

**PARENT HANDBOOK**

Montessori Children’s House of Lenawee

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**Classroom Staff**

**Toddler Classroom**

*Lead Teachers*

Brittany Cook: bcook@mch-lenawee.org

Ross Reed: rreed@mch-lenawee.org

*Assistant Teachers*

Kristina Kusisto

Rachel Allen

**Preprimary Classrooms**

*Lead Teachers*

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*Assistant Teachers*

Coral Sackett

Danielle Brunt

Andrea Marsh

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**Before/After School Care Staff**

Shelley Horace

Cassie Smith

**Mission Statement**

Montessori Children’s House of Lenawee is a peace-oriented Montessori community dedicated to providing an encompassing education that nurtures the mind, body and spirit of each child.

**Belief Statements**

We respect the worth, dignity and uniqueness of everyone.

We believe in an environment of collaboration and cooperation among parents, students and educators.

We believe education is a developmental process based on life experience and reflection.

We believe students are responsible to actively participate in their own education.

We believe we contribute to our peace-making community.

We educate the heart as well as the mind.

We believe in nurturing the whole child mentally, physically and spiritually.

**Montessori Children’s House of Lenawee Program**

The first Montessori Children’s House (located on Siena Heights University campus) was founded over 40 years ago by Sister Anthonita Porta, OP, with a vision of providing children a peaceful and loving learning environment. Montessori Children’s House of Lenawee (our new campus housed inside of Trenton Hills Learning Center) has been serving children of the greater Lenawee County area since 2012. MCHL is a non-profit, tuition-based preschool continuing to carry out this mission of providing a Montessori education to the children in our community. Our peace-oriented classrooms provide hands-on learning materials while focusing on the developmental, emotional and academic needs of each child. We offer a toddler, preschool and kindergarten program for ages 13 months to 6 years.

*From the moment you arrive at Montessori Children’s House of Lenawee, you will see how our school distinguishes itself from other learning environments. You will find small class sizes with a unique atmosphere of true warmth, safety and vibrancy. You will sense it when you look in our spacious classrooms, talk with staff and watch our children at work and play.*

**Toddler Program**

This full-day or half-day program is offered for children from 13 months through 3 years of age. The three full-day option has limited spaces.

**Pre-primary Program**

This full-day or half-day program is offered for children from 3 years to 6 years of age. Limited space for 3-day half/full day is offered for Preprimary programs. Inquire in school office for availability.

**ADMISSION AND WITHDRAWL POLICY**

Montessori Children’s House of Lenawee admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin.

All parents with a child entering MCHL must present an official copy of their birth certificate, health appraisal signed by a medical doctor and performed within the last 12 months (for toddlers: 6 months) prior to the first day of school and a certificate of immunization at the time of registration. All children’s immunizations must meet the Health Department’s requirements. If this does not happen the student shall be excluded until the appropriate requirements have been completed. If immunizations are denied by parents, a waiver must be on file with MCHL and the Lenawee County Health Department before admission is accepted.

MCHL understands every child has areas of special gifts, unique learning styles and special challenges. The Montessori Method of education is designed to allow for each child to learn at his or her own pace. Each situation and individual will be evaluated to ensure MCHL can successfully meet the child’s needs and learning styles. This evaluation will include the cooperation and collaboration of MCHL administration, staff, parents and consultants.

MCHL believes diversity is an integral part of the Montessori philosophy. Our program encourages, embraces and celebrates a wide range of educational, cultural, ethnic and economic diversity by:

* Providing a multicultural program within our curriculum
* Creating an environment that promotes peace
* Respecting the individual needs of each child
* Exploring varied backgrounds and cultures in the world
* Nurturing a sense of wonder about our differences

If for any reason a child’s attendance is deemed not to be in the best interest of MCHL, withdrawal notice will be given to the parent(s) by the administration and the remaining tuition will be refunded.

MCHL does not reimburse for vacation days, illness of child, Acts of God requiring school closure, or voluntary withdrawal of enrollment. Administration allows withdrawal and tuition arrangements due to a move farther than 50 miles from the school, or a prolonged illness. Each situation will be handled on an individual basis.

