

TCH Partnership Agreement

Partnership With the school

Our school program is based on the philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori and the latest research in child development. Our goal is to provide a carefully prepared environment that meets the needs of each individual child and fosters independent thinkers.

We employ positive self-discipline principles. We believe using this method consistently, helps raise healthy, respectful children who possess authentic self-esteem. It teaches them social skills so they can be successful in life.

Children thrive when home and school work in harmony, with both environments sharing the same values and expectations. Choosing to attend TCH means agreeing to a set of expectations, operating principles, and policies. These can be found in the Parent Handbook and in this Parent Agreement.

Montessori Philosophy is unique and very different to traditional preschools. It is our goal to find families who are a right fit for our school. We believe every child benefits from our environment however it is not for every family. It is our intention to be thoughtful and intentional in our enrollment process and to invite families to join our small community only if they share our values.

1. What does the school expect from parents?

We understand that everyone comes to our school with varying levels of knowledge about Montessori. We are here to help not only your child but your family. We expect you to continue to understand and embrace the Montessori approach and work in partnership with the School.

To fully reap the benefit of what your child is gaining at school and to make the partnership of the triangle: parent, teacher, child as strong as it can possibly be, you need to apply the same principles at home.

To this end, we offer a 5-week parenting course which parents are required to complete within the first 6 months of enrollment. The cost of the course is \$150. This entails watching videos at home, reading a few chapters, and attending 5, one hour, sessions where the material is discussed. We understand you are busy so we offer several different times to make it easier for you to attend.

This course clearly explains the basic principles of positive self-discipline, a proven method of disciplining children and instilling basic life skills that will serve them now and



forever. It will help you apply the principles of Montessori consistently at home, which will create an optimal environment for your child to learn and flourish.

We will also provide you with monthly articles which will support the development of your child. Please access these on your child's class Shutterfly site. Using the Shutterfly phone app is an easy way to access this information.

In addition, we have books from our lending library and will make suggestions for webinars and online courses on positive self-discipline, child development and the Montessori way.

We expect you to share information about any events at home that may impact your child. If you notice any behavioral issues or developmental milestones discuss these with us so we can use a common language and approach to helping your child.

2. Arrival and departure

It is essential for the success of your child and the community's day that your child arrives no later than 8:30. Late arrivals disrupt the children in their work, and can be disconcerting for your child. We can help discuss a routine for your child's morning and evening to properly prepare for the day.

Your child will be ready to leave for afternoon pick up at the same time each day. Please pick up your child promptly at his dismissal time. Your child learns to expect you at certain times each day; your promptness shows respect for this inner rhythm in the child. Asking your child to wait longer is not fair or kind to your child.

We have various transitions with remaining children. Picking up your child on time and leaving the classroom or playground promptly ensures we can give our attention and supervise the children who stay for an extended day.

Chronic absenteeism (more than 10 days a year, for reasons other than an illness) and tardiness at drop off or/and at pick up is in violation of our Parent Agreement Pledge and may result in TCH requesting you to withdraw from the school.

In the event a child is absent for more than 10 days, and/or a parent is late dropping off and/or picking up more than 3 times in a school year, TCH will give the parent a one-week notice period to withdraw the child from TCH. A tuition refund for the remainder of that month will be returned to the parent.

Please note that a \$20 late fee will be imposed if you are a minute late, picking up. You are welcome to sign your child up for the extended day program if you prefer to pick up at a later time. Extra Hour Requests (requires 24-hour notice and dependent upon space available) at \$20 per hour.

3. Demonstrate open, direct communication and respectful behavior

We value open and direct communication. If you have a concern with an adult, please speak directly with the person concerned. For example, any classroom issues should be addressed with the classroom teacher. If you have any administrative issues, please speak with Debbie.

As adults we are here to support and help each other. Not to judge and criticize.

We pledge to treat each other with respect, especially each child in our community by not talking about them, in front of them or behind their back. We accept that each child is “not there yet but is becoming,” he is in the process of developing his character.

We expect age-appropriate cooperation from your child. It is only by having similar discipline, namely positive self-discipline practice at home and at school, that a child can develop self-control and treat himself, his peers, and adults with respect.

4. Home environment that supports the development of the child

a. A young child thrives on consistency and predictability. It is essential to establish set routines at home so your child can know what to expect, he can predict the next step, and this makes him feel secure. For example, at bedtime, if you do things in the same order each evening: eat dinner, brush teeth, bath, put on pj's, read book, sing lullaby, lights out, sleep time. Your child will learn this is what happens every evening and this will help him feel safe.

b. Independence is the cornerstone of Montessori education. It is the child's task to become an autonomous being and our role is to aid him in his journey. That does not translate to allowing your child to do whatever he wants to do. The essence of Montessori is providing an environment for the child where he is free to create himself but within limits. Choices are always limited to A or B, making those choices age appropriate and acceptable to the adult.

Always give your child the smallest amount of help necessary to help him to do it “all by myself.” We expect children to walk by themselves and carry their own belongings. Even the youngest child can put his own items away and changing his shoes. We believe young children are incredibly able, it is only by doing things for himself does he develop self-confidence which develops authentic self-esteem. Do not rob him of an opportunity to exert effort and learn.

The message you send your child when you allow him to be independent, is that you respect his intelligence and trust that he is capable, and that you want him to enjoy persevering and learning, every day.

c. Limit screen time. Babies are born tabula rasa. In order to grow, develop and learn about their world they need hands on interaction with real things. They learn by exploring with all their senses and their brain develops through the multi-sensory stimulation they engage in. Montessori said, “The hand is the instrument of the brain.” Neurological connections are made when children engage hands on and explore their environment. Screen time replaces this valuable learning opportunity with less-than-optimal stimulation and feedback, and can retard development. Excessive screen time can inhibit ability to concentrate, and cause behavioral issues.

