

Admission Policies and Procedures

Kindergarten



Thank you for your interest in Children's Day School. The school's admission procedures and policies for kindergarten are outlined below. The Admission Office is here to assist you in this process, so please feel free to email or call Diane Larrabee, Director of Admission (dianel@cds-sf.org, 415-861-5432 x322), or Amanda Richard, Assistant Director of Admission (amandar@cds-sf.org, 415-861-5432 x337), with any questions you may have.

Because our school includes a preschool, the number of kindergarten spaces available for students new to CDS varies from year to year. We anticipate enrolling approximately 15-18 kindergarten students new to CDS for the 2012-13 school year.

Admission Deadlines

The application deadline for the 2012-13 school year for kindergarten is Tuesday, January 3, 2012. On March 15, 2012, we will mail admission decisions to all kindergarten candidates who have completed the application requirements by January 3. Applications completed after this deadline will be considered on a space-available basis.

Kindergarten applicants must be 5 years old by August 31, 2012.

Admission Process

1. **Attend a school tour or Open House.** Contact Amanda Richard to schedule a tour. Morning group tours (for parents/guardians only) are from 8:45-10:45 a.m. and are an opportunity to visit our classrooms while school is in session; tours are available starting September 28. Our Saturday Open House provides an opportunity for you to explore our campus with your child. Our evening Open House (for parents/guardians only) provides an opportunity to talk with our classroom teachers. No reservations are required to attend our Open Houses.
2. **Return the completed Application, Parent/Guardian Statement and family photo** with the required **\$75.00 application fee** to the Admission Office. We have an online application (www.cds-sf.org) that we encourage you to use; however, paper applications are available at tours and Open Houses.
3. **Submit Student Evaluation form.** After December 1, the Student Evaluation form should be submitted to your child's teacher (preschool, toddler class, child care, etc.). Your child's teacher is responsible for returning the completed form directly to the Admission Office by the application deadline noted above. The form may be mailed to CDS, emailed to dianel@cds-sf.org, or faxed to 415-861-5419.
4. **Schedule visit and parent/guardian conversation.** The Admission Office will schedule a visit and a separate parent/guardian conversation. Prospective kindergartners visit in our kindergarten classroom in groups of 15-20 children for one hour on a Saturday in January or February.

In addition, a separate 20-30 minute parent/guardian conversation with a member of the admission team will be scheduled.

5. **Kindergarten decision letters will be mailed on March 15, 2012.**

Admission Policy

Children’s Day School (CDS) seeks students who are self-confident, curious and excited about learning – students who think learning is fun and who are eager to share in the responsibilities associated with their own academic, physical and social education. Our admission procedures and criteria vary according to the age of the students, but the process is designed to identify the following student characteristics:

- Enthusiasm for learning and intellectual curiosity
- Ability to take responsibility for their own learning
- Ability to work cooperatively with students of all ages
- Appreciation for differences in others
- High degree of personal and social responsibility, including caring for themselves, others and their environment

Our goal is to admit students and families for whom CDS is a good fit. Admission Committees composed of experienced faculty and administrators for each grade discuss each application, teacher evaluation, school record (if applicable) and assessment from the student visit. After determining which children and families would thrive in our school, we craft each class looking for a balance in socioeconomic, racial, cultural and family diversity, learning styles and gender. When there are more qualified candidates than openings available, the school establishes a waiting pool.

We seek to increase the diversity of our applicant pool at all levels to develop a student body that represents the racial, ethnic, cultural, religious, economic and family diversity of San Francisco. CDS admits students without reference to race, color, sex, religion, sexual orientation, national and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, financial aid program, athletic and school-administered programs. All students are encouraged to apply.

Requests for sliding scale tuition have no influence on consideration of an application to the school. The Access and Affordability Committee oversees the sliding scale tuition process, and the same standards and criteria apply to all candidates.

Admission Decisions

The Admission Committee will only consider candidates who have completed all of the admission requirements. Each committee will render one of the decisions below for the applicant and recommend the appropriate placement of each accepted student.

Accept – Invited

The student is qualified to attend Children’s Day School and shows promise of not only benefiting from, but also contributing to, the school community. This group of students is offered enrollment agreements which must be accepted or declined on or before the due date indicated in the agreement. A reservation deposit (10% of tuition) will be necessary to hold the position.

