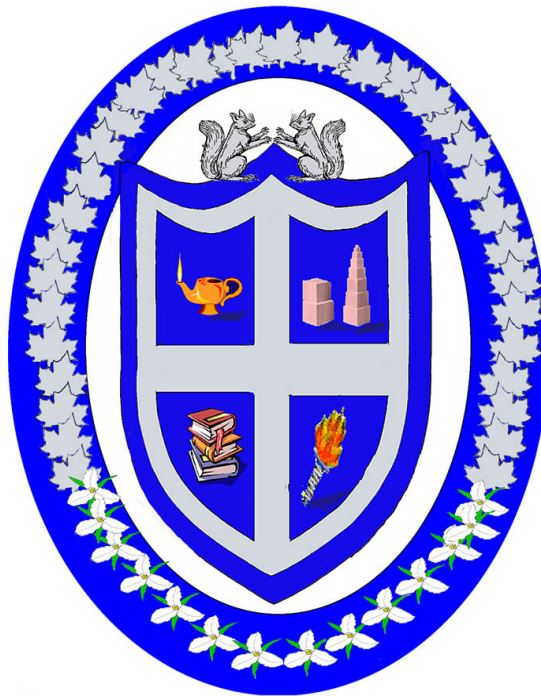




Montessori Learning Centre 750985 Ontario Inc.
“Knowledge with Understanding”

GENERAL INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES



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July 22, 2024

THE MONTESSORI PHILOSOPHY

The Montessori method was conceived as an approach to learning, supporting a comprehensive view of the child. Montessori regarded the classroom as a laboratory of sorts for observing children and testing and retesting ideas and aids to their growth. She approached education as a scientist and pursued her ideas with an open mind and always with strong respect for the child as an individual. It is a scientifically designed method to develop the whole personality of the child at their own natural rate of progress and thus, free their potential for self-development within a prepared environment.

Montessori felt that for each of the four stages of human development (birth to six, six to twelve, twelve to eighteen and eighteen to twenty-four) it was necessary to change our basic approach to the child ensuring their well-being as competent, capable, curious beings.

The Montessori curriculum places no restraints on the student's ability and provides manual and physical activity through use of concrete and abstract experiences to help them gain mastery of themselves and their environment.

The materials encourage the child to explore the world through their various senses. Lessons allow them to gain self-confidence and self-mastery – knowing how to do things for themselves, through the successful completion of work that is meaningful to them. They gain the confidence necessary to competence by experiencing failures only as a stepping stone as they work from the simple to the more complex. Dr. Montessori felt that self-education was of the greatest value and that to be in control of one's self the ultimate achievement.

What has always been most unique about the Montessori method is the detailed emphasis given to sensorial experiences, and herein, lies the key to its great success in later learning.

Based on "The Essential Montessori" – Elizabeth Hainstock

CORE VALUES

- L**eadership – we strive to be leaders in the community paving and maintaining the way for tomorrow's leaders.
- E**xcellence – we commit to the continuing improvement of our teaching methods and curriculum.
- A**ccountability – in all that we do each day.
- R**espect – for students, parents, peers and our varied customs and beliefs.
- N**urture – meeting the individualization of each child and moving them towards achieving their potential.

MISSION STATEMENT

To continue on our path of excellence in education, recognizing the importance of respect, knowledge and individualization for each and every student.

HISTORY

The Montessori Learning Centre of Pickering first opened its doors at 415 Toynevale Road in September of 1984 with 25 students and 4 staff members. The school offered a full Montessori Programme with 2 classrooms – a CASA grouping (3 to 6 years) and a Junior Elementary classroom (6 to 9 years). As the first Montessori school in Pickering, it quickly expanded. The school grew steadily adding Intermediate Elementary (9 to 12 years) and the Senior Elementary (13 years and up). An Infant Programme was also added in 1996 catering to children from 6 months to 18 months old. Due to increasing numbers, 401 Kingston Road was purchased in September 1998. 409 and 417 Kingston Road were also acquired as an extension of the school; home at last! The curriculum has expanded and improved continuously throughout the school's life.

STAFF LIST INCLUDES

Principal
Speciality Teachers

Vice-Principals
Montessori, ECE's & Support Staff

Office Staff
Housekeeping / Culinary Management

ABSENCE/LATENESS

Please contact us should your child be ill or away for any length of time. Consistent and punctual attendance is important, especially at the Elementary level. The Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy requires us to follow up on any child not here at the day's start if we have not received notification to the contrary.

AGES SERVED

MLCP is pleased to offer Montessori's curriculum/theories and philosophies to students between 6 months and Grade 8. Students under 4 years of age are licensed by CCEYA. The school also enjoys membership and registration with CCMA, OFIS, Ministry of Education, ISAA and AMI.

ALTERNATE NEEDS/BEHAVIOURIAL SUPPORT

MLCP commits to being respectful of the individual needs of all students and families. Amendments and/or changes will be made to the best of our ability to meet the needs of students with special requirements, physical or otherwise.

