



# **Parent Handbook**

**2010**

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# 1. Montessori Education

## **The Montessori Philosophy of Education:**

Maria Montessori was Italy's first woman doctor. She developed her method of education after many years of dedicated observations and assessing the development patterns that children display.

One of the fundamental principles of Montessori Philosophy is that we 'follow the child'. This means that we acknowledge each child as an individual and give each child a special kind of 'work' that he or she needs to develop its fullest potential.

Children are placed in Environments that have been specifically prepared for them to meet all their developmental needs, and offer the most in terms of physical, emotional, social intellectual and spiritual opportunities. These Environments contain specialised Montessori materials, which have been designed to attract the children to work with them.

A Montessori Directress is trained to observe the children in her care and to treat each child with respect and dignity. Her role in the Environment is unobtrusive. The dynamic aspect is observed in the interaction between the children and the materials.

## **The Silver Creek College Mission Statement and Objective:**

Our objective at Silver Creek College is to provide your child with an environment that is stimulating and exciting. In this prepared Environment we aim to foster a life-long love of learning in your child so that their inner needs for growth and creativity can be met and satisfied through self-fulfilment, rather than external pressure.

## **Code of ethics:**

### Confidentiality:

All personal information regarding children, their families and school-related matters are held in the strictest confidence.

### Respect for the child:

This includes a positive, optimistic attitude towards the child, a cooperative spirit, a nurturing of independence, a recognition of the child's unique individuality, trust in the child's great work to create himself, providing the right activity, listening to and observing the child in order to ascertain his needs. We avoid pride, anger, touching a child unless invited, speaking ill of a child, sarcasm, teasing, overreaction to bad behaviour and implied punishment or rewards.

### Preparation of the Environment:

The Directress' preparation is taken from her observations of each child's individual needs. She keeps records of each child's progress and readiness for new materials. She is committed to maintaining the materials and the order in the classroom.

### The Curriculum:

The Montessori Curriculum, which Silver Creek College will implement, is outcomes based as required by the RNCS (Revised National Curriculum Statement). We therefore work with one theme in different subjects – e.g. when studying Geography (South Africa), we would include

South African history, fauna, flora, music and art.

Montessori's Cosmic Education follows the principle of presenting the "big picture" to the child first, and then breaking it up into smaller pieces – e.g. we first present earth made up of land, air and water (the "big picture") and then break this down into parts according to the level at which the child is working in reference to land – and water forms, continents, countries, flags from the different countries and famous landmarks.

English and Mathematics are of the utmost importance and presented on a daily basis. We also offer a cultural programme which includes the following subject areas from Preschool to Upper Primary: Geography and History (Social Sciences), Natural Sciences, Art, Technology, Music would be outsourced.

We make use of the assessment criteria and critical outcomes as stated in the RNCS for evaluation purposes and to ensure our alignment to the education department's expectations.

### Subjects Covered:

#### PRESCHOOL (3-6 yrs)

Practical Life Skills, Sensorial, Geometry, Language, Math, Cultural Subjects, Physical Motor Activities and Art.

#### LOWER PRIMARY (6-9 yrs)

Practical Life Skills, Geometry, Languages (English first language, Afrikaans second language), Math, Cultural Subjects and Physical Education.

#### UPPER PRIMARY (9-12 yrs)

Practical Life Skills (Life Orientation), Algebra and Geometry, Languages (English first language, Afrikaans second language), Math, Cultural Subjects, Economic Management, Science and Physical Education.

#### MIDDLE SCHOOL (12-15 yrs)

First Language English, English Literature, Afrikaans Second Language, Mathematics, Sciences (Biology, Chemistry, Physics), Technology, Social Science (History, Geography), Art, Practical Life Skills and Business Studies.

