



Children's Own School

Parent Handbook

2026-2027

86 Main Street • Winchester, MA 01890 • 781-729-2689
information@childrensown.org • www.childrensownschool.org

Welcome to all new and returning families!

We hope you will find our Parent Handbook both useful and accessible. It is a comprehensive overview of your child's school day and our procedures and policies.

Children's Own School has been a Montessori tradition since 1942. We are members of the *Montessori Schools of Massachusetts*, the *American Montessori Society* and the *Association of Independent Schools of New England*. We are licensed by and operate under the guidance of the *Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care*.

Dr. Montessori's time-tested curriculum

- Addresses each child's physical, social, cognitive, and emotional development.
- Encourages creative thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making skills.
- Offers freedom of choice and opportunities for self-directed learning.
- Provides a multi-age classroom environment where children progress at their own pace, while younger children learn from older classmates who serve as role models and leaders.
- Fosters independence, self-confidence, and a lifelong love of learning.

Thank you for choosing Children's Own School! We look forward to partnering with families to build an inclusive community based on trust and mutual respect.

Our School	1
Our Programs	5
Communication	8
Daily Schedule and Logistics	10
Car Line Guidance	12
Everyday Life	15
Snack/Lunch	15
Clothing	16
Toileting	18
Traditions	20
School Support Events	20
Enrollment	22
Fundraising/Development	25
Health and Safety	26
Parental Rights	30
Medication Consent Form (printable)	31

Our School

Mission

Our home-like community welcomes all children to grow at a just-right pace—fostering independence, igniting curiosity, and inspiring a lifetime love of learning. We cherish childhood as a special place in time.

How We Live Our Mission (COS Montessori Values)

Respect for the Child

Educating the whole child, encouraging a connection with nature, and helping children appreciate and enjoy the present moment.

Fostering Independence

Providing a thoughtfully prepared environment, guidance, and opportunities for freedom of movement and choice within clear, respectful limits to support children's independence.

Love of Learning

Through observation, we follow the child's natural curiosity and development, nurturing their innate love of learning and purposeful exploration.

Community and Peace

Supporting children in constructing themselves within a community, becoming valued members of society, and contributing to a more peaceful world.

Hands-on Learning

Children learn through multi-sensory, hands-on experiences. Montessori materials invite exploration and active engagement, allowing children to internalize abstract concepts in concrete, meaningful ways.

Diversity Statement

Children's Own School desires to build and maintain a welcoming and inclusive environment in which children of diverse backgrounds, abilities, and interests can develop and learn. Our firm commitment to racial, cultural, and economic pluralism is central to our work as a school. Our children, families, faculty, and broader community reflect diversity: we are of assorted races, ethnicities, genders, and

sexual orientations. Our community includes a range of family structures, beliefs, and physical abilities as well as learning styles.

Classroom Teams

Our teachers foster children's natural curiosity by preparing the learning environment to encourage optimal development. Classroom teams are composed of two adults: a Montessori guide (also called lead teacher) and a classroom assistant. In addition, float teachers spend time in each classroom and substitute when needed. All staff members are certified in infant, child, and adult First Aid and CPR.

Our lead teachers hold Montessori credentials specific to their age level. They respect children as individuals and strive to prepare an environment that enables each child to connect to productive work. They support children as they develop concentration, self-control, and progress towards independent decision making.

Teaching teams work cooperatively to prepare and maintain an orderly, attractive, and joyful learning environment. Assistants provide another pair of observant eyes and ears supporting our young learners, modeling courteous and respectful behavior, and contributing to the warm, supportive, calm atmosphere that is the hallmark of Montessori classrooms and our school.

Administrative Team

The Head of School works with the Board, teachers, and families to provide a program that embodies the school's philosophy and mission, promotes the strength of a positive community, and strives to improve the financial and physical conditions of the school. They manage daily administration and supervise the faculty, including coordinating the implementation of the Montessori program across classrooms. The Head of School ensures compliance with state licensing mandates and provides support for classrooms, staff, and children when needed. The Head of School supports and guides the classroom teams to help meet the specific needs of individual children and meets with families as needed.

The Director of Strategic Initiatives and Marketing collaborates with the Head of School to align their work with a shared vision to uphold the school's philosophy and mission. The Director of Strategic Initiatives and Marketing manages the marketing and development of the school, leads the admissions process, and fosters a strong sense of community among parents, alumni, faculty, and students. They support the teachers and children as needed. The Director of Strategic Initiatives and Marketing assumes a key role in the development and management of the school's budget on an annual basis.

The Literacy Director works to ensure a rich language experience for all children and supports environments where the Montessori language curriculum can be implemented with fidelity to Montessori philosophy. The Literacy Director works directly with the Kindergarteners on language and literacy skills using the Orton-Gillingham method, based on the science of reading. The Literacy

Director can provide an additional professional opinion regarding the general needs of a classroom or the specific needs of individual children and meets with families as needed.

The Office Manager coordinates with the entire school community to help daily operations run smoothly. The Office Manager is responsible for tuition invoicing, payroll and benefits, accounts payable, cash flow, the school's financial systems, and coordinating maintenance and facilities work. The Office Manager works with the Board Treasurer, the Director of Strategic Initiatives, and the Head of School on the annual budget and prepares the annual audit.

Parent Committee

The Parent Committee organizes and hosts special events throughout the year to connect the families in our community. The committee of volunteers keeps parents informed of upcoming events, coordinates the sale of COS swag, and coordinates classroom contributions for teacher appreciation. All contributions by families—volunteering time and/or monetary—are voluntary and gratefully appreciated. The Parent Committee and its volunteers are instrumental in organizing an auction each spring, which helps support scholarship, professional development, enhancements to programming, and classroom materials.

Governance

Children's Own School (COS) is incorporated as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and managed by a Board of Directors. The Board upholds the school's mission, maintains and passes bylaws, and engages in strategic planning for COS's future success, while also determining tuition and making major financial and policy decisions. The Board oversees the finances of the Corporation and has all the powers of the Corporation. The Board is responsible for appointing, supporting, and supervising the Head of School.