**ENROLLMENT / RE-ENROLLMENT**

Currently enrolled families must renew their child’s enrollment for the following academic year early each spring. The following items must be present to re-enroll: enrollment form, updated emergency card, health appraisal/physical, re-enrollment fee, re-enrollment of FACTS tuition program, signed parent handbook, and signed volunteer hours.

Prompt re-enrollment helps the school plan staffing and materials for the following school year.

Enrollment forms and tuition rates are available in the school office. A non-refundable enrollment fee is required with each new or renewed registration.

Tuition is based on a ten-month payment plan. The FACTS Tuition Management Company collects monthly tuition and a non-refundable ancillary fee.

Tuition payments account for only a portion of your child’s education costs. Therefore, each family contributes a minimum of 15 volunteer service hours or makes a $225 contribution to the MCHL. These hours must be completed by June 1, 2019.

**SCHOOL HOURS**

Before School Care 7:00-8:15AM

School Day Full Day 8:15AM-3:25PM

 Half Day 8:15-11:15AM

After School Care 3:25-6:15PM

***A 24 hour notice is required for Before School Care & After School Care to ensure staff/child ratio. Late pickup after 6:15 p.m. will be a $25.00 charge.***

MCHL charges $50.00 per month unlimited use or $10.00 drop in daily fee. If your child is in BSC or ASC for more than 10 minutes charges will begin. There are no exceptions to this policy.

MCHL runs on a locked door system. When dropping off/picking up your child from Before or After School Care please use the preschool playground entrance door. The cost of Before School Care and After School Care is determined yearly. Please contact the school office for information.

**PARKING POLICY**

Montessori Children’s House of Lenawee families may park in front of school parking lot or rear school parking lot located behind school. No parking permitted in church parking lot or LISD bus lanes.

**ATTENDANCE**

Daily and punctual attendance is essential if a child is to be a successful learner. During the school day, each student is to be in the classroom or other assigned areas. Toddler students may not be dropped off any time after 9:30AM unless prior arrangements are made with administration. Preprimary students need to arrive by 8:30AM for lesson presentations.

**TARDINESS**

If a child is expected to be a late arrival, the parent should call the school office. New work presentations start daily at 8:30AM in preprimary classrooms.

**ABSENCE**

To report a child absence, please call the school office (517-417-5437) **by 10AM.** *Tuition will not be reimbursed on days of absence.*

**ILLNESS**

***Children with severe colds, coughs and/or contagious diseases should remain at home. Any child who has a fever above normal should not be sent to school.***

This ensures the well-being of other students, saves the school time of contacting parents and the parents transporting the student home again. Children may not return to school until symptoms have ceased for 24 hours. Children **will be sent home** if they are vomiting, have diarrhea or a temperature of 101.5 or above.

**COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

Cases of contagious diseases must be reported to the school office immediately. If your child is diagnosed with chicken pox, measles, strep, influenza A/B, scarlet fever, head lice or any other communicable disease, please notify the school office. Student confidentiality will be maintained, but it is important to notify other parents to watch for symptoms of infection.

**MEDICATION**

A signed permission form must be on file if a child must take any medication (prescriptions or over the counter, including cough drops and lip balm**). Medication and permission MUST be given to the Director or Business Manager and not stored in a lunch box, locker or backpack.** The Director or Business Manager will be responsible for administering the medication to the children and will keep the medication refrigerated if necessary. The school does not supply over the counter medication. Medication must be presented to the school in the original container and it must state the child’s name and dosage required.

**ACCIDENT PROCEDURES**

School personnel take all precautions to prevent accidents and injuries on school property. Despite these precautions, injuries may occur. The following procedure is to be followed when a student is injured:

1. The injury should be reported to the adult in charge.
2. The teacher/adult will determine the extent of the injury.
3. Parents will be notified by phone immediately if a severe injury occurs, such as head injuries, broken bones, internal injuries, dislocations or dental injuries.
4. Minor injuries, such as cuts, scrapes, bruises and finger pinches will be documented, and parents will be informed when their child is picked up from school.
5. 911 will be called if the situation warrants.
6. A written accident form with parent signature will be filed in the office on reported injuries.

**EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

Student Registration/Emergency Cards must be on file for every child enrolled in MCHL. The cards are sent home with children on the first day of school and should be returned to the school immediately. A complete signature, home and work addresses, including street, city, zip code and telephone numbers are necessary. Additional emergency contact names should be listed for school officials to contact in an emergency. Those people whose names appear on the emergency card should be notified and instructed as to parental wishes. ***If emergency information changes during the school year, it is imperative that parents keep the school updated.***

**SCHOOL CLOSINGS/DELAYS**

When it becomes necessary to close school or delay the beginning time of the school day because of unforeseen circumstances or adverse weather conditions, announcements will be made on:

REMIND (text message)

MCHL Facebook Page

These announcements will be broadcasted as early as possible.

**EMERGENCY DRILLS/RELOCATION**

In preparation for dealing with emergencies, MCHL will follow the LISD policies and procedures:

*Practice of fire drills* - All students, accompanied by teachers, are to move out and away from the building by set evacuation routes.

*Practice of tornado drills* - All students, accompanied by teachers, are to move to the designated shelter areas in the hall and wait for further instructions.

*Practice of lockdown drills* - All students should go immediately to the area designated for that classroom, sit on the floor and wait for further instructions.

It is essential that children always follow directions quickly and quietly.

Relocation procedures:

1. *Designated safe site*: One Mosaic Church (next door) 1002 W. Maple Ave. Adrian, MI 49221
2. Everyone will be directed to walk across the parking lot to church.
3. Staff, students and visitors will remain at the designated evacuation area until directed by LISD administration and Director of MCHL.
4. Parents will be notified by MCHL administration in the event of relocation/evacuation due to an incident in a timely manner.

**EARLY RELEASE FROM SCHOOL**

A child shall never be released early without the explicit knowledge of the parent/guardian, staff and/or director. Students are expected to remain in school until the end of the child’s school day. All appointments should be made after school hours, unless there is no other possibility. Please notify the office if your child will be picked up early.

A child shall not be released to anyone other than the parent/guardian without the permission of the parent/guardian (see emergency card).

The school shall release a student to either parent unless the school has a copy of a court order giving one parent exclusive custody.

**MESSAGES FOR OFFICE/TEACHERS**

Please call the office by 10:30AM for the morning session and 1:30 PM for the afternoon session if you need to get a message to your child’s teacher. This will give the school office/staff enough time to deliver the message before the child is dismissed.

**LUNCH**

Our aim is that lunch be an enjoyable time where children can eat nutritional foods in an atmosphere of relaxation and courtesy. The lunch period is a half-hour in length.

Montessori Preprimary full-day students will have recess and lunch from 11:15AM-12:15PM. The children bring their lunch in a lunch box with an icepack. Cold water, cups, plates, napkins and utensils are provided by the school. If the children do not finish their lunch, they will bring the leftovers home.

Please provide a variety of protein, grain, fruit, and vegetable choices and limit or skip treats. Our school has a no candy policy. Consider selecting fresh fruits and vegetables, foods with less sugar, less or no salt and less or no additives and preservatives. Portion control is important too and will allow your child to eat the lunch with minimum leftover food. Research shows that children who maintain a healthy diet do better in school. Instilling healthy habits early is also one way to prevent dental decay, chronic and serious illness.

Your child may bring food to be warmed or reheated in a microwave. However, we are not licensed to prepare food. We ask that children do not bring the prepare and eat lunchables, such as tacos, pizza or frozen entrees. We are also not allowed to make or prepare hot cereal or macaroni and cheese. In addition to our licensing restrictions, preparing these foods leaves little time for the child to eat his/her lunch. Food ends up being wasted. If you prepare these at home, we can reheat the food at school.

Remember that our school is nut-free. Please do not send peanut butter, peanuts, or nuts of any kind for lunch. This includes items such as peanut butter crackers, peanut butter filled pretzels, granola bars and honey nut cheerios. This includes any foods that have been processed in a facility with any type of nuts.

**RECESS**

All full-day students have a daily recess as physical exercise is encouraged for all children. Recess time also allows children social interaction with their peers.

During the winter months, coats, boots, hats, gloves, etc. are necessary for your child’s protection and comfort. If extremely severe temperatures or inclement weather prevails, the necessary adjustments in recess will be made.

If a student cannot go out for recess because of medical reasons, a written parent note is required. A doctor’s note will be required if this request is made frequently or for a significant length of time.

