**Welcome!**

We welcome you to Montessori Children’s House of North Barrington (MCHNB), a Lab School of the Seton Montessori Institute Teacher Education program. As parents, you make up one-third of the educational triangle: teachers, students, and families. This handbook and the information it contains should help you hold up your “leg” of this important relationship.

At MCHNB, we believe that parents, and the environment they create at home, are the primary educational influences in the life of the child. As a school, we want to be with you in your work as a parent and help you in discovering who your child is, and what his or her needs are as he/she begins the adventure of life. It is our goal to help your child become a creative, competent human being, who is fully aware of him or herself, of others, and of the world around him. Other goals include nurturing a love of learning, self-motivation, increased self-esteem, persistence and concentration, habits of inner discipline and order.

To realize these goals we have thoughtfully created an authentic Montessori school, reflecting Dr. Maria Montessori’s design of a place where children can be themselves in an atmosphere of freedom and responsibility. It is a place where children will come joyfully and become absorbed and interested in their learning and becoming.

Parents are brought into this atmosphere as much as possible through a host of engaging activities. Often friendships made in this “Montessori family” will last a lifetime. We extend the invitation for you to join us in this educational adventure.

For your child to benefit most fully from the years he/she will spend at MCHNB, we suggest you become familiar with the Montessori philosophy. Throughout the year we will present Parent Education Programs aimed at increasing our understanding of Montessori philosophy, education, and parenting. We strongly recommend that both new and returning parents attend these programs. At the start of the school year we will host a “Montessori 101” parent course, highlighting specific areas of the Montessori curriculum and demonstrating how we introduce this subject from the toddler years through the preprimary years. During the school year we will have several offerings of discussion and dialogue about parenting concerns from the Montessori perspective. We hope you will attend most, if not all, of these important educational sessions.

Montessori Children’s House of North Barrington publishes a monthly electronic newsletter containing information concerning the academic and social events of the school. Please read each newsletter for information about all school functions.

Please read this handbook carefully and keep it for future reference. We encourage you to voice any concerns or questions you may have. Your understanding of why we do what we do is an important part of your child’s education.

We are looking forward to many happy and productive years!

***About Montessori Children’s House of North Barrington***

Montessori Children’s House located in North Barrington, Illinois, serves families from all over the Northwest Suburbs. Children and families from all walks of life make up our Toddler, Preschool and Kindergarten year programs. Founded in 1970, MCHNB has a long history of providing excellence in education. MCHNB is proud to now be providing an educational experience to children of our alumni.

***Our Mission***

We are dedicated to fostering human development through a reflective implementation of

Montessori’s dynamic, experiential approach.

We support, cultivate and honor the creative curiosity of all students - adults and children alike.

Our school provides a place of learning that respects the human spirit and engages the mind and body.

***Our History***

In 1970, a Montessori teacher named Rosemary Johnson founded and built the building that we know as MCHNB to be a residence on the top floor and a school building on the bottom floor - an ingenious design for a preschool building! Several years later, in 1976, internationally recognized lecturers and educators, Celma Pinho Perry and Desmond Perry acquired and assumed direction of MCHNB, holding it to the same high standards that were used in Celma’s experiences in opening and directing Seton Montessori School in Clarendon Hills in 1965. Celma and her family wanted to provide the Northwest suburban area with the same high quality educational opportunities that their Seton community offered to preschool children.

MCHNB serves the educational needs of children between the ages of birth to the age of six on a beautiful three-acre property in North Barrington. We have a deeply committed, trained and certified staff of educators that consistently bring a caring, nurturing attitude toward their education of children. Our quality, accredited programming is a testament to the strength of the wonderful, committed team of educators.

Today, Seton Montessori Institute and School and MCHNB are combined in our efforts to satisfy the educational needs of young children utilizing the Montessori approach. Our affiliation with Seton as a lab school for Institute student teachers, provides both the child and the adult students a unique opportunity for learning. The children are exposed to the most current and progressive teaching methods and the adults have access to authentic Montessori classrooms and learning experiences.