COS Board members are not charged with oversight of day-to-day school management. Please address questions and concerns directly with the Head of School.

Communication

Our Office Manager manages email lists and may send essential and/or time-sensitive messages via email. Parent contact information is provided in the Class Lists and Family Directory via *Transparent Classroom*. This personal contact information is solely for the use of COS families—and is not to be distributed or used by other individuals or organizations. Before sending any emails to the COS community/individual classrooms, etc., please send a draft to the Head of School for review/approval. To support a respectful community, sensitive concerns regarding COS policies, teachers, staff, or students should not be shared through broadcast emails, social media, or public websites.

Code of Conduct

Children's Own School is a community that strives to provide opportunities for each child, teacher, parent, and staff member to be a successful and valued member. Our expectations for the children

are to take care of themselves, take care of others, and take care of our school environment. By fostering a culture of respect, we provide countless examples for our children to emulate. With consistency, we are guiding children to become productive and successful members of the greater world community. Our expectation is for all adults to support the Montessori lessons of grace and courtesy:

- Treat all people with courtesy and respect;
- Address conflicts directly in a calm and private manner;
- Respect the privacy and dignity of adults and children;
- Refrain from gossip.

Parent Conduct

Our community thrives on the principles of grace, courtesy, and respect. Your electronic signature acknowledging receipt and reading of this handbook indicates your willingness to abide by the guidelines above. Parents who stray from the guidelines may be asked to meet with the administrative team. We recognize that everyone has challenging moments and may make mistakes; at the same time, we are committed to addressing patterns of behavior that can lead to disrespect.

Privacy

Please help us maintain the mutual trust and respect we all need to keep our community healthy by safeguarding the privacy of children, families, and staff. Passing on confidential, damaging, or hurtful information is not acceptable.

Conflicts

Conflicts between parents or between parents and staff should be addressed in a calm and private manner, preferably in person or with a respectful note. Meetings will be held by appointment or at a mutually convenient time.

When a parent has a question, concern, or grievance, we encourage them to address it directly with the appropriate person, as outlined below.

- For program, student, and classroom issues:
 1. Child's teacher
 2. Head of School
- For General School Operations and Policy Issues:
Office Manager or Head of School

Our Programs

Toddler: 22 months-3 years

Half Day: 8:30 am - 12:00 pm

Full Day: 8:30 am - 3:00 pm

“Help me to help myself” is the mantra of the growing toddler.

Montessori toddler classrooms are simpler and slower-paced than the Montessori Primary rooms. Tables and chairs are smaller, and the teacher-child ratio is lower (2:9). It is a warm, supportive, and joyful classroom—with ample opportunity for singing, outdoor time, and physical movement.

Our program supports each child’s development of self-care skills—such as dressing and toileting—and promotes independence, language development, concentration, problem solving, visual discrimination, social-emotional skills, and physical coordination. Toddler Montessori materials are thoughtfully designed to align with toddlers’ developmental needs and to encourage purposeful activity.

Primary: 2.9-6 years

Half Day: 8:30 am - 12:00 pm

Full Day: 8:30 am - 3:00 pm

Extended Day (Limited enrollment): 8:30 am - 5:00 pm

Our Primary Program is designed specifically for children who are 2.9 years old through Kindergarten. In a carefully prepared Montessori environment, children receive individualized, sequential lessons that support the development of academic skills and independence. The Primary Program nurtures children throughout their preschool years and culminates in the Kindergarten year, when they take on leadership roles within the classroom and deepen their learning.

Because children stay in the same Primary classroom for their entire experience at COS, children develop close relationships. During the morning work cycle, children move freely between all areas of the classroom: Practical Life, Sensorial, Mathematics, and Language. Geography and Science are woven throughout the curriculum areas. Art, music, and storytelling round out the daily experience. Once children have been introduced to specific activities, they are free to independently explore the materials that appeal to them.

Children enrolled in the full-day program have lunch at school, recess, a rest time or nap if needed, and/or an afternoon Montessori work period, and a second opportunity for outdoor play—leaving school at 3:00 pm.

- **Limited Extended Day option from 8:30 am - 5:00 pm**

This program enrolls a maximum of 10 children. Families must elect this option when they enroll in our Primary program; it is a full-year commitment—not available to any child under three years of age by the start of the school year. There is no guarantee that your child will have a space and may be accepted for Full Day (3:00 dismissal). The option to transfer into this program during the year or from year-to-year is not guaranteed. If a family's needs change, the option to drop the program is permitted during the next year's re-enrollment period.

During the school day, all children enjoy the same Primary program. From 3:00 pm – 5:00 pm, children in Extended Day gather in the Blue Room. They enjoy a hearty afternoon snack, organized activities, free play, art, and circle time. When the weather permits, they spend ample time in free outdoor play.

Children must be 3 years old to enroll in this option and capable of regular, independent use of the toilet. Children enrolled in the after-school program must be able to follow adult directions and participate in the group activities as expected.

Kindergarten at Children's Own School

Kindergarten students must be 5 years old before September 1st. Unlike a traditional Kindergarten program, the final year of the Primary Program is a “capstone” experience. Our Montessori curriculum is thoughtfully designed to build upon each stage of a child's development. We do not offer a separate Kindergarten curriculum; rather, the Kindergarten year provides children with the opportunity for a full and enriching exploration of the Montessori Primary curriculum. This is a time when children truly blossom—gaining confidence in themselves, deepening their independence, and stretching the boundaries of their learning experience.

The Kindergarteners develop confidence as leaders and role models for the younger students. They apply the skills and knowledge gleaned in prior years to extend their work into more advanced mathematics and language activities. All the threads of the Montessori Primary program come together in their final year. They leave prepared to enter first grade. Early elementary academic skills, particularly reading, emerge at different times for children. That said, COS believes strongly that children should enter first grade with strong literacy skills. As such, our Literacy Specialist works with the Kindergarteners to ensure a successful foundation in the skills needed for decoding, encoding, and oral language. Our students typically enter first grade as practiced early readers with mathematical competencies and strong social/emotional skills.