Accept – Waiting Pool

The student meets the qualifications necessary to attend Children’s Day School, but no place is currently available. The waiting pool is comprised of qualified candidates available to fill an opening in a specific grade. Waiting pool candidates are not prioritized. When an opening occurs in a particular grade, the appropriate Admission Committee reconvenes to determine which candidate in the waiting pool can best fill that position. The waiting pool does not carry over from one application season to another.

Non-Accept

A “non-accept” decision indicates that at this particular time the Admission Committee has determined that Children’s Day School is not the appropriate educational match for the student.

2011-12 Tuition and Fees

Following is the tuition and fee schedule for 2011-12. The Board of Trustees will set tuition and fees for the 2012-13 school year in January of 2012.

Sliding scale tuition

\$2,325 - \$23,250 (depending on family's financial situation)

While tuition payments are our largest source of income, they do not cover the entire cost of educating a child at CDS. During the year, we ask families to contribute additional financial support to our fundraising programs to the best of their ability.

Extended Day Program fees (optional)

Fees are sliding scale based on amount paid for yearly tuition (see website for detailed information).

- Before and after school program \$2.50-12.00/hour (depending on use per week)
- Enrichment classes \$50-250/ten-week class
- Vacation camps \$15-60/day (8 a.m. to 6 p.m.)

Financing Options

Students are enrolled for the entire academic year. There are two tuition payment plans from which to choose. Both plans require payment of a non-refundable reservation deposit of 10% of tuition, which must accompany the enrollment agreement.

- **Single Payment Plan** allows the convenience of writing one check to cover tuition for the year (tuition balance after deposit), due June 1.
- **10-Month Payment Plan** allows the flexibility of paying the tuition balance, after deposit, over a ten-month period, from June through March. Families choosing this plan are required to purchase Tuition Refund Insurance.

Tuition Refund Insurance is available through A.W.G. Dewar, Inc. This plan provides partial insurance coverage in the event of a separation or withdrawal from CDS for a variety of reasons. Enrollment is handled by automatic billing on the June statement. The cost is currently 1.7% of the tuition balance after deposit. It is the policy of the school to require families entering into a monthly payment plan agreement to subscribe to the Tuition Refund Insurance Plan. The school strongly suggests that all families purchase tuition refund insurance.

Sliding Scale Tuition

Philosophy and Purpose

The founding vision of CDS is to provide an excellent education for children in the Bay Area regardless of family ability to afford tuition. Our sliding scale tuition is one of the many manifestations of our core commitment to diversity.

We encourage families who have concerns about their ability to afford full tuition to apply for our sliding scale tuition. Families entering the school paying full tuition are expected to continue to pay full tuition, unless they can demonstrate a significant change in their financial situation (e.g., job loss or job change; additional children in tuition-charging schools, etc.). It does not improve your chances of admission to not apply for sliding scale tuition, and it is to your distinct disadvantage going forward to fail to apply and then request sliding scale tuition in subsequent years without a corresponding change in financial situation. Thus, families who anticipate needing sliding scale tuition at any time during their child's enrollment at CDS should apply for sliding scale at the time of the admission application.

Subject to the limits of available funds, CDS offers sliding scale tuition based on each family's unique financial situation; CDS' sliding scale tuition is strictly need-based. While every family is expected to pay some portion of the tuition and to support the community to the extent individual family circumstances permit, we do not expect each tuition to be the same. The families of approximately 36% of our students pay sliding scale tuition, making

us a leader in economic diversity among independent elementary schools in San Francisco. Financial support for sliding scale is derived from the school's operating budget (i.e., tuition revenue and fundraising). CDS currently dedicates approximately 24% of its operating budget to sliding scale tuition.

Process

Since dollars are limited, CDS makes a concerted effort to responsibly evaluate each request for sliding scale tuition and to distribute sliding scale funds in the fairest and most equitable manner possible.

CDS, like many independent schools, uses the services of School and Student Service for Financial Aid (SSS), an organization of the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS). SSS impartially analyzes the information you provide on your Parents' Financial Statement (PFS) and computes a recommended family contribution for tuition.