***Philosophy***

Montessori Children’s House of North Barrington subscribes to a pedagogical philosophy created and developed by Dr. Maria Montessori one hundred years ago. On January 6, 2007, the world celebrated the centennial anniversary of the first Montessori school in Rome, Italy. Today Montessori education continues as the product of long and careful hours of ongoing research. Given a carefully prepared learning environment children would work toward perfecting their concentration and inner control. Montessori is a personalized educational approach designed to help each child reach his or her fullest potential. The Montessori method is education for life.

Each classroom is completely outfitted with carefully prepared and sequenced materials. Children perfect their natural tools for learning by working with a variety of materials. The Montessori materials are designed to help the cognitive development, as well as concentration, coordination, independence and socialization. Intelligence is built through work and experience. The materials change as the children develop and all materials are carefully constructed to present specific concepts at each level.

The child is the core of any Montessori school. Dr. Montessori believed that no human being is educated by another person. In reality, the child educates him/herself because they have a natural desire to learn; therefore, the Montessori environment cultivates this natural desire and builds within the habits of lifelong learning.

All programs have a three-year age span. Mixing ages is an important component of the Montessori philosophy. It allows for more individualized work and for students to move through the curriculum at their own pace in a non-competitive environment. Older students have a chance to be role models, while younger students have the benefit of a more stimulating environment.

A Montessori education allows each child to develop his/her natural talents to the fullest. Most importantly, each individual receives the fullest respect and regard. We are confident you will find in MCHNB a place where children will effectively develop their potential with joy and satisfaction.

***Our Goals for Your Child***

**Academic Preparation:** Academic preparation entails providing students with skills that allow them to become independently functioning adults and lifelong learners. As students master one level of academic skills, they are able to go further and apply themselves to increasingly challenging materials across various academic disciplines. Students recognize that there is always room to grow in their abilities to read, write, speak, and think clearly and thoughtfully. Children learn by doing. They are encouraged to explore materials, integrate new concepts, analyze data, and think critically. Academic skills are essential to the process of learning and knowing.

**Intrinsic Motivation:** Each student develops their innate desire, which drives a child to engage in an activity for enjoyment and satisfaction.

**Ability to Handle External Authority:** The student is able to accept the ground rules established by external authority as appropriate boundaries by interactions within the school community. These ground rules are internalized, enabling the student to function with or without the presence of the external authority.

**Creativity and Originality of Thought:** Students use the knowledge and skills they have acquired to express their own ideas and creativity with confidence. They recognize the value of their own ideas, respect the creative process of others, and are willing to share regardless of risk. Students find joy and satisfaction in self-expression.

**Social Responsibility:** Social responsibility requires the awareness that one’s actions have an impact on the welfare of the group and that one cannot attain complete independence and autonomy until one contributes constructively in a group process. Individuals are able to make a positive contribution to their community and groups within that community.

**Autonomy:** The autonomous child is self-directed, composed, and morally independent.

**Confidence and Competence:** The confident and competent child perceives himself/herself as being successful, has a realistic understanding of accomplishment, and has the ability to learn from his/her mistakes. Competence is the capability for success through risk-taking, reflection, and self-correction.

**Spiritual Awareness:** Spiritual awareness is embodied in the child who is compassionate, empathetic, and sensitive to the natural world and the human condition.

***Admissions and Withdrawals***

MCHNB provides a quality Montessori experience for as many children as we have space for within our classrooms and programs. Admissions are not limited for reason of race, color, creed, sex, national origin, or religion.

MCHNB admission requirements include, but are not limited to:

* Application/Re-enrollment and applicable fees
* Physical examination and immunization records as required by the State of Illinois and/or Department of Children and Family Service
* Tuition payment
* Completion and submission of applicable school forms and/or waivers as deemed necessary by school administration

In the case of recognized special needs, a student is accepted for a four-week trial basis. At the end of that period, the Teacher and Head of School will determine if the student’s needs will be met by the program offered. If it is determined that either the child and/or MCHNB will not benefit from continued involvement, a conference is scheduled between the parents or legal guardians, the Teacher and the Head of School. If the child is dis-enrolled at the request of the school, or withdrawn at the request of the parents, all pre-paid tuition will be refunded. Further explanation is offered in the “Tuition & Fees” section of this Handbook.