Kindergarteners participate in Kindergarten-specific activities in addition to their work cycles in the classroom. Art, Music, and Kindergarten literacy programs are offered several times each week. Each year, they write a play, compose the music, and perform for the school community on the last day of school.

Special Programs

Throughout the school year, children may leave their classroom group to participate in special pull-out programs or events—such as Mass Audubon, special art, cooking projects, or gardening. We also enjoy going on nature walks in the nearby town forest. Anytime a special program involves leaving the school grounds, such as a nature walk, families will be informed in advance. When children participate in any special programs, they will always be with qualified COS staff.

Communication

Frequent and open communication between home and school is crucial to the effective functioning of the school and the well-being of each child. We value a strong home-school partnership. We use a variety of platforms to share the information you need in a clear and timely manner. Reading our Parent Handbook is essential for all families. Please refer first to the Parent Handbook during the school year if you have questions.

While frequent communication is important, there are times that are not appropriate to pass along information about your child to staff. Drop-off and pick-up are not ideal times for long conversations. These transition times require everyone to be fully focused on supervising children.

Contacting Your Child's Teacher

Please do not hesitate to call the office or email your child's classroom team with information concerning your child or to request a call back. Please understand that teachers are generally not available to answer or return calls and/or emails during classroom hours; they will be in contact as soon as possible. For more urgent messages, please contact the office. Please inform your child's teacher if there is a change in the home situation: death, divorce, relocation, a new baby, friends or relatives visiting, parent(s) traveling, a new caregiver, a change in pick up/drop off routine, or sleep disruptions due to fears or nightmares. Changes in a child's routine are often reflected in their behavior at school. The more information we have, the better we can support your child.

Contacting the Office

Most calls during school hours are answered in person. If you get the voicemail system during school hours, please wait a few minutes and try again or leave a message.

Contacting the Board

The Board is available to speak about school governance, finances, and school leadership. The Board is not involved in the day-to-day operation of the school. The Board can address questions about the mission and vision of the school and long-range strategic planning. They welcome your interest in serving on the Board of Directors and can inform you about the nomination process and the extent of the commitment of service. The Board can be contacted by email: board@childrensown.org.

Contacting the Parent Committee

The Parent Committee co-chairs are available to speak to parents about many different volunteer opportunities, including volunteering to help with fundraising, events, and whole school initiatives.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Formal conferences are held twice a year—Fall and Spring—in person, and families are encouraged to have all primary caregivers attend whenever possible. COS closes a half day and a full day for children on parent/teacher conference days. A written progress report is sent via Transparent Classroom two times a year to highlight your child's progress. Additional meetings may be set up with your child's teacher as needed.

Communication from School

We use email and newsletters as our primary means to communicate information that all families need to be aware of—such as upcoming school events. Each classroom team sends home regular newsletters to keep families informed about classroom activities, curriculum highlights, and upcoming events. In addition, the Head of School sends a monthly newsletter with school-wide updates, important announcements, community news, and information about upcoming programs and events.

Transparent Classroom is the online platform we use for enrollment documents, classroom record-keeping, progress reports, injury and incident reports, and family communication. Teachers may also share classroom updates and photos of children throughout the school year. All families are expected to create and maintain a Transparent Classroom account and to check it regularly for important school information, updates, and notifications. Please ensure that your contact information and required forms remain current throughout the year.

Children will occasionally be given notes to take home. These will be placed in the child's lunch box, backpack, or given to the person who picks up your child. A copy of notes sent home may also be sent via email.

Injury Reports

COS does not have a school nurse. When children are injured at school, teachers and other school staff are trained to care for minor illnesses and injuries. Any time your child is injured and requires first aid, care beyond first aid, or medical attention in an emergency situation, COS will send home an injury report through *Transparent Classroom*. We will always contact a parent/guardian for any injury that requires care beyond minor first aid.

Daily Schedule and Logistics

A typical day at Children's Own School:

Toddler Program

Arrival (outdoor)	8:30 am – 8:40 am
Outdoor Time	8:30 am – 9:30 am
Morning Work Cycle	9:30 am – 11:30 am
Half-day dismissal (side playground)	11:30 am - 12:00 pm
Lunch	12:00 pm – 12:30 pm
Nap	12:30 pm – 2:30 pm
Afternoon dismissal (side playground)	2:35 pm – 3:00 pm

Primary Program

Arrival (outdoor)	8:30 am – 8:40 am
Morning Work Cycle	8:30 am – 11:30 am
Half-day dismissal (front playground)	11:30 am - 12:00 pm
Lunch/Recess	11:30 am – 12:40 pm
Rest/nap (for those who do nap)	1:00 pm – 2:00 pm
Afternoon Work Cycle	12:45 pm – 2:30 pm
Afternoon dismissal (playgrounds)	2:35 pm – 3:00 pm
Extended Day Program	3:00 pm – 5:00 pm

Attendance: Why it Matters

Consistent attendance is important because young children thrive on routine. The children who benefit most from the prepared environment are those who attend regularly.

- A consistent routine provides security for the young child—building both comfort and confidence.
- Because your child's experience with classroom materials is cumulative, consistent attendance bolsters learning.
- Your own commitment to your child's presence in school affirms the importance of school and learning.
- Intermittent attendance can negatively affect both your child's adjustment to school and their learning.