Accommodations for communication, mobility, diet, etc. will be discussed prior to acceptance to ensure our ability to properly, safely and respectfully support each student attending.

MLCP promotes respectful interaction between individuals involved with the school and students. All parties are expected to deal with each other politely and respectfully. Conversations will be conducted in places as seen appropriate – depending on the type of conversation. Variances from the norm in dealings between students, parents or staff members must be dealt with professionally. Issues or concerns should be brought to the classroom teacher or office – where we can work together towards a solution.

Students are reminded of gentle hands and kind words. Support and alternatives are always discussed and practiced and, should the need arise, students are offered the option of moving away from the situation until feeling more receptive to positive interaction. In extreme cases parents will be asked to come in to the school for a meeting to discuss consistent strategies for better behaviours. Elementary students and parents are required to sign our discipline contract and the sign off on these guidelines acknowledging agreement of the content.

MLCP is known for its dedicated and supportive staff and we take our care of your children seriously. Staff works hard to ensure that your children receive a positive and supportive education. Staff are screened prior to employment, are encouraged to attend professional development opportunities, regularly review policies and work hard towards the goal of supporting the competent, caring, potential rich children in our care.

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL

The safety of students is our top priority. Arrival and dismissal are busy times at schools. We need to work together with parents, guardians and childcare providers to make sure students have safely arrived at school. If your child is going to be late or absent for any reason, it is important that you contact the office immediately and report the reason for the student's lateness or absence.

Students are expected to arrive by 8:30am for a classroom start of 8:45am and be picked up between 4:00pm or 4:15pm if not using paid day care. The arrival/departure time is documented on a daily log sheet and noted in the register.

The child is greeted by staff upon arrival where parents have an opportunity to mention any changes to regular scheduling or any incidents of note and have staff document these as needed.

As parking can be an issue, please vacate the space as soon as possible so that another parent may use it. We begin meeting the cars and escorting the students inside as soon as a comfort level is reached by the students – usually by October. Please yield to students and staff using the marked pedestrian crossing. The Evelyne Avenue access is an option at busy times for drop offs and pickups. For our Liverpool students, drop off can be at either the front or the back. The front drop off allows access via the south pathway to the rear entrance. A front entrance drive by, however, will allow a child entrance without a need for parking.

As most students at MLCP are typically dropped off each morning by parents or family members, there is possibly less concern as to safe arrival but it is a mandated practice to contact parents by 9:15am each day if a child does not arrive and we have not been notified of an absence. Telephone calls to parents followed by the emergency contact will take place, with messages left until the absence has been confirmed. Emails will follow if there is no verbal response forthcoming. Communication will continue at regular intervals until contact has been made (home, cell, work, email). Staff will clarify with the parent the timeline for the absence where possible and document the call and response and notify the office if any follow up is needed. Staff will monitor all log in and log out sheets throughout the day to ensure that the daily register is correct and up to date. Should we be unable to confirm the absence after through communications attempts CAS, could be notified and staff will follow their direction with regards to next steps (as per Ministry regulation).

MLCP will ensure that any child attending the school is only released to the child's parent/guardian or to someone other than a parent with written authorization. If there are a number of people who will be picking up the child, documentation of the names in a permanent note and, where possible, having introductions made prior to the first pick-up is required. Written withdrawal of a change to pick up permission is needed. If our MLCP staff is not familiar with the person picking up the child, picture ID will need to be shown before we release the child into their care.

All pick up times will be noted and documented by the classroom staff until 4:30pm and then by day care staff until closing.

In the event of an emergency situation where none of the above noted individuals are able to pick up the child, verbal permission and instruction should be shared. The pick-up person will need to show identification and confirm the instructions before the release of the child.

A parent/guardian may request that an older child be released from MLCP without supervision. Parents/Guardians must provide written and signed authorization and instructions for the release of the child including the time of dismissal. This will be reviewed by releasing staff before allowing departure. Where a Parent/Guardian provides written instructions for the release of their child from care without supervision, the Parent/Guardian is aware that MLCP is no longer responsible for that child upon their dismissal.

Should a student not be collected by their regular or specified time, staff will begin reaching out with reminders or queries. As above, calls to the cell, home, and office of both parents and followed by emergency contact as necessary until contact and communication take place. Should a child not have been picked up and communication been unsuccessful an hour after the school is officially closed, CAS will be contacted and their direction followed (as per Ministry regulation).

We recognize that consistent and punctual attendance is essential to the safety, academic success, and well-being of all students. Thank you for your continued cooperation to keep your child safe and accounted for.

BIRTHDAYS

Children are welcome to bring a small and generally healthy snack for their birthday celebration (please send in plates, serviettes and disposable cutlery as needed). Some parents choose to do a class lunch time pizza party. Please see the office for details. Should you hold a private party, please give invitations to the teachers for hand out to appropriate parents, in an effort to alleviate any hurt feelings for those not invited. All birthdays are acknowledged by the class.