5. Re-enrollment procedure

Your child's re-enrollment is assessed each year, it is not automatic and is at the sole discretion of TCH.

We ask that parents review the parent handbook and parent agreement and sign the parent agreement each year.

1. January - In January an online intent to return survey will be sent to all parents, including rising kindergarteners. If either parents or the school have any questions, concerns or are uncertain about re-enrolling then either party should request a conference and meet by January 31.

2. February - In our February conferences the school will make recommendations about re-enrolling rising kindergarten children. Please know that there are many factors that go into deciding if your child is ready to move onto elementary school. Both the parent and teacher's input are valuable. However, your child's teacher will make her decision based mainly on where your child is developmentally (and not on his chronological age or academic readiness) as this serves to determine what is in your child's best interest.

3. March - On March 1st, re-enrollment contracts are due along with the tuition deposit (post-dated check for June 1). Classroom rosters are also finalized by March 1st.

There are limited places in each classroom and many considerations have to be taken into account when we finalize the roster. As a licensed facility we are limited to 29 students. We also have to consider our toddlers moving up into the preschool classroom.

As always, for a Montessori classroom to work we have to carefully balance boys and girls, developmental ages and personalities. We hold the “big picture” view and find that when we do what is in each child's best interest, then it usually works for the whole classroom community.

What can parents reasonably expect from the school?

1. The school aims to provide an authentic Montessori experience.

Our primary goal is to help your child reach his full potential in all areas of life. We provide an environment that nurtures the development of social skills, emotional growth, and physical coordination as well as cognitive development.

The holistic curriculum, under the direction of a specially prepared teacher, allows your child to experience the joy of learning in an uninterrupted work period where your child is given freedom, within limits, to choose his work and follow it through completion while working independently or in cooperation with others.

He will be allowed to experience and learn from the consequences of his choices thereby strengthening his critical thinking skills. We will promote a growth mind-set by giving specific feedback rather than blanket praise. We believe the child must identify his own interests to construct himself and thus develop his unique character. We will never force your child to learn something he is not interested in.

We will treat each child with dignity and respect and expect that he/she will treat all others with the same respect.

2. What can I expect in terms of communication from the school?

We aim to maintain open, honest, timely, and respectful communication with you about your child and about information affecting the school community.

For toddlers there are four regularly scheduled parent-teacher conferences in August, October, February, and May accompanied by a written progress report in October and May.

For primary children there are three regularly scheduled conferences in August, October, (February is for rising kindergarteners) and May accompanied by a written progress report in May.

In the event of special concerns, your child's teacher will contact you to discuss these concerns by phone or in person. If you have a concern or question about your child's



classroom or progress, please contact your child's teacher immediately. Please do not wait for scheduled conference times.

Each TCH teacher is a well-trained professional and her evaluation is confidential and based on direct observation of your child. She will always offer her current best understanding of your child's progress and his strengths and needs. For all children, this evaluation is based on the teacher's observation.

We will promptly consult you should it ever become clear that your child is not benefiting from the school's program and outside professional assistance is needed by the teacher to advise us and help your child.

Regarding on-going, school-wide communication, the school distributes a monthly article which you can access on your class Shutterfly site. The school will maintain the calendar on this site as dates may be added or changed. For example, school days are cancelled and added because of inclement weather. In addition, your child's teacher will add newsletters regularly and post photos of your child's class on this site. Using the Shutterfly phone app is an easy way to access this information.

3. What can I expect of the school environment?

We strive to ensure an environment that is physically and emotionally safe and supportive, as well as aesthetically beautiful.

Dr. Montessori said that the classroom teacher's first responsibility is to prepare the environment. This means that the learning materials should correspond to the developmental characteristics of the child at each level. It is important that those materials be attractive to the child: correct in size, aesthetically pleasing, well maintained, and complete. In a broader sense, the whole school environment must meet these criteria: to appeal to the child and to inspire his work.

We have created a playground that is developmentally appropriate for 18 months – 6-year-olds to play. We expect children to take age-appropriate risks outside which means your child may come home with scraped knees, bumps, and bruises. We believe these are a normal part of learning how to navigate their bodies through space and around fast-moving objects, such as balance bikes. While we will not hover around children to avoid incidences as we believe they must be given freedom to learn through experience, teachers are stationed at strategic points on the playground and remain vigilant, scanning the playground for potential real risks.

We are ever vigilant to ensure that the school buildings and grounds are physically safe, secure, and well maintained. If you notice something that needs to be addressed, please bring it to the attention of the director.



Our community of children and adults comprise a social environment and culture that impacts the child's experience. We strive to make this environment emotionally supportive and safe for every child. This does not mean that there will be no problems. It does mean that we will work with your child in developmentally appropriate ways to deal with problems as they arise, empowering him with problem-solving and social skills and support him in the development of emotional intelligence to aid him in life.

4. What professional standards can I expect of the school?

Personal Development and Continuing Education: Our lead teachers are Montessori trained and all our staff continue to strengthen our program through an on-going review and development process. We pride ourselves on being lifelong learners and each year embark on professional and personal growth opportunities. We dedicate at least 10 hours of continuing education.

Masters of Montessori Exchange: Every year we observe other Montessori schools and collaborate with professionals to exchange ideas and inspire each other.

Children First: We strive to focus on meeting the needs of the individual child in harmony with the life of the community; In making decisions, we will focus on the interest of the individual child in balance with the needs of the school.

Respect, Communication, Solutions: You can expect an open-door to your questions or concerns and professional and courteous conduct, as well as mutually respectful communication. When there is a problem, we will let you know promptly and work with you to resolve it as soon as possible.