Please schedule appointments with doctors, dentists, and other professionals outside classroom hours whenever possible. If your child will be late due to an appointment, please inform the office via phone or email the office and your classroom team ahead of time. **If you are unable to arrive before 9:30 am, half-day enrolled children will miss that day of school. Full Day and Extended Day children may arrive at 11:30 am for lunch/recess and the afternoon work cycle.** This policy includes late arrivals for appointments. **If you are dismissing your child for a morning appointment, and your child will not be returning before lunch (11:30), your child should remain home for the day.**

Getting to School on Time

School begins at 8:30 a.m., and a prompt arrival allows for the expected morning work cycle in the Montessori classroom. Out of respect for your own child, other children, and teachers, please help your child arrive at school on time. When younger children arrive late, it disturbs their sense of order—what is expected and how things are supposed to be. Late arrivals can often lead to difficult transitions to the classroom and disrupt the work of other children as well as the teacher. COS staff welcome children outside during our drop-off window from 8:30 – 8:40 a.m. and transition them to their classrooms. Parents and children say their “goodbyes” in the driveway. If you arrive after the drop-off period, please ring the doorbell by the front door. A staff member will arrive as soon as possible to welcome your child.

Drop-off Expectations

To help support a smooth and confident transition into the classroom, families typically say goodbye at the school entrance during drop-off. In our experience, most children recover from separation anxiety or a difficult drop-off quickly once in the classroom. A parent's presence can prolong big feelings—a quick drop-off is generally the best. We are well-versed in helping children transition. Please know that we will support your child to help them feel calm and secure. Please feel free to call the office if you would like to check on your child after a drop-off that may have been difficult.

If your child does not settle in the classroom (for example, persistent crying for a prolonged period of time) on any particular day, we may ask that someone come and pick up the child. If your child's transition to school is not improving with time, we will have a conversation on how to best support a successful transition routine to provide consistency and comfort.

Please allow/encourage your child to walk to the school entrance. This bit of independence is a confidence booster and an opportunity for your child to enter the school with friends. Being a Montessori parent means doing less for your child as they become capable, supporting their natural drive(s) to independence by showing and helping rather than doing. Please hold your child's hand when you are walking to the school entrance—this is a safety issue. Please supervise your child while waiting to enter the school.

- The ramp is not intended as a climbing structure, so we ask children to use it for walking only.
- We stay out of the garden beds so they can continue to grow and be cared for.

- In winter, snow and ice can be slippery, so we move carefully and stay close together when outdoors.
- Mobile phone use during drop-off and pick-up is strongly discouraged.

Please be mindful of our neighbors.

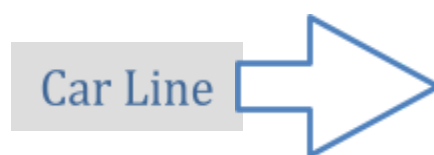
- Park courteously; do not make it difficult for neighbors to arrive at or leave their homes.
- Follow traffic laws.
- Drive as if your children live here.
- Do not block the shared driveway.
- Please shut off engines in the driveway.

Car Line Guidance (Morning drop-off and Half-Day dismissal)

We prefer that you use the car line as indicated below:



COS building



Morning Drop Off:

The car line begins on Main Street before the COS driveway entrance (on the Winchester side of the school). The entrance to the driveway will be blocked until 8:30 and then opened for cars to pull up to the yellow zone in the driveway, where a staff member will unbuckle and take your child out of the car and walk your child to the entrance. Families using the car line/driveway drop-off are asked to remain in their vehicles so we can keep the line moving safely and efficiently for everyone.

- Families waiting to pull into the driveway should form a line along Main Street until they are ready to pull into the COS driveway.
- Please pull up to the yellow zone and **turn off your engine**.

- Please do not get out of your car to unload your child(ren)—a staff member will take care of them and walk them to the school entrance.
- As children are dropped off, please pull out of the driveway to allow more cars to move into the driveway.
- **When you exit the COS driveway, you must turn right.**
- Any family anticipating a difficult drop-off should park and walk their child to school instead of using the car line.

Half-Day Dismissal for Cars Entering the Driveway:

- Cars will pull up to the Yellow line and **turn off engines (no idling, please).**
- Families can exit cars in the driveway to pick up their children.
- No cars will leave the driveway until it is clear of pedestrian traffic by the front playground and the Yellow Room (side) gate.
- Please be sure to hold your child's hand in the driveway and have your child walk scooters/bikes down the driveway to the sidewalk to be clear of all driveway car traffic.
- We ask that all pedestrians wait for cars to come to a complete stop.
- As with morning drop-off, there is a car line indicated by signs before the entrance to the driveway for cars to wait until they are able to enter the driveway.

***The driveway will be closed for cars during afternoon dismissal.**

***Please remember to turn off your car engine when dropping off or picking up your child—better for little lungs and our environment.**

Parking Options for Drop-Off

If you wish to park your car and walk your child up the driveway for drop-off, there are marked spots along Main Street. There are multiple crosswalks, including one right in front of COS, to safely cross.

Picking Up Your Child

We dismiss from our playgrounds unless extreme weather prohibits outside dismissal. Please come to the playground gate to pick up your child. Your classroom teacher will let you know which playground will be used for dismissal. Once the teacher has released your child, your child is under your supervision. Children are never allowed inside the building without adult supervision after they have been released to an authorized adult.

We expect all caregivers to be on time for pick-up—no later than 3:00 pm (full day); 12:00 pm (half day); 5:00 pm (Extended Day). In the event of an unavoidable delay, please call the school. Please be sensitive to your child's pick-up time. Children who have not been picked up on time will be waiting in the office. After three late Extended Day pick-ups past 5:00 pm, the child will be required to be picked up at 4:30 pm.

Special Circumstances Pick-Up

Pick-up by someone other than the parent/guardian or regular caregiver needs to be authorized daily unless they are on the list of approved adults to whom we may release your child (as indicated on your paperwork in Transparent Classroom). Please call or email if a friend, neighbor, new caregiver, or family member will be picking up your child. It is always best if your child's teachers are introduced ahead of time to someone other than yourself who will be picking up your child. Before releasing your child to anyone new/not familiar, teachers will check identification as a safety precaution.

