



Montessori Children's House of Lenawee

PARENT HANDBOOK

9/17/2013

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 each individual.

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.

Description of the Montessori Children's House of Lenawee Program

From the moment you arrive at the 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.

The Montessori program is dedicated to the Montessori philosophy and method of educating students through the senses. A child attending Montessori Children's House of Lenawee is exposed to a method which facilitates the growth of inner discipline and later complex reasoning through free choice and the organized use of didactic materials within an atmosphere conducive to these ends. Our school is committed to the development of each child's cognitive and affective realms. For this program to be successful, an understanding and implementation of the Montessori philosophy in the home as well as in the school is vital.

Toddler Program

This full day or half-day program is offered for children from 13 months through three years of age.

Pre-primary Program

This full day or half-day program is offered for children from 3 years to 6 years of age.

ADMISSIONS POLICY

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

All children entering MCHL must present an official copy of their birth certificate, a certificate of immunization, and a Social Security number 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 such time as the appropriate requirements have been completed.

MCHL endeavors to educate within the limits of the school's educational program and staffing. *A child who possesses special needs which cannot be serviced by the school or staff may be denied admission to MCHL.*

ENROLLMENT / RE-ENROLLMENT

Currently enrolled families must renew their child's enrollment for the following academic year early each spring. 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 ancillary fees.

Tuition payments account for only a portion of your child's education costs. Therefore, each family contributes a minimum of 20 volunteer service hours and/or makes a \$300 contribution to the MCHL.

SCHOOL HOURS

Before School Care **7:00 am – 8:00 am**

Montessori Pre-primary & Toddler **8:15 am – 3:15 pm**

After School Care **3:15 pm – 6:15 pm**

The cost of Before School Care and After School Care is determined yearly. Please contact the school office for information.

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.

TARDINESS

If a child is expected to be tardy, the parent must call the school office by 8:00 am. Please be respectful of the teacher's classroom time and have your child in class on time.

ABSENCE

To report a student absence, please call the school office (517-417-5437) **by 8 am.** *Lengthy absences during the school year are discouraged.*

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 insures 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 an above normal temperature.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Cases of contagious diseases must be reported to the school office immediately. If your child is diagnosed with chicken pox, measles, strep, H1N1 virus, 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 signs of infection, etc.

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 Montessori teacher and not stored in a lunch box, locker or backpack. The teacher or school director who will be responsible for administering the medication to the children will keep the medication refrigerated if necessary. The school does not supply over-the-counter medication.

ACCIDENT/PROCEDURES

School personnel take all precautions to prevent accidents and injuries on school property. In spite of 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. In the case of serious injury, parents will be notified immediately.
4. 911 will be called if the situation warrants.
5. A written accident 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:

WLEN

WABJ

MCHL WEBSITE (www.mch-lenawee.org)

MCHL FACEBOOK PAGE

MCHL VOICEMAIL (517-417-5437)

These announcements will be broadcasted as early as possible.

Montessori Children's House of Lenawee will follow Lenawee Intermediate School Districts weather related delays and closings.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

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 prescribed evacuation routes.

Practice of tornado drills- all students, accompanied by teachers, are to move to the designated shelter areas across 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.

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. In this instance, a note requesting early dismissal should be sent to the teacher or school office, and the parent/guardian must come to the school or Montessori classroom to sign out their child for early dismissal.

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 once parent exclusive custody.

MESSAGES FOR OFFICE/TEACHERS

Please call the office by 10:30AM for the morning session and 1:30PM 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 one half hour in length.

Montessori students who stay all day have lunch and recess from 11:15AM – 12:15PM. The children bring their lunch. Ice water is provided by the school; if you wish to purchase milk for your child please contact your child's teacher. 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 peanut-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.

RECESS

All 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, he/she may need to leave the area for a period of time.

SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS

Students are appropriately supervised by an adult at all times during the school day. Before 8:00AM 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 7:00AM until classes begin. After School Care is available beginning at 3:15 and ending at 6:15PM.

DRESS/APPEARANCE

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 alcohol, drugs, gangs, profanity, sexual conduct, and violence. These items are not allowed at school or any school sponsored function. Camouflage dress is not allowed. Camouflage is defined as brown, green, grey, military pattern material or orange hunting material.

Shoes must be worn at all times. Sandals and shoes should be the kind with a back strap or backing. Keep in mind the child's age; please be careful about the size of the heel. 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 the children during the winter months. The 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.

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 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

The Montessori toddler and pre-primary curriculum is based on the guidelines of the American Montessori Society and the State of Michigan. As stated in the philosophy, students 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, who is motivated through work itself to persist in a given task.

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 provided 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.

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 at all times 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 take action 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 Program 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 poor student attitude and/or behavior. 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.

Students are not allowed to chew gum in 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 in order 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.

Serious repeated offenses may result in a suspension from school or dismissal from the school.

SMOKE FREE POLICY

Montessori Children's House of Lenawee partnered with LISD facilities and grounds are designated "Smoke free".

SEXUAL HARRASSMENT POLICY

Montessori Children's House of Lenawee absolutely prohibits sexual harassment of anyone in any form. Sexual harassment may include explicit sexual propositions, sexual innuendo, suggestive comments, sexually oriented "kidding" or "teasing", "practical jokes" about gender-specific traits, foul or obscene language or gestures, display of foul or obscene printed or visual material, and physical contact such as patting, pinching, or brushing against another's body. A substantiated charge shall subject such person to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from MCHL.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY

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

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. Violation of this policy renders the student liable to immediate expulsion.

State Law requires the expulsion of students who possess a dangerous weapon on school property or at school activities, or whom commit arson or rape in a school building or on school grounds. A "dangerous weapon" refers to a firearm, dagger, dirk, stiletto, knife with a blade more than three inches in length, pocket knife open by mechanical device (switch blade), iron bar or brass knuckles. The law (PA. 328) provides for the permanent expulsion of students who violate its provisions. Michigan law does provide the possible reinstatement by the Administration after a certain time period. It is important for parents and students to know that the expulsion applies to all Michigan Schools. A student cannot be admitted to any public school in Michigan during the expulsion period.

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.

Parents: Please sign the acknowledgment form stating that you have received and read the 2013-2014 MCHL Parent Handbook.



Montessori Children's House of Lenawee

Parent(s) Name(s): _____

____ **I have elected to view the MCHL Parent Handbook electronically via the MCHL website, and have read the contents of the Handbook.**

-OR-

____ **I hereby acknowledge that I have received the MCHL Parent Handbook, and have read the contents of the Handbook.**

Signed: _____