

November 7, 2008

Dear CCNS Parents,

Four weeks ago at the Fall Parents Meeting, I shared the school policy regarding runny noses and school attendance. At this time, I feel it is necessary to remind the Canterbury community of this policy:

A child with a runny nose may only attend school if that child can manage his/her nose independently. The child must be able to blow the nose with a tissue, dispose of the tissue properly, and wash hands. Those children who are unable to manage this task independently will be sent home in order to preserve the welfare of the other children and staff.

If a child is unable to take care of a runny nose, then the mucous ends up on toys, equipment, other children, teachers, playdough, etc. Mucous is defined by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration as a bodily fluid that we must treat using specified Standard Precautions, including putting on gloves prior to assisting the child with wiping and blowing the nose.

Canterbury's policy stems directly from our mission statement, which reads: *Canterbury will educate children in a creative nurturing environment in partnership with family and community.*

We cannot fulfill our professional role as educators of young children when we are spending our time regularly attending to health issues for individual children. Furthermore, having to attend to these hygiene issues creates a safety issue in the classroom. Each class has established ratios mandated by licensing and accreditation. When a child is at school with a runny nose that he/she is unable to manage independently, a teacher must devote extra time to that child, leaving the other teacher to handle the rest of the class, and putting the rest of the class out of ratio for a large portion of the day.

Therefore, as part of the partnership between school and family, we ask you to respect this policy. Help your child learn to practice proper hygiene so that they can fully participate in the educational process. According to pediatrician Dr. Dan Levy, by age 2, most children are developmentally able to learn to blow their own noses. This doesn't mean they are willing or agreeable. But, if they understand that they cannot participate in school unless they learn this skill, they may be more cooperative.

At Canterbury, we value our partnership with each family. We do not want this policy to cause conflict. However, we do feel strongly that following this policy is essential to the health, safety and well being of our students and staff. Our sincere thanks to the many Canterbury families who are diligently following this policy.

If you have questions or concerns regarding this policy, please feel free to come and speak with me.

Terry Tusing
Director
Canterbury Community Nursery School