COMMUNICATION

General communication is handled through newsletters, notices, main foyer notice board, weekly email memos and day-to-day contact. By giving MLCP your email address, you are giving the school permission to use your e-mail as a means of communication. Parents are responsible for collection of notices, etc. from pouches, hooks or cubbies as applicable.

The P.T.A. Facebook group, the school Facebook page and the school website: www.mlcp.ca are also an excellent means of information. Please view regularly for current activity, photographs, homework and newsletters.

Please do not hesitate to bring any concerns or comments you may have to the classroom teachers or to the office. Serious issues may warrant more than a conversation and will certainly be discussed, documented and worked through – always with the children's best interest as the focal point. We ask that issues be dealt with away from the classroom or hallways (if at a drop off or pick up time). Should discussions become heated in any way they are best dealt with away from the public forum.

Ongoing information is communicated through forwarded emails to the provided address each Monday. Please check the website regularly for added communication. Our youngest students take home daily notes, the middle groups weekly and the Elementary students receive and use agendas. Each child does have a labelled pouch where additional or complimentary information can be exchanged. Parent Teacher Interviews and Report Cards allow for academic tracking and discussion.

C.T.B.S.

The Canadian Test for Basic Skills is offered each year to children 6 years and older. The Elementary children are tested at the end of the first and third terms. Graduating Casa children are tested towards the end of the third term. This test is administered only as a recognizable grading of appropriate movement to, and a record for, alternative educational settings. This test absolutely does not test the true academic achievements of children in Montessori settings.

DAYCARE

Daycare is available during the following times: **7:30 am - 8:15 am & 4:30 pm - 5:30 pm**

Please note that Daycare from 8:15-8:45am and from 4-4:30pm is complimentary. Daycare Tickets are available in denominations of 1 hour, 5 hours and 10 hours. A late fee of \$10.00 per 15 minutes will be charged for children still in Daycare after 5:30pm and is payable immediately to the daycare provider. Tickets must be presented at drop-off and pick-up time in payment for the time used. If Daycare tickets are not purchased, billed Daycare at month end is at a higher charge.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION

Should a governmental issued emergency evacuation (e.g. nuclear) be required, children will be transported by whatever means available (bus, staff car, parent car, etc.) to the area designated at that time. Unless you are in the immediate area and able to assist with emergency transportation, we suggest that you go directly to our designated site to avoid unnecessary traffic in the area. Please keep the phone lines open for emergency communication. Information will be broadcast on CHFI FM 98.1 and CKDO AM 1350, via email and/or phone call.

Local or school-initiated evacuations at the main Kington Road campus will use the church at Rosebank and Highway 2 as an offsite evacuation point.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

MLCP has emergency management policies and procedures which are posted on our website www.mlcp.ca for review. An emergency can mean an urgent or pressing situation requiring immediate action.

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS/SERIOUS OCCURRENCES AND ACCIDENTS

Accidents/injuries are documented in the accident book at the time of occurrence and copies forwarded home. There is, located in each building, a book allocated for accident/incident reporting. All accidents and mishaps will be noted for parental information and understanding. An accident report will be completed and a copy forwarded to the parent. In the event of more serious injury, you will be notified by phone. Should the child require medical attention he/she will be transported to the most convenient hospital according to EMS and parents will meet a staff member there. For this reason, especially, we need contact changes as soon as they occur. New concussion policies require medical permission for return to school.

A serious occurrence is a situation in which a staff, child or person on site is impacted in a way that extremely affects the normal procedures of the day causing interruption to the health, safety or wellbeing of the individual. A serious occurrence for the purposes of the CCEYA mandates are as follows.

Categories and Definitions

- ❖ The death of a child that occurs while participating in the daily activities or on the property of MLCP or at home.
- ❖ Any alleged or abuse/mistreatment of a child that occurs while participating in the daily activities of MLCP. Abuse in the form of physical force or action injuring a child, neglect of basic needs, emotional abuse including teasing, belittling, rejecting and exposure to domestic violence or sexual abuse.

- ❖ A life-threatening injury or illness.
- ❖ Any situation where a child/person is missing/missing and found or is temporarily unsupervised.
- ❖ Any disaster causing unplanned disruptions, such as a fire, flood, gas leak, carbon monoxide detection, outbreak, lockdown, other emergency relocation or temporary closure.

Each situation will be accessed for safety and the needed immediate responses. Police, Fire, Medical care, CAS, Poison Control @ 9-1-1. Emergency procedures are to be followed as needed or instructed in each instance. Emergency contacts are posted beside each phone.

Serious occurrences will be reported to the Ministry, through CCLS and DRHD within 24 hours. The parents will be notified of the occurrence. A (non identifying) summary report will be visibly posted for a minimum of 10 days and updated as new information becomes available.