Snow Days/Inclement Weather

Children's Own School will close for snowstorms and other severe weather whenever the Winchester Public Schools close. There are various listings on the websites, social media and TV. We will send an email to notify our families. The school may also close even though public schools are open, if the Head of School determines it is in the best interest of the children or the school to do so. Notification will be sent as early as possible.

If Winchester has a one-hour delay due to inclement weather, COS will also have a one-hour delay. However, if there is a two-hour delay in Winchester, our Half-Day program will be canceled. Occasionally, when severe weather develops during the school day, we may dismiss early. An all-school email will be sent out in this event.

We do not make up canceled school days at the end of the year.

Everyday Life

If your child has any food allergies or food sensitivities, please make this clear when filling out your paperwork. If special measures must be taken to protect your child, such as providing an EpiPen, please speak directly to your child's teachers and review the requirements in the Health and Safety Section. You will need to fill out an Individual Health Care Plan signed by your child's pediatrician and provide an EpiPen to be left at school, along with any other medications outlined for treatment. This must be completed before your child's first day. Please reach out to the Head of School for a form.

Snack

Each classroom offers a morning self-serve snack. We strive to provide a variety of healthy snack options and food preparation activities so that children may eat when they feel hungry throughout the morning work period.

Families will be assigned a snack day on a rotating basis. On your assigned day, you will receive a shopping basket along with a list of requested items to bring to the classroom the following Monday. These contributions help ensure that children have fresh and nutritious snacks to enjoy while participating in meaningful food preparation activities.

Classroom Food Preparation

As part of the Montessori Practical Life curriculum, each classroom offers food preparation activities for children. These activities are carefully prepared on individual trays and invite children to independently prepare a snack for themselves and the classroom community. Examples may include cutting bananas or cucumbers, spreading butter on bread, or preparing other simple snacks.

Water Bottles

Filtered water is available for children to drink throughout the day in each classroom in self-serve pitchers. Water bottles will be kept in a child's cubby and brought outside when the weather is hot. Some children use their water bottle at lunch, and some choose to pour their own from the classroom pitcher.

Lunch

Children staying for the afternoons bring their lunches. Children must be able to independently manage their lunch. Small sandwiches, baby carrots, cherry tomatoes, berries, cut fruit, cheese and crackers, peeled hard-boiled eggs, etc., are great options. Small individual containers that children can open and close independently are a better option than pre-packed food marketed as an individual serving. Bento boxes are a favorite for most families as they allow many choices for your child and can be opened easily by children.

Teachers encourage children to eat their lunches, but lunch is also a very social time in a preschool classroom! Any food not consumed will be sent home each day. Lunch boxes cannot be refrigerated at school, and we do not reheat food for lunches. Please use an insulated bag and cold pack if needed.

Nut Free Environment

We are a NUT-FREE school. Because people who are severely allergic can have an anaphylactic reaction to trace amounts of peanuts or tree nuts, we must request the cooperation of all COS families and staff. We ask everyone to make a conscious effort to keep peanut butter and any foods consisting of or containing peanuts or tree nuts away from our school and school grounds. Please do not use peanuts, peanut products, nuts, or nut products when preparing food that your child will bring to school, and be sure to check labels, as many children have reactions to foods that contain nuts—even if they are not in their own lunches.

- Please read ingredient labels on packaged foods.
- Any food sent to school to be shared with the class (weekly shopping basket) must have been made in a nut-free facility.
- Children are not allowed to share food during lunch.
- With the cooperation of all families and staff members, we will be able to minimize the risk of any allergic reactions.

Clothing

General Guidelines

Clothing free of commercial characters is preferred. If a child comes to school wearing clothes that are distracting to the child or the classroom, we may ask them to change or remove the item. Please do not send your child to school in costumes intended for pretend play.

If dressing is a battle at home, it can be helpful to offer your child a choice of two options of clothing to avoid struggles over what to wear to school. Children take pride in being able to dress themselves. When choosing clothes for your child, look for pants that are easy to pull on, front openings and simple fastenings, such as large, loose buttons and easy zippers. Children frequently change clothing at COS. Please let them practice dressing themselves at home, as this is the expectation at school. Clothing that is easy to manipulate also helps children prevent bathroom “accidents.”

Please send at least one complete set of seasonally-appropriate extra clothing, several pairs of underpants, and socks (labeled with your child's name) to keep in their cubby in case a change of clothing is needed. Be sure to update your child's extra clothing as needed and with the change of seasons and when items are sent home to be laundered.

Outerwear

The children will go outdoors to play every day, except during truly inclement weather. Please dress your child for the weather. In rainy weather, this means raincoats/rain suits with a hood and rain boots. In winter, snow pants and boots are nice for warmth, even if it's not snowy. Don't forget hats and mittens or gloves! All-in-one snowsuits are easier for children to put on by themselves. Consider this option instead of snow pants and a jacket. Your child should wear their outside gear to school when needed.

Shoes

Please choose closed-toe outdoor shoes that are easy for your child to put on, safe, and comfortable for your child to run, climb, and play outside. No sandals, clogs, or flip-flops, please—these are not ideal for the level of outdoor activity that children engage in during recess. If your child has not mastered lacing, please bring slip-on shoes or shoes with Velcro fasteners.

Classroom Indoor Shoes



At COS, as in many Montessori schools, our students wear indoor shoes. Our New England weather often requires rain or snow boots for outdoor play. Indoor shoes allow your child to wear weather-appropriate gear to school and still be comfortable in the classroom. They also keep the environment as clean as possible. Indoor shoes are worn all day, and they should be comfortable, safe, and sturdy. Indoor shoes are left in your child's cubby for use each day. If you choose slippers for indoor shoes, please choose ones that support independence, stay on your child's feet, and do not have large, floppy heads or other distracting details. Your child's teacher can provide guidance on the type of indoor shoes they prefer. There are some examples of indoor shoes above.

Jewelry, Toys, and other Distractions

Children may not bring personal belongings such as toys, costume jewelry, costume headbands, money, etc., to school. This creates a distraction from the school day, and there is the possibility that the item may become lost or broken.