The children are to play peacefully and respectfully demonstrating kindness to everyone. They are to use playground equipment in a safe, responsible and respectful manner. If a student misuses a piece of equipment or is not playing respectfully he/she may need to leave the area for a period.

**SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS**

Students are always appropriately supervised by an adult during the school day. Before 8AM MCHL is not responsible for supervision, unless your child(ren) is/are in Before School Care. MCHL’s Before School Care program is available from 7AM until classes begin at 8:15AM. After School Care is available beginning at 3:25PM and ending at 6:15PM.

**DRESS/APPEARANCE**

**(Includes backpacks & lunch boxes)**

**For All Programs:**

There is a positive relationship between learning and appearance. Emphasis is placed on modesty, cleanliness, neatness and common sense. Out of respect for all, our appearance should not be a distraction for self or others in the learning environment.

Parental cooperation in proper dress will alleviate potential problems.

Final determination and interpretation of the dress code are at the discretion of the Program Director. Fashion and fads change, consequently appropriate dress for school may change as well. Therefore, it is the prerogative and responsibility of the administration to decide whether an item fits within the spirit of the dress code. Unacceptable dress will be discussed with the parent as is appropriate.

Items that do not support the school’s philosophy of nonviolence and the dignity of the human person are not allowed. This includes clothing or personal items that promote or support violence. These items are not allowed at school or any school sponsored function. Superheroes and cartoon characters that display weapons are not allowed.

Shoes must always be worn. Sandals and shoes should be the kind with a back strap or backing. ***Shoe skates or other unsafe shoes (flip-flops) may not be worn.***

**Extra Clothing:**

Please bring extra sets of clothing to leave at school in case of accidents.

**Winter Clothing:**

Please be sure that your child’s coat or jacket and boots are clearly labeled with their name. There is no need to overdress your half day children during the winter months; they do not need snow pants and boots. Montessori students do not go outside to play during the cold winter months unless they attend full day. The children staying for lunch will go outside when weather permits, so please dress them accordingly. Full-day children need a coat, hat, snow pants, boots and gloves/mittens daily.

**CONFERENCES**

Good communication between teachers and parents is an integral part of the educational philosophy of MCHL. Parent-Teacher conferences are an important part of this communication system.

Conferences are scheduled in the fall and spring each year.

If a parent would like to confer with a teacher about his/her child outside of these conference times, please call the school to schedule an appointment with the appropriate teacher or send a written note and/or email to the teacher. These conferences will be held after class/school hours.

Note: Scheduling an appointment for a conference allows for quality interaction between the parent and teacher. It is for this reason that “drop-in” conferences are discouraged.

**CURRICULUM**

**(Visit our school website for more information)**

The Montessori toddler (ages 13mo-3yrs) and pre-primary (ages 3yrs-6yrs) curriculum is based on the guidelines of the American Montessori Society and the State of Michigan. As stated in the philosophy, children are encouraged to learn by way of self-paced progress. Children move themselves toward learning using age-appropriate activities. The teacher prepares the environment, directs the activity, functions as the authority, offers the child stimulations, but it is the child who learns, and who is motivated through work itself to persist in a given task.

MCHL offers a half and full-day Kindergarten curriculum. We also offer special curriculum activities and field trips to those aged 4, 5 and 6 in our extended day program.

The Montessori environment ensures success. It possesses order and so disposes the child to develop at his/her own speed, according to his/her own capacities, in a collaborative atmosphere. We believe “success breeds success”.

**LENAWEE COUNTY SERVICES**

MCHL has access to all tax-funded services, including hearing and vision testing, speech therapy, psychological testing, academic testing and learning disabilities consultants. These services are proved by the Lenawee Intermediate School District, the Lenawee County Health Department, and the local school districts.

**STUDENT RECORDS**

In accordance with Public Law 93-380 regarding the Protection of the Rights and Privacy of Parents and Students, the parents of any student shall be entitled to receive or be informed of that part of such record or data as pertains to their child. If a parent wishes to examine his/her child’s records, he/she should make this request through the school office. The Program Director will make an appointment with the parent. The records will then be examined in the office with the parent. Written consent from the student’s parents will be required when specific records are to be released to judicial or counseling officials. The student and parent are notified in advance of compliance with any subpoenas or orders from any educational institution or agency.