## **2. Contact Information**

|                           |                  |              |
|---------------------------|------------------|--------------|
| Owner: Principle          | Lawréne Jordaan  | 083 307 3789 |
| Directress (Pre-school)   | Anel Gericke     | 084 503 8486 |
| Directress (Gr. 1,2,3)    | Carien Smith     | 084 552 3799 |
| Directress (Gr. 1,2,3)    | Janis Schröer    | 082 853 0650 |
| Directress (Gr. 4,5,6)    | Dalene Dampier   | 072 171 5914 |
| Directress (Gr. 4,5,6)    | Frieda Chennells | 083 455 3138 |
| Directress (Gr. 7,8,9,10) | Marinda Keyser   | 083 287 2675 |
| Directress (Gr. 7,8,9,10) | Charl Smit       | 073 327 0410 |
| Directress (Gr. 7,8,9,10) | Valerie Hudson   | 072 515 7395 |

**Fax:** 086 6916 083

**Email:** [silvercreekcollege@gmail.com](mailto:silvercreekcollege@gmail.com)

### 3. School Schedule 2010

Silver Creek College broadly follows the schedule of the North West government schools.

Terms for 2010

Starting date:

First Term

Second Term

Third Term

Fourth Term

Other school holidays:

### 4. Fees

The Fees for 2010 are set out below.

**Enrolment Fees**

R 500 new student

R 250 re-enrolment of student every year

**Primary and High School**

R 1 350.00 per month x 11

**Pre- Primary**

R 900.00 per month x11

**Discount**

R 250.00 discount for every other child

Please note:

One month's written notice is required when leaving the College.

A refundable deposit equal to one month's school fees is levied. This deposit is held by the school and used towards your child's education development. Should they leave the school the deposit is refundable if all school fees are paid up and one month's notice has been given. The deposit may be paid over a period of six months. The deposit will be refunded within three months of notice.

**Payment of School fees**

Invoicing will be done via sms or email, if you require a hard copy we can provide you by the first (1<sup>st</sup>) of every month. We require payment in the Silver Creek College account by the 25<sup>th</sup> of every month, payable in advance. We have an eleven (11) month school fee structure. If the account is not paid by the 25<sup>th</sup> we will give you a courtesy call. Please sms via bank or fax proof of payment to avoid an unnecessary call from us. If we do not receive payment within three (3) days, we would require an explanation and payment plan. If account is still not paid within twenty five (25) days we unfortunately would have to request in writing that your child be kept at home until the school fees are paid in full. This action is a very last resort as our primary focus is the child.

### Payment methods:

We prefer Internet transfers or cash deposits directly into the bank. Please use the reference numbers provided on the invoices or sms and kindly provide us with a copy of proof of payment.

FNB - Silver Creek College  
Sediba plaza - 250044  
Acc: 62168164425

## **5. School Times**

School starts: 08:00 am. School ends: 13:00 pm. - Juniors  
School Starts: 07:45 am. School ends: 14:00 pm - Senior

Children may be dropped off at school from 07:30 am, at which time a staff member is on duty. Please ensure your child is safely in the care of an adult when you drop them off.

In case of an emergency please contact us on 083 307 3789

### After care:

After care would be provided daily until 17:30 if and when the need arises. Information regarding costs and the lunch procedure is available on request.

## **6. Communication between you and your child's Teacher**

Your child's 'Message book' is an essential part of the communication between the school and the parents. Letters of importance, weekly planners, homework assignments and messages are put into the book and provide a channel whereby concerns, comments and information can be expressed. This book is a two-way channel to be used from the school to the parent, and from parent to school. You can also use the message book to communicate short messages such as:

- My child is being collected by her aunt today
- My child is going home with a friend today
- My child had a bad night (illness/ nightmares)
- We won't be at school tomorrow, we're going to the dentist, etc.

Most correspondence will be via sms or e-mail, depending on the length of the message. You are also welcome to use these channels of communication.

The teachers will be available between 07:30 am and 08:00 am, if you require personal communication.