**Age guidelines for our programs are as follows*:***

Parent/Child Birth - 2 years

Toddler 18 months – 35 months

Preprimary 3 years - 6 years

**Program Arrival and Dismissal Times**

***Toddler***  Arrival Time Dismissal Time

**Morning Class** 8:45 – 9:00 a.m. 11:15 – 11:30 a.m.

**All Day Class** 8:45 – 9:00 a.m. 3:45 – 4:00 p.m.

**Early/Evening Hours** 7:30 – 8:45 a.m. 4:00 – 5:00 p.m. (All Day Program Only)

***Preprimary Program*** Arrival Time Dismissal Time

**Morning Class** 8:30 – 8:45 a.m. 11:30 - 11:45 a.m.

**Extended Day**  11:30 – 11:45 a.m. 1:30 - 1:45 p.m.

**All Day Class** 8:30 – 8:45 a.m. 3:45 - 4:00 p.m.

**PM Class** 1:30 – 1:45 p.m. 3:45 – 4:00 p.m.

**Early/Evening Hours** 7:30 – 8:30 a.m. 4:00 – 5:00 p.m. (All Day Program Only) ***More Safety***

* Please remember to always put pedestrians and the safety of others first.
* Please do not use your cell phone and other distractions while traveling through the parking areas. Your full attention is required to maintain the flow of traffic and to ensure the safety of yourself and others.
* Please do not leave your vehicle if waiting in line to drop off or pick up your children.
* At any time you leave your car in the parking lot, please turn off the engine and take the key with you.
* Please do not leave any children unattended in the car.
* Please remember that the drop-off/pick-up area is NOT the time to have a conversation with your child’s teacher. You can always call and leave a message for your child’s teacher and they will call you back.

***Entering and Exiting School Campus - Safety First***

Upon approaching our campus, we respectfully ask that you slow down. The residential street speed limit is 25 miles per hour.

Please SLOWLY drive in and out of the campus parking lot using the designated entrance and exit. All traffic must enter the school premises heading south on Clover Hill Lane from West Miller Road (As per the local Sheriff’s Office, entering school premises by heading north on Clover Hill Lane from North Rand Road is strictly discouraged due to traffic congestion). Exiting school traffic must drive north on Clover Hill Lane to West Miller Road.

Montessori Children's House of North Barrington is State of Illinois designated cell-free school zone. Please discontinue all cell phone use while driving on the Montessori Children's House of North Barrington campus. In the case of an emergency call, staff members will keep children with them until you have completed your call.

***Arrivals and Dismissals***

Stay in the arrival and dismissal lines and drive up to the building entrance. During regular arrival and dismissal times a teacher will take your child from or to the car and walk him/her to the class. If you are late, parents must park and WALK THIER CHILD INTO THE CLASS. Please make sure the teacher has greeted your child before you leave. All families are asked to have their children to school NO LATER than within 30 minutes of the start of the scheduled class time. If you are late for your dismissal time, please park in the designated areas and walk into the classroom to greet your child.

When dropping off your child allow him/her to exit the car from the right-hand side only. Once a staff member has safely greeted your child, pull forward to exit the parking lot, watching for on-coming traffic, and then proceed north on Clover Hill Lane.

When leaving the building, PLEASE have your child walk with you out the front gate. Please hold his/her hand to enter the parking lot. Children NEED adult supervision in the parking area. This is for the safety and well being of your child!

Only parents or authorized adults will be allowed to pick up a child. A written note is needed from the parents or legal guardian and given to the class teacher if someone else is picking up their child. Identification will be requested.

***Extended Hours - General Information***

In the All Day Programs, children come for the core program hours: 8:45 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. for the Toddler Program and from 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. for the Preprimary Class. Extended hours from 7:30 a.m. - 8:45 a.m. for the Toddler Program and 7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. for the Preprimary Program or 4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. for both Toddler and Preprimary Programs are available for an additional charge. This program is available throughout the school year.

In the case of emergency cancellations during the course of the school day (i.e. facility or operational malfunctions, etc.), extended hours will be canceled. Please refer to the “School Closings” and “Emergency Cancellations” sections in the Student Handbook for further information.