Labeling

Please label all clothing with name tags or a permanent marker. As you can imagine, we have multiples of many outdoor gear items, and children leave things behind or put items in the wrong cubby. Labels help us find and return items to their rightful owner. We will use a permanent marker to discreetly put your child's name on their clothing if needed for any reason.

Cubbies

Each child has a cubby. This is a place where the child's personal belongings can be kept safely at school. There is ample room for coats and sweaters, a change of clothes, and a lunch box. Teachers check your child's cubby daily for lunch boxes, wet clothes, and other things that need to go home. Occasionally, a teacher may leave a note in your child's lunchbox with a request for additional clothing. Please send a wet bag to school so we may send wet or soiled clothing home and minimize the use of plastic bags.

Lost And Found

Labeling your child's possessions will minimize the risk of any of them ending up in the Lost and Found, which is in the foyer by the side double glass doors. If your child is missing any belongings, check the Lost and Found bin.

Special Programs

COS operates as a preschool, and not a child care center. Children will occasionally be invited to participate in special programs during the school day without prior parental notification. Children never leave the campus for a special program without prior notification/permission from the family.

Toileting

Some children who have already mastered using the toilet have trouble adjusting at school and may experience some regression. This is not out of the ordinary, but feel free to speak to your child's teacher or the Head of School if you have concerns. This is one reason we ask families to provide an extra change of clothes to have available in your child's cubby. Feel free to contact the Head of School if you have any questions about our toileting process, toilet learning, or other areas of development.

Unless there is a medical or developmental condition that contraindicates a child using the toilet, we expect that all children enrolled in the Primary Program are working on mastering toilet learning and have transitioned out of diapers.

Independence is promoted by our Montessori philosophy, lessons, and activities. We specifically teach children to care for themselves, others, and the classroom environment. Learning to use the toilet is an important step toward independence. COS staff are always available to help a child who needs assistance or to clean up and change when a child has had a toileting accident.

Children who enroll in our Primary Program and are not yet independent in their toileting are asked to wear underwear—no diapers—so that they may practice independence at school. Children are frequently asked to use the toilet by classroom staff. We have found that, for most children, if they arrive at school not quite toilet-trained, they quickly learn (within a matter of weeks). This is an important self-care activity. It is important that families continue with the practice at home. For children in the process of toilet learning, regular communication between school and home will take place to help the child successfully master the process.

Children who enroll in our Toddler Program will be actively working on toilet learning as developmentally appropriate. Regular communication between school and home is important in this process. Yellow room families are responsible for supplying diapers for your child.

Separation Anxiety

Even children who have previously been in school may have difficulty making new transitions. Do not be alarmed if you see regressions in your child's behavior, such as crying, baby talk, loud vocalizations, etc. Teachers use a variety of strategies to comfort a child with separation anxiety, and children often calm down and move on with their day long before the adult who experienced the child's distraught behavior. You are welcome to call the school to see how your child has settled in on days when separating has been a struggle.

As noted earlier in the handbook, when separation anxiety is not a temporary condition, COS will work with the family to develop a plan specific to help that child feel safe and happy at school. Strategies that have been used in the past include: a consistent/quick drop-off, bringing a family photo for their cubby, creating a longer transition/phase-in period, or shortening the length of a child's day at COS.

Traditions

Flower Arranging

As part of the Montessori curriculum, children are given lessons in flower arranging. They fill vases with flowers and greenery, which beautify the classroom and school environment. Each classroom sends home a weekly shopping list with a family for classroom supplies, including flowers. Please avoid flowers with thorns or strong aromas. As a general guideline, parents typically bring one dozen of two different but complementary flowers and assorted greenery (two dozen total).

Kindergarten Tea

This cherished tradition beautifully highlights the grace and courtesy lessons essential to our philosophy. From baking treats to arranging fresh flowers to warmly welcoming their special guests at the door, Kindergarteners take pride in hosting their loved ones. To make it even more memorable, the children perform a special song—written and composed by them with the help of our music teacher.

Kindergarten Play

During the second half of the year, the Kindergarteners work with our music teacher to brainstorm ideas for a play. They work cooperatively on writing the play, choosing roles, composing the music, learning their lines and the music, and designing the set/props. They perform the play on the last day of school for the whole community—it is truly one of the highlights of the school year.

Birthdays

At Children's Own School, we celebrate birthdays using a special Montessori tradition called the Celebration of Life. This simple and meaningful ceremony helps children reflect on their growth and development over the years. In keeping with Montessori tradition, we do not hold birthday parties at school. Families should check with their child's teacher in advance regarding classroom guidelines for birthday celebrations.

School Support Events

New Student Visits & New Family Orientation

New students and families are invited to visit and attend New Family Orientation in May. Additional visits will take place before the start of the school year, allowing children to meet their teachers, become familiar with their classroom environment, and ease the transition into school.

Back to School Night

Families are invited to visit their child's classroom and learn about our Montessori program. You will also have an opportunity to meet our enrichment teachers and learn about the specialized programs

they offer. This is a wonderful opportunity to see the classroom environment, ask questions, and connect with other families.

Family Visit Day

Each January, we invite families to visit their child's classroom on a weekend for our Parent & Child Visit Day. This special event gives children the opportunity to share the Montessori activities and lessons they have been working on throughout the year. Families visit in small groups, allowing plenty of space and time for children to spread out their work, demonstrate materials, and proudly share their learning with their loved ones. This experience offers families a firsthand look at the Montessori classroom and celebrates each child's growth.

Parent Observation

Parents/guardians are welcome to observe their child's classroom during the school year. Observations are limited to one parent or guardian at a time and are scheduled for up to 20 minutes to minimize disruption to the classroom environment. To arrange an observation, please contact your child's classroom teacher or the Head of School to schedule a convenient date and time.