## **7. Academic Assessments and Reports**

### Assessments:

Children are assessed by the staff on a continuous basis and a daily record is kept of work done and outcomes achieved. We also make use of self-evaluation and peer assessment (where possible) as prescribed by the RNCS.

### Interviews:

Parent interviews will be scheduled for the third term or when required. These interviews take the form of a private meeting between the parents and the Directress. We consider these interviews as a very important part of the educational process in our school and parents are strongly recommended not to miss this opportunity. This should be seen as verbal reports.

### Reports:

Written reports are issued twice a year. To ensure that teachers do not waste education time for all the reporting, monitoring done constantly.

## **8. Safety and Security**

The safety and security of your children is of major concern to us. Staff will be on duty to receive your children in the mornings, registers will be taken every day, and all children not collected at the end of the school day will be handed to the Aftercare supervisor and checked in. We ask for your assistance in leaving a detailed message for the teacher if your child is going home with someone else or is leaving school early and with your signature. Children will not be allowed to go home with anyone lacking the express permission of their parent or guardian.

## **9. Parent involvement and Education**

Parent evenings are held once a term. These evenings are essential to parents as they give insight into the workings and Philosophy behind the activities your child is involved in during the regular school day.

## **10. Parents and Visitors to the School**

Parents and visitors are always welcome in our school, however, we ask you to please observe the following courtesies when in the children's environments:

A Montessori Environment is a place created and prepared specially for our children. They become proud of their area and learn to take responsibility for it. Parents are encouraged to respect this space as the children's. Discuss any visits that you would like to make with your child. This will build a mutual attitude of respect between you and your child. Your child will appreciate your respect and reciprocate by following your example.

## **11. Policies**

### **11.1. Absences**

#### **Absence from school:**

If a child is absent for a day or two, parents must furnish the school with a letter upon the child's return.

#### **Absence from Physical Education or any other class/ activity:**

Parents must inform the school of any reason why their child should not participate in any physical activities, or may not attend any other class or activity (e.g. for religious reasons).

### **11.2. Abuse and Neglect**

Any staff member who has seen or is aware of an abusive situation concerning a child or another staff member must notify the Principal immediately.

An internal investigation will be conducted, and if necessary, social workers or relevant authorities will be contacted.

### **11.3. Alcohol**

Children found with alcohol on the school premises will have their parents informed. If necessary, professional help at the parent's expense will be sought.

### **11.4. Arrivals and Departures**

Children should be at school in time to be in their class by 08:00 am. Children not attending Aftercare need to be collected by 13:15 pm.

Children attending Aftercare should be collected by 17:30 pm. Except in emergencies, arrangements preferably need to be made 24 hours in advance with the Aftercare supervisor in the event of a late pick-up.

### **11.5. Cell Phones**

All children are required to book in their cell phones at the relevant place first thing in the morning. Cell phones can be collected at the end of the child's school day. Although every precaution will be taken, Silver Creek College assumes no liability whatsoever for the safekeeping of cell phones belonging to children.

### **11.6. Discipline Procedures**

#### **Minor infractions:**

All discipline is age-appropriate. Minor infractions are generally dealt with in the classroom. Teachers may use 'time out' or 'loss of privileges' as consequence for inappropriate behaviour in the classroom. If a student continues to commit minor offences, the infractions may be treated as a moderate infraction. The student will be dealt with accordingly and parents may be informed at this point.

#### **Moderate infractions:**

Moderate infractions may include refusal to complete work assignments, backtalk to teachers, minor damage to school or other property, and repeated minor infractions. Consequences for such infractions may include, but are not limited to, restitution (the student may be asked to help repair, recreate or pay for damaged property), in school suspension, loss of privileges, parent conference, parent phone call, or community service. Repeated moderate infractions may be treated as a severe infraction in some cases.

#### **Severe infractions:**

Severe infractions include, but are not limited to, defacing or damaging property (school or other), profanity (verbal or written), violence, threats of violence, theft, bringing a gun, knife or

other weapon to school, blatant disrespect, disorderly conduct and endangering the safety of self and others. Students may be subject to suspension or expulsion for severe infractions. They may also be subject to making restitution and / or to police involvement.