***Late pick up***

As stated on the Pick-Up Agreement form sent with initial enrollment information, there will be a $5 charge per five minutes (or portion thereof) for any child who is picked up after his or her scheduled dismissal time. You will be notified of the necessary payment to be made.

If you know in advance that you will be late, please call the school office and your child’s teacher will be informed. A late fee of $20 per hour will be charged when advance notice is given.

***Rates & Billing***

School is open each day from 7:30 a.m. until 5:00 p.m., parents may arrange for occasional extended hours as needed with advance notice and confirmation from the School Office. The decision will be based on student-staffing ratio requirements. Requests must be made in person or by phone. Extended hour charges and late fees for any student not picked up at the scheduled time will appear on your invoice.

***School Closings***

In case of an emergency closing, there are a variety of ways to verify the closure.

**Scheduled School Closings**

**Emergency School Closings**: Montessori Children's House of North Barrington will post on the Emergency School Closure website and, as a result, an announcement will be put on local radio and TV stations. Alternatively, you can go online to www.EmergencyClosings.com or call the emergency closing center hotline at (847) 238-1234; then enter our facility phone number (847) 550-0917. Please note: you can register your e-mail with the service and an electronic message will be sent directly to you when they receive notification that the school is closed.

**Constant Contact e-mail blast:** E-mail will be sent directly to the e-mail address to which you receive the school's updates. If the weather is questionable, check your e-mail for more information.

**Voicemail message at MCHNB:** The voicemail message at school will include information about any closures due to weather. When in doubt, call the school at (847) 550-0917 before heading out.

**Community Consolidated School District 220**: Montessori Children's House of North Barrington often follows the closure decisions of District 220. If you see notification for closure for District 220, please double check with one of the additional notification venues above. MCHNB does not follow cancellations or delays in the case of fog.

In the case of inclement weather situations, it is up to the discretion of parents to determine if their children can be safely transported to school.

In the event that the weather becomes bad during the day, we hope you will make every effort to pick up your child at the earliest possible time.

**Emergency Cancellations**

In the case of emergency cancellations during the course of the school day (i.e. facility or operational malfunctions, etc.), we will notify parents of the cancellation or dismissal via e-mail and/or by phone. It is imperative that each student has current emergency contact information on file listing home, work, cellular, and other emergency numbers. Under these circumstances, extended hours will also be cancelled.

Please refer to the school calendar for a listing of scheduled school closings and holiday dates.

***Health Policies & Procedures***

**Statement of Concern**

MCHNB recognizes the importance of the physical wellbeing of its students and, therefore, will do everything possible to aid the student in the maintenance of good physical health.

**Cleanliness**

We recognize that an important part of health is cleanliness; therefore, all of the tables, sinks, countertops, etc. in our classrooms are cleaned on a daily basis using approved environmentally friendly germicides and disinfectants in all of the classrooms when available. The teaching materials in the parent-infant and toddler room are wiped clean on a daily basis on any days that the classrooms are in use. The materials are cleaned in the preschool classrooms on a weekly basis.

**Pest Control**

No pesticides are currently used at MCHNB while school is in session, however, in the event that we find it necessary to use any chemicals for pest control, we will choose the least environmentally harmful that shall be applied in minimal amounts. Pesticide application shall not be used when children are present in the facility, and children will not return to the treated area within two hours or as specified on the pesticide label, whichever time is greater. Materials and other items handled by children will be removed prior to application to avoid contact. Parents will be notified in writing at least two days before application.

**Immunizations**

MCHNB follows the immunization guidelines established by the State of Illinois Department of Health and the State of Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. Each student must have a complete immunization history before the first day of school. An updated immunization record is required on a yearly basis. The State of Illinois requires immunization against the following communicable diseases: • Whooping Cough (Pertussis) • Diphtheria • Tetanus • Poliomyelitis • Measles (Rubella) • German measles (Rubella) • Mumps • Chickenpox • Hepatitis B.