Parent Workshop

We offer parent workshops on Montessori philosophy, curriculum, and a variety of parenting-related topics throughout the school year. Workshops are presented either in person or via Zoom to accommodate family schedules. In addition, our Literacy Director provides specialized literacy workshops for kindergarten families, offering guidance and support for children's emerging reading and writing development.

Board of Directors Meetings

Board meetings are open to all members of our community. The elected members of the Board vote on important leadership and financial decisions throughout the year. A parent committee representative, the Head of School, and the Administrative team attend Board meetings as non-voting members. Executive sessions of the Board are closed to non-voting members of the Board and the COS community except by invitation. Board meetings are held virtually or in person. They are marked on the school's Google calendar, and a reminder is sent to the community.

Open House

In October and January, we hold an open house for prospective parents who may be interested in applying for the following school year. We encourage you to reach out to your friends and invite them to attend.

Annual Auction

Our annual auction is our biggest fundraiser of the year and brings the whole school community together. We encourage families to contribute, attend, and invite friends! Many volunteers are needed

to help make this evening a success—all proceeds go directly to programs, classroom materials, and events for the children.

Enrollment

Classroom Assignments

Our Primary classrooms are made up of children 2.9 to 6 years of age. The children remain in the same Primary classroom for the entire time they are in school. This enables them to build close relationships with teachers as well as their peers. We do not honor specific teacher or classroom requests—we strive to balance our classrooms on many levels and cannot promise any specific assignment. Siblings are not placed in the same classroom.

Re-Enrollment

Re-enrollment contracts are distributed via Transparent Classroom to all current families in January. To ensure your child's spot for the following school year, please submit your contract and deposit before the deadline indicated on the contract. The deposit for all programs is 10% of the full year's tuition and is applied to your total tuition payment. Deposits are non-refundable. Tuition payments must be current to receive a re-enrollment contract.

Sibling Admissions

We give preference in admission to siblings of current students and alumni when those older siblings have enrolled for the full developmental cycle of our Primary Program (meaning they attend the Kindergarten year at COS). Sibling applications (with registration fee) are due by December 31st.

Withdrawal

The school reserves the right to dismiss any student whose behavior or consistent lack of cooperation is deemed unacceptable or unsafe. In addition, we reserve the right to dismiss any student whose parents no longer have a cooperative relationship with the school or who undermine school policy. Uncooperative behavior at Children's Own School includes but is not limited to: a sustained disregard for school policy, non-payment of tuition, disparagement/defamation of the school's faculty, administration, Board, or families, or behavior that creates an unsafe or uncooperative environment for children, parents, or teachers.

If parents decide to withdraw a student for any reason, they must notify the Head of School in writing of their decision. Regardless of the reason for withdrawal, no portion of tuition fees paid or outstanding will be refunded or canceled, even in the event of absence, withdrawal, or dismissal.

Scholarships

Scholarships are available to continuing and incoming COS families, and awards are based on financial need. If a family would like consideration for a scholarship, it is the responsibility of the

parent(s) to obtain, complete, and submit the application. Whether or not your child is currently enrolled, in order to qualify for a scholarship for the beginning of the school year in September, you must submit your completed application along with copies of your tax returns no later than January 15th. If your family is receiving a scholarship for the current school year, there is no guarantee that your family will receive a scholarship for the next school year. Families currently on scholarship who seek financial assistance for next year must follow the same procedure and meet the same deadlines as prospective/incoming families.

Applications will not be considered if they are late, incomplete, or do not include copies of tax returns. Any family with an unpaid balance of any type is ineligible for a scholarship until all outstanding payments are made. Given our desire to help as many deserving families as possible, we require that families receiving scholarships pay a minimum of the enrollment deposit per child per school year.

Admission and scholarship decisions are made separately. The criteria for awarding scholarships include the financial need of the individual family, the availability of funds, and the total need of all families who have applied in any given year. A child may be accepted for admission, but not awarded a scholarship. Financial information provided to the school, scholarship awards, and the names of those receiving scholarships are confidential.

Scholarships are only awarded for our school day. If a family chooses the Extended Day Program, the responsibility for the difference in tuition is theirs.

Tuition

There are two options for tuition payment plans: paying in two installments or paying monthly. You choose the plan when you sign your contract. After your deposit is subtracted from the total tuition, the balance is invoiced in either two installments (half due August 1st and half due March 1st) or nine installments (one-ninth due each month, August through April).

Prompt payment is essential to the financial well-being of the school. Blackbaud manages our tuition payments directly with families.

Non-refundability

Your obligation to pay the tuition for the full academic year is unconditional after acceptance of the contract by the School or June 1st, whichever shall be the last to occur. If the signees of the Reservation Agreement and Enrollment Contract wish to cancel, the Head of School must receive a written (email or delivered mail) correspondence before June 1st. Such cancellation will result in the forfeiture of the entire Advance Tuition Deposit.

Enrollment Forms

MASSACHUSETTS STATE LAW REQUIRES THAT ALL CHILDREN'S FILES BE IN ORDER BEFORE THE START OF THE SCHOOL YEAR.

Please submit your child's Enrollment Form, Health Form, and Family and Child History Form before the start of the first day of school. All of this information should be submitted electronically via your Transparent Classroom account. In addition, you will need to submit a copy of your child's most recent health record, including all immunizations, via email: information@childrensown.org, by dropping it off at the school before the first day, or mailing a copy. (see below)

Health Record

Your child's health record must show all required immunizations, a lead test screening, and a *recent* physical exam. The health record must show the date of a recent physical exam and is valid for one calendar year from that date. Please be sure to give us an updated health record if it expires before the end of the school year.

Required Immunizations:

- 4 doses of vaccine for DTaP/DTP
- 3 doses of vaccine for polio
- 1 dose of vaccine for MMR
- 3 doses of vaccine for Hib
- 3 doses of vaccine for Hepatitis B
- 1 dose of vaccine for varicella or a record of chickenpox

If you are unable to get the missing doses in time for a complete health record to be submitted to the school by Labor Day, please make an appointment for early in the school year and provide the school with a note from the health care provider stating the date(s) and the name(s) of the vaccine(s) scheduled.