By reading and signing off on this General Information and Guidelines policy you will hereby release and agree to indemnify MLCP, its teachers, administrators, agents and employees from any and all actions, causes of actions, claims and demands for damages, indemnity, costs, interest, loss or injury of every nature and kind whatsoever and howsoever, which you have had, may now have or may hereafter have, in your personal capacity or on behalf of your child, in any way relating to or arising from your child's enrolment or participation in MLCP, all MLCP activities and events, including all excursion-related activities and events, and any communicable illness that may be contracted on school premises, provided MLCP complies with all applicable laws.

The Serious Occurrence Policy will be reviewed by staff at the beginning of each year, when revisions are made and at any time deemed important for an additional review.

In the case of an emergency situation requiring extended school closure the following will apply:

- ❖ Where possible, students will move to an online learning scenario created to, as closely as possible, match classroom learning. Younger students, less able to cope online, will be accommodated as possible.
- ❖ In such a force majeure situation, adjustments to tuitions may not be possible.

FEES

School Fees are annual but may be broken up over payment periods. Fees cover the academic portion of the day with daycare and lunches being additional charges. Late fees do apply for late payment. It is our policy to receive payment in advance of the month. E-transfers are now accepted at mlcpfees@gmail.com – please see the payment options and indicate your payment method on the Annual Sign Off Form. Please note that, at this time, MLCP is not enrolled in the Canada-Wide Early Learning & Child Care initiative (WELCC).

MLCP runs on a 12-month calendar year. We offer a 10-month Montessori Academic Programme between September and June and an eight week Summer Camp Programme, for interested families, with students under 6 years of age through July and August.

There are five weeks of designated holiday time when the school is closed - two weeks in December, one week in March and one week at the end of June and August. We do close for statutory holidays. Please see the annual calendar on the website or forwarded fridge magnet for specific dates each year.

There will be no adjustments to fees in the case of any additional time away during the school year. Students withdrawn before the year-end are required to give two months' notice or two month's fees – other than in the event of fee pre-payment (see fee schedule).

All students leaving MLCP are required to provide academic forwarding information so that files may be transferred to the applicable school.

As per your prospectus package and our website, the admission procedure requires an on-site visit where the programme information package and facility are discussed and viewed. Parents are encouraged to thoroughly review information before we finalize admission.

FIRE DRILL/EVACUATIONS

These are held monthly in an effort to familiarize the children with escape routes and associated information. Your support and encouragement at home are especially important at the beginning of the year when younger children, despite explanation, may be scared by the noise and change in routine. Footwear must be worn at all times as these are held throughout the year.

IMMUNIZATIONS

Students in Ontario are required to submit proof of immunization upon registration. Please use the link on our website to download the required form for the Health Department and submit with application form. Updates, as required, must be forwarded to the Health Department and the school. Students not receiving immunizations must complete a standardized industry approved Statement of Medical Exemption form available through the Ministry of Health.

LABELLING

Please ensure that all bedding, clothing and items from home are labelled. Bedding (something to cover with and something to lie on) will be used for the week and sent home each Friday for laundering. The Elementary uniforms especially, being identical, must be labelled. While there will be the inevitable lost articles, clear labelling does assist in faster return.

LOST AND FOUND

All lost and found articles not claimed at the end of each term will be delivered to charitable organizations.

LUNCHESES

Lunches and snacks are prepared on site by our culinary staff at Kingston Road and by an area restaurant at Liverpool. We do not serve pork and do prepare halal and vegetarian meals as needed. Menus are posted on the main foyer notice board, in each building and on our website.

Elementary students not using the hot lunch programme may utilize the microwave. Other students are required to bring warmed lunches in an appropriate container. Each family is responsible for maintaining necessary safety temperatures for home lunches. Ice packs, frozen juice boxes or water bottles are all good options. We are unable to heat lunches for the CASA students. Students under 4 years of age are required to use the school lunch program.

Children are encouraged to eat lunches provided by parents – any uneaten portions are sent home.

While MLCP works hard to meet the individual needs of each family, there may be situations when food substitutions from home are necessary.

Please ensure that lunches are nutritionally balanced as required by the Ministry of Health. Carbonated drinks are not encouraged. For the younger children, may we suggest the smaller/half size juice boxes. Often, large portions of juice boxes are thrown away, being simply too much to consume at one sitting and difficult to return home. Lunchtime staff will contact parents if we see ongoing or consistent struggles with a particular child and their lunch.

Please note that the school is a **“nut aware environment”** for allergy related reasons. Therefore, please confirm that packed lunches from home contain nut free products. Alternate nut butters including Nutella are **NOT** allowed on school property. Products containing nuts, as well as lunch box meals from home are carefully monitored by the school.

From an environmental aspect, may we ask that lunches be as **“undisposable”** as possible. Plastic re-usable containers would be most appreciated.

Monthly hot dog/grilled cheese or pizza lunches are offered on alternate months and usually on a Wednesday. Interest slips containing information and cost will be sent home prior to the lunches, for your completion. Please note that this payment only applies to students over 4 years of age and who are not on the hot lunch programme – form return is still encouraged.

MEDICAL NEEDS

MLCP is an inclusive, supportive environment. Children with medical needs, with which we can confidently cope, are welcomed. Individualized plans prepared with parents create a safe and informed environment.

