in immediate dismissal from Counterpane.

Counterpane enforces strict rules on the use of drugs and alcohol. Young people deserve to enter a community that exists as a sanctuary from drugs and alcohol. Drugs, alcohol, smoking, and/or the use of smokeless tobacco will not be tolerated on the campus of Counterpane. This includes all events, trips, or activities that are under the sponsorship of Counterpane. The penalties for non-adherence to this policy will be severe and can result in separation from Counterpane. There is no minimum; possession or a sip is the same as the consumption of a large quantity. The following sanctions on offenses will prevail:

- Student may be required to be assessed by a qualified professional and submit a letter of results of assessment from the qualified professional with fifteen (15) days.
- Student must appear before the head of the school for in-school disciplinary sanctions.
- Student is ineligible for awards for the academic year.
- Student must vacate any honorary or elected office for the academic year.
- In reprehensible cases, student is subject to expulsion.

Drug and Alcohol Test – As part of Counterpane's drug and alcohol policy, Counterpane reserves the right to request suspected students to submit to appropriate medical tests on the spot, at the discretion of the school, whenever we encounter suspected violations of our rules forbidding the use, possession, or distribution of alcohol or drugs. Parents will be consulted before any tests are administered. Students who refuse required testing will be assumed guilty of the suspected violation and will receive the appropriate consequences.

Aggression or Bullying – Aggressive, threatening, or bullying behavior, including cyberbullying, is not tolerated and will result in suspension or dismissal.

Certain behaviors, such as profanity in word or deed; intentional mistreatment of the physical plant, environment, or classroom materials; or physically or verbally assaulting another person are unacceptable, and students may be sent home to deal with further consequences there.

Violations of the rule on unsafe practices and possessions – Students are forbidden to put themselves and others at risk by their actions or possessions. The following are examples (but cannot be all inclusive) concerning personal safety:

- No fireworks, unapproved fires or other forms of pyrotechnics are allowed on campus.
- No weapons (air rifles, paint guns, pistols, slingshots, knives, etc.) are allowed on campus.
- Students may not engage in dangerous pranks, fights or other activities. Failure to adhere to the school's rule on unsafe practices and possessions may result in suspension or expulsion from the school.

Financial Aid – Limited financial aid may be available at times for students with proven need. Financial aid is contingent on available funds.

Bright from the Start – Bright from the Start administers the nationally recognized Georgia's Pre-K Program, licenses child care centers and home-based child care, and administers federal nutrition programs. Counterpane School is not a child care center. I have been informed that Counterpane's program is not a licensed child care facility. I also understand this program is not required to be licensed by the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning and this program is exempt from state licensure requirements.