



# The Children's School · K - 8

## **Our Approach to Exceptional Learners**

Like all school communities, The Children's School serves children whose physical, behavioral, or learning attributes differ from the typical in a way that affects their ability to benefit from the standard school setting. Exceptional learners include children with or without a formal diagnosis of a learning, behavioral, or physical disability or impairment, as well as any child whose developmental or learning needs at a given time require a modified approach in the classroom.

At The Children's School we are fortunate to have a curriculum that is intellectually rigorous, complete, comprehensive, yet flexible and fluid. In addition, we have small class sizes that allow for greater attention to individual needs. A fluid curriculum and small class size support our commitment to progressive education, which includes critical thinking, reflection, discourse, and small group work. We are also able to tailor our work with children to help meet individual needs, be they academic, social, and/or emotional.

The Children's School also employs a full-time social worker and part-time learning specialist who are available to work with students who may need learning, socio-emotional, or behavioral support. Time with our learning specialist is paid for by families.

While we are able to adjust teaching strategies and attend to the unique social and emotional needs of students, our special education resources at The Children's School are limited. Our teachers, administrators, social worker, and learning specialist work to assure that the school provides a thoughtful plan for each child's learning needs. Listed below are the means we can use to provide individualized attention to children identified as needing additional support:

### **WHAT WE CAN DO:**

- Our teachers will provide flexible curriculum and pedagogy to meet the individual academic, social, and emotional needs of each child within the context of the classroom community.
- We are available to meet with families throughout the year to discuss the unique challenges their child faces and to offer suggestions as to how we can support the child's needs in school.
- We are willing to collaborate with consultants or others who can provide us with additional insights into a child. We welcome information families provide from outside consultations, including testing, tutoring, and

special services. In certain circumstances, we are able to work with a one-on-one aide hired by the family to support the child while at school.

- We can coordinate with families to refer students to the public school district for evaluation, and we will work with the public school district on implementation of a service plan if needed. With limited resources, the public school district is required only to assess children attending private school within the district; in rare cases, the district may also provide consultative or other services to TCS students.

As we work with families of children needing additional support, it must be noted that there are limitations to what TCS can provide.

#### LIMITATIONS:

- Our faculty will make every effort to adjust learning strategies to support the social, emotional, and academic needs of the child. However, we are limited by the fact that there is only one teacher in all but the Kindergarten and first grade classrooms and the teacher is responsible for the learning needs of each and every child in the room. If it is determined that a child would benefit from a one-on-one aide during the school day, that aide would be hired by the family with approval by TCS.
- In addition to our social worker and learning specialist, we can accommodate (within limits) a child working with non-TCS specialists during the school day at The Children's School, at a district site, or elsewhere. For non-TCS specialists wishing to see children on-site at TCS, we reserve the right to approve their presence and scheduling.
- At times students may enter The Children's School with a pre-existing Individual Education Plan (IEP) or other assessments that describe a specific set of recommended therapeutic or medical interventions and resources. We are limited in our capacity to honor each and every action such assessments may recommend. While we will make every effort to address the concerns listed by such reports, we cannot be responsible for enacting all aspects.

At The Children's School we strongly believe in the importance of bringing a full range of learning modalities to all children. Our commitment to the social and emotional lives of children is inherent in our day-to-day routines and activities. We believe in helping all children learn and in working with families and outside resources to support learning goals. With limited resources we work hard to celebrate the unique potential each child has. It is our responsibility to best address individual needs and to inform parents when and if we cannot do so in the context of our educational environment.

*The Children's School admits students of any race, color, and national and ethnic origin to all the rights privileges, and activities accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, or national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, hiring policies, admissions policies, financial aid program, or any other school-administered programs.*