MEDICATION

Medication can be administered only if noted in the medication booklet and on the notice board with parental documentation to the prescribed patient. Any prescription medication can only be administered as written on the original container or with a doctor's written instruction.

Emergency dosages of antihistamines, fever reducers or pain relievers, etc. can be administered with signed consent as needed and only if provided by the parent. We suggest parents, particularly of younger students, store a fever/pain reducer and an antihistamine with the student's name clearly noted at school. In the event of these being needed, we can only administer labelled medication sent from home with parental signature to the applicable student.

Standing medications require a specific form and should be updated as needed i.e. puffers, epi-pens, insulin etc. As such, we do suggest that you keep a supply at school to be stored with the classroom teacher.

Medications of any kind (prescribed or over the counter) may not be stored in backpacks or lunch bags nor carried by the student but must be stored with the classroom teacher in the emergency bag or the fridge.

A reminder that children who are unwell must remain at home until symptom free for 24 hours or 48 hours if stomach related.

OFF SITE ACTIVITIES

Parental permission is required for all field trips. Forms will be sent home, and a prompt response is appreciated. Forms are also required for offsite times for Elementary students, irregular lunches and some Elementary gym activities, etc.

Offsite experiences are important for all our children. Students and staff are transported by chartered bus, school van or occasionally staff car to designated venues. Students may join the field trip with the forwarded information form returned dated and with parent signature. Fees to cover the activity and transportation will be part of the permission form.

OFFICE

Office hours are from 8:30am-4:30pm. Immediate connection or response between 11:30am and 1:30pm may be difficult as all staff assist with lunch. The answering machine will pick up messages during these hours and at any time that phone lines are busy. We endeavour to return calls as soon as possible. Communication via email is also returned in as timely a manner as possible.

OUTSIDE TIME

The Health Department stipulates that the children must be outside each day for fresh air, weather permitting. Children **MAY NOT REMAIN** inside. We operate on the assumption that if a child is well enough to be at school, they are well enough to be outside. We are not staffed for alternative situations. Outside time in colder weather is adjusted according to the children's comfort levels. We suggest extra clothing be kept at school especially during winter. Recognize that for health reasons, fresh air and socialization are most important and puddles, mud and "wetness" are part of our seasonal Canadian lifestyle.

PARENT CONCERNS AND ISSUES

We offer a transparent process for parents/guardians, MLCP and staff to use when parents/guardians bring forward issues/concerns. Parental concerns will be taken seriously and addressed within the shortest time frame possible. We ask that parents confidently bring their issues to our attention so resolution and understanding allow positive movement forward.

We suggest that if the issue concerns a student - addressing the concerns with the classroom teacher - if a positive conclusion cannot be reached, please bring the issue verbally or in documented format to the office. After discussion with, recognition of, and understanding from all involved a mutually agreeable resolution can be decided upon.

If the issue concerns a staff member – please bring the concerns to the office where again, discussion, information gathering and resolutions can be discussed.

Where immediate attention cannot be attributed - MLCP commits to a 24-hour maximum of recognition and discussion of the concern.

Students, staff and parents are expected to be courteous, respectful and supportive at all times.

Discussion about students or classroom management should take place with the classroom teacher first. Conversations with parents about students must be discussed with the Head Teacher prior to or as soon after as possible. If resolution is not achieved, the conversation should be brought to the attention of the office. Please see the Parental Issues and Concerns Policy for more detailed information.

PARENTAL PERMISSION

Children will not be released to other than a parent without written authorization. If there are a number of people who will be picking up your child, please document the names in a permanent note and, where possible, make introductions prior to the first pick-up. If our MLCP staff is not familiar with the person picking up your child, picture ID will need to be shown before we release your child into their care.

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents and guardians have an important role in the education of their children and can help school staff in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students. Parent responsibilities should include but are not limited to the following as per the “Rights of the Child” as mandated in the Ontario’s code of conduct for the education sector:

- ❖ Parents are expected to have their child(ren) at school, ready to begin at the assigned times, picked up on time and ensure that their child(ren) attend school regularly.
- ❖ Lunches, should they be sent from home, be nutritionally balanced and nut free.
- ❖ Students should be suitably attired each day in their uniform or clothing without any offensive or damaging depictions.
- ❖ Parents are expected to be unimpaired by drugs or alcohol when dropping off and picking up their child(ren). We are unable to release to a parent who appears debilitated in any way.
- ❖ Inform the school about their child(ren)'s absence or late arrival.
- ❖ Encourage and help their child(ren) follow the rules of behaviour and support staff in managing issues which may arise.
- ❖ Are engaged in their child's schoolwork and progress and communicate regularly with the school.
- ❖ Recognize that the education of each child is the joint responsibility of the parent, student, faculty and school community and that working cooperatively is in the best interest of the child.
- ❖ Treat members of MLCP staff and fellow parents in a professional and respectful manner.
- ❖ Exhibit a good example for students in their conduct, language and behaviour while on school property or at school sponsored activities.
- ❖ Seek to clarify a child’s version of events with the school’s view in order to avoid misunderstanding and to bring about a successful resolution to any dispute.
- ❖ Contact the school directly when you have a question or need clarification of a school matter rather than depending upon the interpretation of parents or other non-official school sources.
- ❖ Refrain from negative gossip or unsubstantiated criticism that disparages the reputation of the school or its employees, including on social media sites and also refrain from using social media to fuel discontent or criticism of individual school employees, other parents, students, or school programs or services.
- ❖ A parent cannot be prevented from entering the premises or accessing their child unless it is believed that the parent doesn’t have a legal right of access, the parent could be dangerous to the child(ren), staff, other parents or premises or is behaving in a debilitated/disruptive manner.
- ❖ Refuse to comply with any reasonable request from a school employee in the performance of his/her duties.