The CDS Access and Affordability Committee, comprised of the Head of School, the Director of Finance and Operations, and the Director of Admission, reviews the completed PFS, the SSS computation (adjusted for the Bay Area cost of living), and all documents provided by your family, and with this information, determines tuition. In determining tuition, the Access and Affordability Committee considers a number of factors, including whether a family owns real estate or has other significant investments; lifestyle choices (stay-at-home parent, discretionary spending such as vacations, etc.); other possible sources of funding for tuition; the tuitions being paid by families in similar financial situations; and many other factors. Because each family's financial situation is unique, it is not possible to provide a general list of all factors that might be considered, but the Access and Affordability Committee's overarching goal is to distribute the limited funds in the fairest and most equitable way possible. With limited funds, the Access and Affordability Committee must consider the financial choices that families make and trusts that families understand the value of an independent school education and are committed to making education a top priority. As an example, consider two families with similar incomes who are both eligible for sliding scale tuition: family #1 rents and has no savings, family #2 owns a home and has significant investments. Absent other factors, family #2 should expect that its tuition will be set at a higher rate than that of family #1.

Both parents are expected to contribute to their child's educational expenses. Sliding scale tuition is reviewed each year for qualifying families – every family must file an updated Parents' Financial Statement for each year in which they want to pay sliding scale tuition. All financial information submitted is held in strictest confidence.

The Admission Committees consider each applicant without regard to whether or not the applicant's family is applying for sliding scale tuition. Once students are admitted, the Access and Affordability Committee meets to review the sliding scale applications. Priority for available funding is given to current students, children of employees and siblings of current students. While CDS strives to make sliding scale tuition available to a high percentage of accepted students whose families are eligible, the school cannot guarantee that resources will be adequate.

In order for a student's application for sliding scale tuition to be considered, all required forms and documents must be submitted (preferably online) to SSS no later than January 6, 2012, or as soon as possible after a late application.

The following page sets forth the application calendar for applicant families applying for sliding scale tuition for the 2012-13 school year.

Application calendar for 2012-13 sliding scale tuition for applicant families

On December 7, 2011 Attend sliding scale tuition workshop, CDS, 6:30-7:30 p.m.
(optional)

By January 6, 2012 Complete an online Parents' Financial Statement (PFS). If you are submitting a paper PFS by mail, contact Diane Larrabee at dianel@cds-sf.org or 415-861-5432 x322 to receive a paper PFS and mail the completed PFS to SSS Application Processing Center, P.O. Box 449, Randolph, MA, 02368-0449. SSS must receive your paper PFS no later than December 30, 2011.

Upload the following documents to the SSS site **and also submit copies (paper or electronic) directly to CDS:**

- Business/Farm Statement (if you own or have an interest in any business and/or farm).
- IRS form 4506-T, completed and signed.
- A copy of your final 2010 federal tax return, including W-2s, 1099s and all schedules and supporting statements. If you are part of a partnership or S-Corporation, make sure to include the partnership or S-Corporation returns and all K-Is.
- Electronic submissions of documents to CDS can be sent to Diane Larrabee, Director of Admission, at dianel@cds-sf.org.
- If you are mailing your documents to SSS, you must also include a PFS cover sheet in order for SSS to properly process your documents. Documents should be mailed to the address shown above.

Once an admission decision to accept a student has been made, the Access and Affordability Committee then reviews that student's sliding scale tuition application and makes a provisional sliding scale tuition determination, subject to review and revision once the 2011 federal tax return is received. Families who have applied for sliding scale tuition are notified of their provisional tuition amount simultaneously with the admission decision notification so that they can make informed choices.

By April 16, 2012 Upload the following document to the SSS site **and also submit copies (paper or electronic) directly to CDS:**

- A copy of your final 2011 federal tax return, including W-2s, 1099s and all schedules and supporting statements. If you are part of a partnership or S-Corporation, make sure to include the partnership or S-Corporation returns and all K-Is.
- Electronic submissions of documents to CDS can be sent to Diane Larrabee, Director of Admission, at dianel@cds-sf.org.
- If you are mailing your documents to SSS, you must also include a PFS cover sheet in order for SSS to properly process your documents. Documents should be mailed to the address shown above.

All sliding scale tuition determinations are provisional until complete, final 2011 federal tax returns are received.