### **11.7. Dress code**

Children should dress in the Silver Creek College uniforms, unless instructed otherwise.

### **11.8. Drugs**

Any child found with drugs will be suspended immediately and a disciplinary hearing will follow. The outcome of the disciplinary hearing will result in the child either being expelled or re-admitted to school.

### **11.9. Eating and Drinking in Class**

Children are allowed to drink fluids (water or juice) during class and are encouraged to bring their own water bottles to school. Eating in class will be at the discretion of the teacher. No chewing gum is allowed.

### **11.10. Emergency plans**

Emergency plans will be adhered to in terms of the instructions posted in each classroom. These plans include fire emergency, hostage situations and explosive scare (bomb and gunshot).

### **11.11. Field Trips**

Outings will be organised from time to time in accordance with the children's field of study. Depending on the nature of the outing, parental involvement may occasionally be required.

### **11.12. First Aid**

A fully equipped First Aid box is kept. Only minor injuries will be treated by Directresses.

When a directress determines that an injury requires medical assistance, the child will be taken to the local doctor and parents will be informed immediately.

### **11.13. Homework**

The policy for children in a Montessori academy is that work that is not completed during the child's work cycle, and within reason, is sent for homework. Uncompleted homework results in the consequence of having to give up part of break to do the work.

### **11.14. Lost Property**

Lost property will be kept in designated areas of each classroom. At the end of each term, all uncollected items will be donated to charity.

### **11.15. Record Keeping and Assessments**

Records of the children's work will be kept updated on a weekly basis. Assessments are done each term and the staff will discuss these assessments with the Principal at every term meeting.

#### **11.16. Reports**

Reports will be given out at midyear and at the end of the year.

#### **11.17. Smoking**

Children involved will discuss the violation with the Principal and parents will be informed at the first offence. In the event of a second offence, a counsellor's help will be arranged at the expense of the parents.

#### **11.18. Theft**

Theft will be reported to the Principal immediately and the staff of the school will conduct an internal investigation. If necessary, the relevant authorities will be contacted. Any person found culpable will be suspended immediately until all investigations and disciplinary hearings are completed. The result of these actions may be dismissal.

#### **11.19. Tuck Shop**

We will endeavour to provide nutritious foods at the Tuck Shop. No credit will be allowed to any staff members or learners. The tuck shop of Silver Creek College is run independently.

#### **11.20. Weapons**

Any weapons brought to school will be removed from the learner immediately and relative parents and authorities will be contacted immediately to take possession of the weapon. Principal and parents will be dealing with the first offence. In the case of a second offence, the child will be suspended until all investigations and disciplinary hearings are completed. The result of these actions may be dismissal.

## **12. Code of Conduct – 2008 Edition**

# **CODE OF CONDUCT**

## **2009 Edition**

### **SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION**

This Code of Conduct has been developed according to the South African Schools Act No 84 of 1996.

According to this Act, the Code of Conduct must aim to establish a disciplined and purposeful school environment dedicated to the maintenance and improvement of the learning process. The purpose is to promote positive discipline, self – discipline and exemplary conduct.

The Code of Conduct is to be presented to all parties concerned before signing the Student Contract of Silver Creek College. Signing the Student Contract implies an acceptance of the Code, as does the employment contract for educators.

### **SECTION 2 – CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Code of Conduct applies to all members of the College. It promotes the welfare, dignity and respect of learners, educators and parents.

#### **2.1 Code of Conduct for Learners**

##### **Objectives:**

- develop their intellectual, cultural and spiritual potential;
- develop thinking and problem solving skills;
- gain knowledge about the world in which they live;
- treat others with dignity and respect;
- improve social and relationship skills;
- explore career opportunities and follow related educational programmes;
- care for others less fortunate than themselves;
- approach College activities with positive, co-operative attitude.