**Physical Examination**

All enrolled students need a physical examination, regardless of age and/or school year. Families must provide an updated physical examination prior to each Summer Camp season or school year. For students with specific medical conditions, which may interfere with his/her educational training, the school may request a physical examination when deemed necessary by the Head of School.

**Illness**

We will send a child home from school with the following: fever  vomiting diarrhea upper respiratory infection cough sore throat any gastrointestinal upset, including abdominal pain, and nausea temperature elevation of more than one degree severe pain, including injury  any rash or skin eruption, until diagnosed  any eye inflammation or infection, until treated head lice until treated and ALL nits removed. Parents are required to keep their child at home until he/she is free of symptoms, un-medicated, for at least 24 hours. If there is any doubt whether the child is feeling well before returning to school, he/she should remain home. If your child is too ill to participate in all school activities, including outside play, he/she should remain at home. Please call the school and leave a message when your child will be absent.

Children can return to school 24 hours after beginning antibiotics or is fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication. Please use these guidelines when you have any questions about whether or not to send your child to school.

**Communicable Diseases**

The school has the authority to temporarily suspend students from school when a contagious disease threatens the health and wellbeing of other students and staff. The suspension will remain in effect until the student is no longer contagious, or has the written permission of a physician to return. All communicable diseases should be reported to the school; we, in turn, notify parents when a contagious disease is present in their child’s classroom.

**Medications**

Our staff will administer prescription medication at school only when requested by parents and authorized by a physician. Parent permission and physician instruction forms are required and medication must be provided with the prescription label affixed (Forms are available at the School Office). The school should be notified of all medications a student is taking, even those not administered during school hours. Under no circumstances may a student medicate him/ herself. This includes cough medicine, cough drops, aspirin or Tylenol.

**Accidents**

Parents will be notified in the event of any significant accidents. It is imperative that each child has up-to-date contact information on file listing home, work, cellular, and other emergency numbers. If this information changes during the year, please call or email the office so that your child’s file can be updated. If parents cannot be reached, the Head of School or MCHNB staff member has the authority to take students to the hospital or arrange for emergency transport or medical assistance.

**Hearing & Vision Screening**

The Lake County Health Department schedules hearing and vision screening for all preschool students at MCHNB. Testing takes place at the school. We provide notification prior to testing.

***Discipline***

The Montessori approach is based on a profound respect for the child and his/her capabilities for self-development. Within the Montessori environment the child is given choices. The Montessori teacher facilitates these choices so that through them, the child builds the person that he or she is to become. As a result of this orientation, Montessori environments are typically peaceful and non-aggressive. Freedom implies responsibility. Through the experience of freedom within a well-established structure of ground rules, children grow into self-disciplined individuals, ready and eager to participate in society.

The philosophy of discipline at MCHNB is one of positive reinforcement and redirection; therefore, it is our belief that adults model the behavior they wish children to learn. Important goals for students include independence and self-discipline. Teachers work with all children to establish ground rules and to solve conflicts peacefully.

**Expectations for Children’s Behavior:**

• Children should respect each other (e.g., no hitting, kicking, biting, abusive language, etc.)

• Children should respect their teachers and respond when spoken to

• Children should respect the environment (including plants, animals and materials)

• Children should use their bodies safely at all times, including walking while indoors

**Guidelines for Staff Response to Children’s Behavior Difficulties**

It is the responsibility of the staff to see to it that behavioral expectations described above are followed through and that the peaceful social order of the classroom and outdoor environments are maintained for the benefit of all the children. Each child is to be given the needed guidance in order to participate successfully in the classroom environment.

If a child has a difficulty, the staff member will assist the child by pointing out alternative positive behaviors within the community or by inviting the child for purposeful rest and an opportunity for self-calming, before helping him/her to become re-involved in meaningful activity. The behavior will not be permitted to continue.

If a difficulty arises between children, the staff member will support and encourage the children in its resolution through expressing themselves verbally to each other. The rights of a child who has been aggressed upon will be protected, and a child who has become distressed through an encounter will be comforted and mentored in peaceful assertion of their rights.

We ask the support of parents in monitoring and limiting their child’s viewing of violent programs, movies, and video games. As always, any approach to discipline is successful only if everyone involved works together.