**FAMILY EVENTS**

During all events on the grounds of the school, parents are expected to follow all school and playground rules.

**CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ALL CHILDREN**

School is a continuation of the child’s development of respect and responsibility learned in the home. We expect our students to respect themselves, other students, and adults always and to respect school property.

When students violate this responsibility by inappropriate, disrespectful or aggressive behavior, a poor attitude, bullying (whether verbal or physical) or fighting, the teacher and/or Program Director will act to correct the problem. The cooperation and support of parents is essential to this process. A parent-student-teacher conference may be requested.

At the discretion of the Director, students who consistently repeat an offense or are involved in an incident that is considered serious in nature may be sent home or suspended from school and school activities.

Dismissal from MCHL may be a consequence of a child’s poor attitude and/or behavior that endangers the physical, psychological and/or emotional well-being of other children or adults. Parents will receive prior notice if this action is being considered for their child.

**NOT PERMITTED ON SCHOOL GROUNDS**

Personal sound and video equipment, iPods/music players, video games, tape recorders, CD players, and toys of any kind are not to be brought to school.

The learning/teaching process is dependent upon an environment in which order prevails and the rights of all students are respected, therefore all students are expected to control themselves in an orderly and cooperative fashion. It is essential that all individuals conduct themselves in a manner conducive to the total welfare of the larger group. Reasonable standards of conduct are expected, not only to support the learning/teaching process, but to provide the individual with invaluable training and experience toward self-discipline and productive citizenship.

MCHL students will respect school property to maintain a pleasing and pleasant environment in which to learn. It is imperative that the school property be kept in good condition. Students are responsible for school property, including lockers. If school property is damaged willfully by students, disciplinary measures will be taken, and parents will be contacted to make restitution for damages.

When a student’s behavior in a class, in an activity, or at an event endangers himself/herself or others, when it takes so much of the attention of the teacher or students that the class or activity can no longer be conducted, or when his/her behavior is rebellious and disrespectful to the teacher or other members of the group involved, he/she will be removed from the class, activity or event.

Serious misconduct must be controlled immediately because of the safety hazards to students, the proper health and well-being of all, along with the protection of property. If a student is removed from class, an activity or event, parents will be notified.

**SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY**

Montessori Children’s House of Lenawee partnered with LISD including school grounds is tobacco, drug and alcohol free.

**DISCIPLINE POLICY**

Montessori Children’s House of Lenawee has a specific policy and guideline regarding the use of discipline. The goal in the cycle of discipline is to aid the child in developing and refining self-control and self-discipline.

The following steps are used at guidelines:

1. The student will be given a cue to remind him/her of the rule.
2. The student will be redirected.
3. The student is given time to reflect.
4. Lead teacher will notify parents and Director.
5. Meeting with parent.
6. Meeting with parent and Director.

**SEARCH AND SEIZURE POLICY**

School personnel are charged with protecting the health and safety of all students. Fulfillment of these duties may conflict with a student’s right to and need for privacy. The interest of individual students in securing personal privacy must be balanced against the interest of society in protecting students against disruptive or illegal conduct.

While lockers and other storage areas are provided to students by the school, the school retains control and access to all lockers, and other storage areas. These areas are assigned to students for their use on the condition that they will be used in a manner consistent with the law and school rules. School personnel may conduct inspections of these areas at any time, in order to fulfill their responsibility of maintaining proper safety, control and management of the school.

**WEAPONS POLICY**

Weapons of any kind, real or toy, do not embody MCHL’s Mission and Belief Statements. Students participating in school activities are prohibited from bringing weapons to school or in the immediate vicinity of the school. If this policy is violated parents will be contacted immediately.

**COMMITMENT TO A SAFE, RESPECTFUL ENVIRONMENT**

Montessori Children’s House of Lenawee is committed to maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment. A child’s/student’s behavior, whether at school or away from school, can affect the safety of the child/student or of other children/students, or can be a sign of a significant issue in the child’s/student’s life, or can affect the overall well-being of the school community.

**MORAL AND SPRITUAL VALUES**

MCHL is a peace-oriented school. Our families come from a variety of cultural, religious and socio-economic backgrounds. Different religions may be discussed during our yearlong cultural studies. MCHL’s objective is to instill the moral and spiritual values of love, kindness and respect to all individuals and our environment.