##### **Code:**

Learners are to understand that they each, through their own response to the Code of Conduct and subsequent daily behaviour, either encourage or prevent the attainment of the College's objectives. The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to ensure that the opportunities presented at Silver Creek college are fully utilized. The Code thus identifies what behaviour is required and expected.

##### **2.1.1 Relationships with Educators**

Learners are expected to respect the task of educators, that is to teach, to co-ordinate learning activities and to facilitate full school programme. Learners can demonstrate this by, for example, being punctual to lessons and activities and working as a member of a team.

### **2.1.2 Towards other Learners**

Learners are expected to respect the rights of others to learn by:

### **2.2 Code of conduct for Educators**

#### **Objectives:**

Educators will fulfil their professional responsibilities by:

- respecting the dignity and rights of learners;
- using their professional skills to educate learners;
- contribute fully to the programme of the College;
- creating a stimulating learning environment in their classrooms;
- maintain regular contact with parents;
- be prepared to go the extra mile in the interests of the learners and the attainment of the College's objectives.

#### **Code:**

While every educator can expect the respect, support and co-operation of the College, parents and learners in his or her efforts to create a healthy learning environment inside and outside the classroom, it is important that educators acknowledge their responsibilities. Educators at Silver Creek College thus undertake to:

- maintain a professional bearing and manner and by so doing set a positive example to the learners;
- be well prepared;
- be fully conversant with the demands of the curriculum taught;
- be punctual;
- mark and return assignments, tests and examinations within a reasonable period of time;
- praise, encourage and motivate learners;
- help create a concept of team work or partnership with learners in the education process;
- help establish and communicate realistic, clear and meaningful goals;
- correct appropriately learners who transgress the code;
- contact parents where necessary;
- report serious misconduct to senior executive staff;
- be sensitive to the individual needs and problems of learners.

Where a parent feels it necessary to discuss a matter relevant to teacher/ learner interaction, the teacher should first be approached. The owner is the final authority in all College matters and should be approached. The owner is the final authority in all College matters and should be approached, if no other resolution can be obtained.

## **2.3. Code of Conduct for Parents**

### **Objectives:**

In their association with the College, parents are expected to:

- provide their children with the necessities for their life at school;
- support their children in their studies and various school activities;
- support the efforts and actions of the College staff;
- support parent activities wherever possible;
- attend their own professional expertise to the College, wherever possible;
- uphold and promote the name of Silver Creek College.

### **Code:**

Silver Creek College aims to maintain a positive relationship with parents. Parents are expected to assist the College in the following ways:

- support educators in their efforts to teach children, i.e. Check test results, help set goals;
- never criticize a directress in a child's presence;
- communicate with the directress or principal in time regarding areas of concern before they become major issues;
- make suggestions or provide assistance to improve educational process and environment;
- encourage their children to participate fully in the life of the College;
- endeavour to uphold moral and legal behaviour in their children especially regarding alcohol, cigarettes, substance abuse and sexual activity;
- be aware at all times of the whereabouts of their children and set parameters as far as time lines, transport arrangements, , dress codes and appropriate behaviour is concerned;
- if alternative transport is organised, the school needs to be notified in writing with one parent's signature to authorise another person to pick a child up after school.
- Entry cards need to be shown at the main entrance to allow entry to the premises when children are dropped or picked up.

### **PAYMENT OF SCHOOL FEES**

**We require payment in the Silver Creek College account by the 25<sup>th</sup> of every month, payable in advance. We have an eleven (11) month school fee structure. If the account is not paid by the 25<sup>th</sup> we will give you a courtesy call. Please sms via bank or fax proof of payment to avoid an unnecessary call from us. If we do not receive payment within three (3) days, we would require an explanation and payment plan. If account is still not paid within twenty five (25) days we unfortunately would have to request in writing that your child be kept at home until the school fees are pain in full. This action is a very last resort as our primary focus is the child.**