PARENT-TEACHER MEETINGS / REPORT CARDS

Formalized parent-teacher meetings are scheduled twice per year in Term I and Term II. Please watch the main foyer notice board for all upcoming dates. Report cards are issued in December, March and June for the Elementary students and June for the Casa and Pre-Casa children. Parent Teacher meeting documentations are forwarded at Term end with all pre-elementary students. Parent Information Meetings, Parent Teacher Association Meetings, Monday Memos, observation opportunities and daily interactions all provide a means of keeping parents aware of school activities.

Please refrain as much as possible from engaging the staff in unscheduled lengthy conversations at other times. While the children are on the premises (7:30 am – 5:30 pm), they must be our primary concern. Should you wish to “touch base” with a teacher, please do so through a scheduled telephone call, email or interview, which we will happily arrange.

MLCP PROGRAM STATEMENT

MLCP’s interpretation of Montessori pedagogy and programming is consistent with the Minister of Education’s Policy Statement as set out in “How Does Learning Happen (HDLH)?” for our younger students. It is important to note that Montessori pedagogy often describes children’s activities as ‘work’ where HDLH describes children’s activity as ‘play’ but the activities, as experienced by a child, are one in the same.

This program statement will be reviewed with childcare staff and volunteers annually or whenever an amendment is made. The Program Statement sign off sheet will be signed each academic year, or whenever changes are made and at the start of employment.

MLCP holds the view that all children are competent, capable, curious and rich in potential, in agreement with HDLH.

This Program Statement describes our goals for students at MLCP and the guidelines that we implement to meet those goals.

We promote the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of the children in our care by diligently meeting all the requirements of ONTARIO REGULATION 137/15. Registration forms include all requirements for individualized information. Students not receiving immunizations must submit the Medical Exemption Form available from the Ministry of Health website.

MLCP is licensed through CCEYA for students under four only. We are registered with the Ministry of Education as a Private School for students ages 4 through Grade 8. We are not a part of the Ministry’s fee reduction program.

As per the Smoke Free Ontario Act, tobacco, medical marijuana and electronic cigarettes are not permitted on the premises.

We support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, child care providers and staff by communicating, promoting and adhering to our ‘Values’ and our ‘Code of Conduct.’ These are communicated in our staff policies and in the General Information and Guidelines handbook. They are applied to all members of the MLCP community – staff, students, parents, volunteers, and interns.

We encourage the children to interact and communicate in a positive way and we support their ability to self-regulate by having mixed-age Montessori communities where children remain with the same adults for three years where possible. This provides many opportunities for interactions with children older and younger than themselves, with adults and through the opportunities in watching staff behaviours and reactions. Positive terminology and opportunities for supported problem solving are part of each day. We also have a Discipline Contract that is applied consistently throughout the Elementary level but amended according to the maturity of the younger children.

Prohibited Practices are never condoned – we encourage positive, supportive interaction with the students rather than negative or punitive approaches. No staff, volunteer or intern at MCLP shall engage in any of the practices mentioned below:

- a) corporal punishment of the child;
- b) physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent;
- c) locking the exits of the child care centre or home child care premises for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is

- required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures;
- d) use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth;
 - e) depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; or
 - f) inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

We foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry by having fully equipped Montessori environments where many activities are present for the full range of ages in each room. There are activities that assist children to become independent, to assist in care of the self, care of the environment and care of others (Grace and Courtesy). Activities are encouraged that explore and refine the senses as well as encouraging the discovery of sequencing and order. Activities to increase vocabulary, encourage discussion, explore sounds, and begin to develop the process of writing and reading are also presented. Activities to develop number sense, numeracy, understanding of large quantities, the mathematical operations, geometry and even rudimentary algebra concepts are offered. Many activities to introduce the cultural variations in our world are shared, along with geography, history and science exercises. In addition, there are activities for cutting, colouring, painting, exploring colour, shape and texture, pasting, etc. Children understand where everything is kept and they are able to choose, work with and return things when tasks are completed independently or with their friends.

We provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences. All Montessori materials are introduced to a student by an adult or by another child, and while the Montessori adults are always observing to see what support each child might need, they are very sensitive to allowing children to use their own initiative-resulting in students being deeply engaged and peaceful in the work that they choose. Staff are always trying to find exactly the right moment to introduce something new. It is important that they have enough time to master an activity but are also always being gently challenged.

We plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development is supported by using the Montessori curriculum and materials that have been proven through research to be effective with children from all socio-economic and cultural groups. Children are all individual beings and Montessori can effectively reach students at all developmental levels within each group and, as such, encourages and supports inclusivity of children who can benefit from our program and materials.

We incorporate indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest and quiet time, into the day, and give consideration to the individual needs of the children by allowing the children to manage a great deal of their day. Children can choose to move about the class carrying things or building things, or sit quietly at a table moving intricate pieces. Older students are involved in their academic placing and evaluations. Children can choose to have snack or a drink when they are hungry or thirsty; they do not have to wait for the whole group. We have large, well-equipped, outdoor playgrounds that children access in groups each day.

We foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children by having regular conversations with parents to explain what is happening in the classrooms, inviting parents in to observe their children, forwarding weekly memos, hosting monthly PTA meetings, and sending home mini observation notices. Annual report cards are prepared for each child with term end reports for the Elementary students. Parent Teacher interviews in Term I and II allow for ongoing interaction with parents. Parents can access their child's teacher by leaving a voicemail or by chatting briefly at the door during arrival and dismissal. We also have many school events where the parents of the students can meet and discuss their child's experience with parents of older children.

We involve local partners through community service with our Upper Elementary students (helping in local businesses and retirement homes), food drives and fund raisers. We welcome specialists from CCAC and other such agencies and find spaces for them to work with our children, meeting with the parents and these specialists as necessary. We liaise with The Bridge - Church for All Nations which serves as our Emergency Refuge.

We support our staff with continuous learning, offering subsidized professional development opportunities throughout the year including First Aid and CPR training. MLCP is a member in good standing in a number of organizations offering a variety of relevant seminars and workshops which staff is encouraged and supported to attend. Changes and implementations are communicated via staff meetings and staff memos. Weekly memos cover past events and upcoming dates and staff room postings ensure another means of communication. Annual "beginning of the year" staff meetings ensure upcoming goals and expectations, support for achievement, and general event dates for the year. The office offers an open door policy that gives staff easy access for immediate issues which may arise.

Should any differences among staff members occur they should be dealt with away from the public arena by confronting and discussing the situation with the person involved, discussing differences with the supervisor – i.e. Head Teacher, and discussion with Principal or Vice Principal as necessary.

Parents are encouraged to bring concerns, questions or issues to Classroom teachers or the office. Only when aware of situations can we work together to better them.

The “beginning of the year” meeting allows an opportunity for staff to complete any annual training updates and review and complete all necessary documentation required. This also is the time that compliance issues can be generally addressed while specific compliance instances are discussed at the time of infraction.

Parent evaluations and student-teacher evaluations are conducted regularly. Parent concerns, requests or comments are welcomed at any time. Inter staff as well as admin evaluations are conducted regularly allowing the ongoing monitoring of compliance with the Program Statement. We document and review the impact of the above strategies on the children and their families through observation, conversation, meetings, surveys, etc.

PROHIBITED/FORBIDDEN PRACTICES

MLCP staff, volunteers and students are expected to be familiar with the prohibited practices and support the implementation protocols. Adults will engage in positive, responsive interactions, understanding that this is critical for children’s overall learning, development, health and well-being. Variances from the norm in dealing with the students, parents or staff members must be dealt with professionally.

These provisions forbid physical punishment and other harmful disciplinary practices in order to protect the emotional and physical well-being of children. They set out clear direction regarding prohibitive practices to support the overall well-being of children.

Young children benefit from an affirming approach that encourages positive interactions with other children and with adults.

By following Montessori’s guidelines and the practices suggested by HDLH, the following can be managed quite easily. Prohibited practices include:

- ❖ corporal punishment of the child including hitting, spanking, slapping and pinching
- ❖ physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a highchair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent
- ❖ locking the exits of the child care centre or home child care premises for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee’s emergency management policies and procedures
- ❖ use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth
- ❖ depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding
- ❖ inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will

No employee, volunteer, or student who is on an educational placement with MLCP shall engage in any of the prohibited practices set out above with respect to a child receiving child care. Should these be observed or reported they will be documented, discussed and carefully monitored moving forward (see Staff Accident & Incident Occurrence Report).

Should same behaviours be reported or observed, staff may be required to attend pertinent workshops or seminars, they may be removed from their area of responsibility or, depending on the severity, suspended without pay or terminated.

Blatant intentional physical harm to a child will result in immediate termination.

P.T.A. INFORMATION

MLCP has hosted a Parent Teacher Association since its inception. Meetings are held about once a month usually via Zoom. Please refer to your calendar for dates. While the P.T.A. does some fundraising, this evening is also an opportunity for

problem solving, idea presenting and concern or comment sharing. Your participation is encouraged whenever you are able to attend. The P.T.A. is an excellent source of information and parental contact.