Patterns of behavior that are deemed harmful to self and/or others may be resolved by asking the student to leave school for the remainder of the day. This is a drastic but effective method of solving some behavioral difficulties. If limits are repeatedly tested, parents are again requested to take the child home. To return to school, the student, parents, teacher, and Head of School must agree on a plan of action, including, in the most extreme cases, possible dismissal of the student.

***Clothing & Personal Belongings***

**Toddler & Preprimary Programs**

Toddler and preprimary students must wear comfortable, loose-fitting, non-restrictive clothing, which allows them quick and easy access to the toilet. Clothing managed without adult assistance is best for toilet learning and teaching independence. Belts, buttons and buckles often prove troublesome and may be a source of frustration for young children.

Boots, waterproof mittens or gloves, hat, snow pants and a warm jacket or coat is mandatory for outside activities during winter weather. **BE SURE TO LABEL EACH ITEM** with your child’s name.

Each Toddler and Preprimary student must have a complete change of clothing (socks, underwear, pants, shirt) to be kept at school. Please send these items in a large Ziploc plastic bag labeled with your child’s name. BE SURE TO LABEL EACH ITEM with your child’s name.

Additionally, each Toddler student is required to have a set of diapers clearly labeled with the child’s name. Parents are required to replenish their child’s diapers regularly.

Unnecessary jewelry, purses and toys will distract your child from his/her work and should not be brought to school. Reassure your child that the item will be waiting for him/her in the car when you return to take him/her home.

**Toilet Learning**

We approach toilet learning in a gentle way with the children, and see that, given a supportive environment, toddlers can be most capable of learning to use the toilet. Since toddlers are generally aware of and interested in these activities, we offer this as we would any other learning activity in the environment, making the associated materials available, giving sample presentations, allowing plenty of time and choice. Please share your home routines with us so that we can work together to accommodate your child’s needs and interest level related to learning to use the toilet.

If your child is currently wearing diapers, we ask that you send a large box of disposable diapers and a box of unscented, alcohol free wipes, as needed, labeled with your child’s name.

**Shoes**

We ask you to provide your child with a pair of shoes that he/ she can put on and take off by him/herself, which will be kept at school for use there. We are recommending shoes with a rubber sole and Velcro type fastener to be worn in the classroom. PLEASE DO NOT SEND BEDROOM SLIPPERS OR CROCS! Also be certain that the shoes fit well. We recommend strong boots during the winter, at which time you will especially appreciate having a pair of “inside shoes” already at school. BE SURE TO LABEL EACH ITEM with your child’s name.

***Naps***

For nap your child will need a small crib sheet, a crib sized blanket and travel size pillow LABELED with the child’s name. If your child likes to sleep with a small stuffed animal, feel free to send one that can stay at school.

***Birthdays***

Birthdays are a special time to share the story of someone’s life as well as a special treat. If you would like to celebrate your child’s birthday in class, please let us know in advance so we can plan it together. Your child may host his/her own celebration by bringing a nutritious snack to share. We suggest a treat of fresh fruit, vegetables, cheese, yogurt or mini muffins. Please no cupcakes with icing or artificially sweetened beverages. Also remember, some of our children have dietary restrictions and SEVERE FOOD ALLERGIES. Please be very diligent in providing foods that do not contain and/or is not prepared in a facility that processes nuts or tree nuts. Please consult with your child’s teacher before sending in a snack.

***Lost & Found***

Lost items left behind will be held for a brief period of time in hopes that someone will claim them, then discarded or donated to charity. We want to encourage everyone to track his/her personal possessions. Labeling items will help reduce the loss of items.

***Lunch – Toddler Program***

If your child stays for lunch, he/she will be served a nutritionally balanced hot meal from our catering service. Whole milk will be served with lunch. Menus will be given to you at the beginning of each month.

***Lunch – Extended Day and All Day Preprimary Programs Only***

Families of Extended Day and Full Day preschool students can either order a nutritionally balanced hot meal from our catering service at an extra cost or send a lunch each day your child is in attendance. Lunch is a special time for children at MCHNB and should consist of nutritional, healthy food choices. We strongly suggest that no sugared foods, beverages, candy, or soda be included in school lunches, including all “fast foods.” Instead, we urge all families to turn to whole foods—organic and locally grown whenever possible. We will repack unhealthy foods—uneaten—in your child’s lunchbox. Studies show foods and beverages with high sugar and fat contents are not nutritionally sound and have a negative effect on children’s behavior and attentiveness.

Please pack lunches in soft, insulated lunch boxes or bags. Keep in mind that no refrigeration is available for storage of lunches. To eliminate waste, we suggest lunch items be packed in reusable containers. We avoid the use of paper products (i.e. paper napkins, plates or cups, etc.) but the school does provide china/silverware for lunch. These items are washed here at school with the students’ assistance and sanitized daily in the dishwasher. Microwaves are available for heating food, but only on a limited basis. Milk and water are available for lunch. All children eat in their classrooms.

***Snacks***

The snacks we provide at school consist mainly of grains, fruit, cheese, vegetables and water. If your child has specific food allergies or restrictions, please provide snacks to be served at school. Send snacks in a clearly labeled container. Remember, some children have dietary restrictions and SEVERE FOOD ALLERGIES. Please consult with your child’s teacher for any restricted foods that cannot come into the class.

***Communications - Contacting Your Child’s Teacher***

Our partnership with parents is very important to us. If you need to speak with your child’s teacher, please send a note with your child or call (847) 550-0917 to leave a message with the office. Our teachers would be happy to speak with you about any concerns regarding your child or their program. We do try to keep adult conversation to a minimum at arrivals and dismissals, and during class time, in order to give full attention to the needs of the children, but we will always get back to you! We are always happy to discuss your child with you and to help you in any way we can.

Additionally, you will have an individual parent-teacher conference in October and February as a formal opportunity to discuss your child’s progress in the classroom.

***Change of Routine***

Please let us know if there is a change in your child’s routine, e.g., parent trips, new caretakers, overnight visitors, moving to a new house, etc. These events, so important to your child, may affect his/her work style or behavior at school. Only parents or authorized persons will be allowed to pick up a child. *Be sure to give us a Daily Parent Release form if someone other than you is picking up your child.* A parent release form is needed from the parents or legal guardian and must be given to the office or class teacher. Identification will be requested.

***E-Mail Communications***

MCHNB is committed to reducing the amount of paper consumed by our programs. As such, the majority of parent communications will be sent via e-mail. Parents should confirm their preferred e-mail at the start of each school year and check each week for updates being sent from the school. If a family does not have a computer or Internet access paper copies will be available.

***Observation and Parental Involvement***

One of the best and most delightful ways of learning about the Montessori approach to education is to observe a class in session. All parents are encouraged to come and see their child at work, to observe him/her in contact with the prepared environment and the other children. As you observe with purpose you can gain insights into his/her personality. Don’t forget to allow time to discuss your observation with the teacher before you leave. The school has a weekly observation day. However, you are always welcome to come and observe, and can make an appointment through the school office.

Traditionally, Montessori Children’s House parents have been involved in school life, including participation in the workshops, event planning and other committees in the school. All parents are invited and strongly encouraged to take part in school-related activities and events. It also helps the parent to gain deeper insights into Montessori and into the whole task of child-rearing and early childhood education. Please complete the Volunteer Opportunity Sheet and submit it to the school office. Your involvement and participation is highly appreciated.

***Tuition***

**Your Child’s Tuition**

MCHNB relies on our community families to underwrite the excellent Montessori education that their children receive. The program in which your child is enrolled determines the tuition amount. This tuition is for the full academic year. An annual $75 non-refundable application fee (per family) is due at the time an application is submitted. A deposit (10% of the academic year tuition) is due at the time of application unless your child is immediately put onto a waiting list.