REST TIME

Younger students are encouraged to balance each day with a nap or rest time. Quiet space and cots or cribs are provided for sleep, rest or quiet play as determined for each child. While parent instructions are always closely observed we need to be directed by the child's needs each day and provide for them as needed. Rest periods should not exceed two hours of time.

Parents will be consulted respecting their child's sleeping arrangements at the time of enrolment and at any other necessary time and made aware of MLCP's nap time protocols to ensure that the optimum sleep time arrangements are followed.

As per CCEYA regulations, sleeping infants will be carefully monitored. Nap time will be a soothing, peaceful time with music and rubbed backs or rocking as requested by parent or needed by child. They will be monitored for comfort. Infants who are unable to roll independently or are under 12 months will be placed on their backs. Infants may sleep for approximately two hours and are awoken gently and with respect.

Assigned cribs and cots will be labelled and occupants of the sleep room noted at its entrance.

Monitoring sheets will be prepared listing all students, who will be checked at certain intervals and initialled by the staff doing the check.

Licensed students and/or their parents may decide whether a child naps or partakes of quiet activity.

Should there be significant sleep patterns or behaviour changes noted with any napper, these will be relayed to parents/guardians along with any adjustments made to the regular routine to make the child's sleeping experience as pleasant as possible (raised bed, additional blanket, etc.). As always on-going communication with the parents is of utmost importance especially for our youngest students.

MLCP strives to create a program making all parts of the child's day a positive experience.

SCHOOL CLOSURE

In the event that the School needs to be closed (e.g. weather), information will be relayed on CHFI FM 98.1 and CKDO AM 1350 and via email.

SCHOOL HOURS

In the best interests of the students beginning their day together with an introductory sharing of information, we ask that you adhere to specified times. The academic day runs from 8:45am – 4:00pm. We ask for an 8:30am drop off for a timely 8:45am start. A daily schedule is posted in each classroom,

Recess periods are scheduled throughout the day as regulated by CCEYA and the Department of Health.

SICKNESS

Please ensure that the Ministry of Health forms are completed and returned as soon as possible. Should a child be uncomfortably ill they will be guided from their group and you will be contacted and asked to do a pick-up. A reminder that children who are unwell must remain home until symptom and fever free for 24 hours or 48 hours if stomach related. We do require a Doctor's note if a child is away for an extended period of time. It is the parent's responsibility to forward updated immunizations to the Ministry of Health and to MLCP.

Please note that new Health regulations regarding concussion management state that a child receiving a blow to the head must be seen by a doctor before a return to school.

SMOKING

The Smoke Free Ontario Act prohibits the smoking of tobacco, medical marijuana and electronic cigarettes anywhere on MLCP properties.

MLCP promotes a healthy smoke free environment. Smoking or vaping is not permitted on the school premises or in the presence of the children. This includes off-site activities such as field trips. Failure to comply with this policy could result in disciplinary action.

SNACKS

As required, MLCP provides snacks for the students mid-morning, mid-afternoon, and before and after school. Snacks usually cover two food groups. Everyone is encouraged to try/lick/smell food items each time and opportunities are always ongoing to encourage taste tests of previously declined items.

SUMMER CAMP

Summer Camp is offered each year for eight weeks in July and August for interested families with students under 6 years of age. Information and registration are usually available by March of each year.

VOLUNTEER STUDENT SUPERVISION

Volunteers and students are welcomed at MLCP. As per our policies – MLCP will obtain criminal reference checks and a lead staff will conduct tours and review all pertinent policies prior to the start date. Volunteers and students will not be left unsupervised and will be monitored and mentored by the head teacher in the classroom.

We welcome volunteers, Montessori and ECE interns and high school students needing community service hours. We support not only the community involvement but the shared learning opportunities.

WAIT LIST PRIORITY

Prospective parents are always welcomed in learning about MLCP. In the event that classrooms/age groups are full, parents are directed towards the option of joining a waitlist. There is no charge associated with being placed on the MLCP waitlist.

Waitlist acceptance involves the completed registration form so that pertinent information along with contact information is readily available. Prospective parents are accepted to the list, notified of their number placement, notified that full day spaces and siblings are given priority and are notified of the first possible absolute day of acceptance. At the point of acceptance, the registration fee and all additional information will be required. Parents are asked to maintain contact with MLCP as to the waitlist placement movement before the suggested availability date. Should a space become available before their absolute date, they are contacted by MLCP administration and offered the spot. At that point, a prospective parent can choose to take the space, remain on the waitlist, refuse the space or ask to be removed.

During the academic year, changes or updates to this document will be reflected on the mlcp.ca website and parents notified as they occur. This document, in particular, is updated each summer for the upcoming academic year.

**Please note that MLCP's Policies and Procedures, and any updates, are available online.
Please ensure that you have read all pertinent information before signing and submitting
the MLCP Annual Sign Off Form found on our website www.mlcp.ca**