**Paying Tuition**

You may select to pay the academic year tuition upon enrollment. The 5-business day grace period does not apply to the One Payment Plan Option. If tuition is not received on or before **August 1st, then you will be deferred to the Nine Installment Plan. Payments can be made by check or money order only.**

For the convenience of our families, we also offer three other tuition payment plans from which you may choose:

**Nine Installment Plan**

The annual tuition (-10% paid with the application) is divided into nine installments. The first installment is due on August 1st, the second on September 1st, and so on. The ninth and final installment is due on April 1st. Monthly installments do not correspond to that particular month of school. **Payments can be made by check or money order only.**

**Four Installment Plan**

The annual tuition is divided into four equal payments. The 10% deposit paid with the application is applied to the first installment due on August 1st. The three remaining installments are due on the first day of November, January and April. **Payments can be made by check or money order only.**

**Two Installment Plan**

The annual tuition is divided into two payments. The 10% deposit paid with the application is applied to the first installment due on August 1st. The second payment is due on January 1st. **Payments can be made by check or money order only.**

The application fee is not refundable, and there is no reduction in fees due to illness or absence.

Prompt payment of tuition installments enables us to maintain a high quality program and a beautiful environment for the children.

**Late Payments & Fees**

Tuition payments are due according to the plan that you selected upon application to the school. It is the responsibility of each family to ensure that their payments arrive on time.

*Payments received more than five business days after the due date will result in a $25 late fee. Payments that are 30 days late will result in a second late fee in the amount of $50. Payments that are 60 or more days late will result in disenrollment of the student from school.*

*Checks returned for insufficient funds will result in a $25 returned check fee.*

**Prorated Tuition**

Academic year tuition is prorated for students who are enrolled after the beginning of a program and for students who are withdrawn prior to the end of the academic year. Calculations for prorated tuition are based on half-month time periods and are not determined on a daily basis.

***Withdrawal Policy***

The option of canceling the enrollment contract with the school is provided with **written notice to the school 30 days prior** **to the withdrawal date**. The last day for withdrawal **before** the start of the school year is July 28th. The last day of withdrawal **after** the start of the school year is February 1st.

If withdrawal is necessary, a thirty-day written notice is required. Any tuition paid in advance of the 30-day withdrawal date will be refunded in full.

***Re-enrollment***

In order to reserve a new place for the following school year, we ask parents to complete a re-enrollment application and submit the first tuition installment by the early spring deadline assigned by the Head of School. After that date, we accept new and returning students on a first come, first served basis to fill any vacancies. Once all vacancies are filled you will be placed on a wait list.

***Frequently Asked Questions***

**How will I be invoiced?**

In order to be more environmentally friendly, families will receive their invoices via email unless they have sent a written request to the school office to receive a paper invoice as well.

**What forms of payment do you accept?**

MCHNB accepts personal checks, money orders, and cashier’s checks. We do not accept cash for payment of tuition.

Many families have found it convenient to set up automated payments through their financial institution.

**Where should I send my payment?**

Payments should be mailed to Montessori Children’s House, 115 Clover Hill Lane, North Barrington, IL 60010. You may also drop off your payment at the school’s office.

**Do you offer any discounts?**

Yes. A second (or third, or fourth) child enrolled in Montessori Children’s House or MCH Summer Camp will receive a 15% discount off the lesser tuition(s).

**May I change my child's program after the school year has begun?**

Depending upon availability, yes. There is a $50 processing fee for program changes.

**My employer has a Flexible Spending Account (FSA) program and I need proof of tuition. Can you help?**

Yes. Whether you need a receipt for flexible spending reimbursement or end-of-the-year records, you can request this documentation from the school office. Please allow 3-5 business days for processing.

**Can we claim tuition for a Tax Credit for Daycare Expenses?**

Tax credits for tuition, childcare, and other expenses may be available. Information regarding eligibility can be obtained through your accountant. Statements of tuition paid can be provided for your use. Please allow five business days for preparation.

***Summer Camp (18 months – 7 years)***

Our summer camp, which runs from June to August, offers campers a unique opportunity to experience the joys of summer on our three-acre campus and our Montessori environment. Children experience a range of indoor and outdoor activities from arts and crafts to swimming lessons, sports and games all lead by our certified Montessori Staff. MCHNB is also a fully accredited camp program with the American Camp Association. ACA is dedicated to ensuring a high quality of camp programs throughout the United States and MCHNB has been maintaining this certification for the past 20 years.