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health also recommends the following immunizations: 4 doses of PCV, 2 doses of Hepatitis A, 3 doses of Rotavirus, and an annual influenza vaccine.

If your child is unable to receive a required immunization, we will need either written documentation from your child's health care provider indicating a medical exemption or a written statement from a parent or guardian requesting a religious exemption, as permitted by Massachusetts law.

The Department of Early Education and Care also requires documentation of lead screening in your child's health record.

Fundraising/Development

Children's Own School is a non-profit preschool, so fundraising is essential. We are committed to hiring and retaining highly qualified teachers and staff, maintaining our beloved building, and providing programming and resources of the highest quality for our students. If your company matches charitable contributions or if you know of a potential source of grants or funding, we would very much appreciate having you share information with the Head of School or Director of Strategic Initiatives and Marketing.

Volunteer And Donation Opportunities

Parents who would like to volunteer to help the school throughout the year are encouraged to talk to a member of the Parent Committee, Head of School, Director of Strategic Initiatives and Marketing, and/or send an email to the office: information@childrensown.org

The Parent Committee solicits donations for both a holiday and end-of-year teacher appreciation gifts. While the Parent Committee suggests an amount to contribute and strives for 100% participation, contributions are always at a family's discretion.

COS Tax I.D. Number

Children's Own School's tax ID number is 04-600-6613. This is the number that you will need for tax returns to deduct tuition and charitable contributions. If you have a Flexible Spending Account (FSA) for dependent care through your employer, you will need this number for reimbursement.

Health and Safety

Our health policy is designed to support the well-being of all children and adults in our community. We recognize that it can be challenging for families to balance work and other commitments when a child is not feeling well. However, children who are experiencing symptoms such as restless sleep, changes in appetite, unusual irritability, clinginess, or other signs of illness often have difficulty fully participating in the school day and benefit most from rest and care at home.

To help maintain a healthy environment for everyone, we will ask that children be picked up if they have a contagious illness, fever, diarrhea, vomiting, or require a level of individual attention that prevents staff from safely and effectively caring for the group. We appreciate your partnership in helping keep our school community healthy and comfortable for all.

Monitor for symptoms and stay home when sick.

- We encourage all families to have a backup childcare plan in place for times when a child is ill.
- While we do our best to support every child, we are not able to provide the individualized care and comfort that a child who is feeling unwell often needs and deserves.
- If your child is unable to comfortably participate in the normal routines and activities of the school day, rest at home is usually the best place for them to be.
- Recovery times vary depending on the illness. A common cold may require a day or two of rest, while influenza and other illnesses may require a longer absence before a child has regained the energy and stamina needed for a full day at school.
- Children returning to school with lingering cold symptoms should be well enough to manage their own self-care, including covering coughs, blowing their nose when needed, and participating comfortably in classroom activities.

Picking Up a Sick Child

A child experiencing any of the following will be sent home:

- Fever 100+;
- Vomiting or diarrhea;
- General malaise, excessive tiredness, new body aches
- Severe congestion, excessive or constant cough, sore throat, thick yellow or green mucus/runny nose;
- Contagious illnesses such as strep, impetigo, or conjunctivitis.

Children may return to school only if they meet ALL of these criteria:

- Fever-free without fever-reducing medication for 24 hours;
- Diarrhea-free for 24 hours;
- Vomit-free for 24 hours;
- If taking medication for a communicable illness, on it for at least 24 hours;

- Able and willing to tolerate food/water;
- Able to participate fully as expected in the school setting.

We ask families to send children to school ready to take part in the full school day, including outdoor play. With very rare exceptions due to extreme weather, all children go outside each day for fresh air and movement. If your child is not well enough to participate fully in both indoor and outdoor activities, it is best for them to stay home and rest.

If your child is staying home due to illness, please call the school at 781-729-2689 to let us know. If you reach voicemail, kindly leave a message. Knowing the reason for an absence helps us ensure your child is safe and allows us to monitor and respond to any communicable illnesses in our community.

When we are informed of a contagious illness in a classroom, we will notify the appropriate families so they can stay informed and take any necessary precautions.

School/Classroom Illness Closure Policy

In the past, COS has experienced instances where the school or a classroom was closed because we were not able, due to staff absence related to illness, to maintain safety ratios as required by our licensing agency. Similarly, we have closed when a highly contagious illness such as norovirus is identified and widespread—this requires closure for disinfecting.

We have coverage to allow for staff absences due to illness. However, in the event of multiple staff absences where COS cannot maintain safety ratios, we will close. Families will be alerted to the closure as soon as possible. If staff absence continues to be problematic beyond a one-day closure, COS will implement a daily rolling classroom closure, allowing those 2 classroom teachers to be shifted to cover a different classroom.

Smoking/Intoxication

Smoking/vaping in or near the building or anywhere on school grounds is strictly prohibited. The school will not release a child to any adult, including a parent or guardian, who is suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Hand Washing/Sanitizing

Children and staff members are required to wash their hands with soap and water throughout the day, but at these times in particular:

- Before eating or handling food;
- After going to the bathroom or assisting in toileting;
- After contact with bodily fluids or secretions (i.e., sneezes, coughs, etc.);
- After cleaning areas contaminated with bodily fluids;
- After handling animals or their equipment.

Commonly used areas are regularly cleaned and sanitized with an EPA-registered disinfectant, including a diluted bleach solution or another sanitizer approved by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC). Special attention is given to proper cleaning and sanitizing following injuries or any incident involving blood or other bodily fluids, in accordance with universal precautions to prevent the spread of disease. All staff are trained in appropriate response procedures for such situations. Soiled clothing will be placed in a sealed bag and sent home in your child's wet bag for laundering.

Medication Administration

- All medication must be provided by the parent with written instructions from a health care provider. Medication will be administered exactly as indicated by the physician's orders.
- COS staff are not allowed to give the first dose of any medication, prescription, or over-the-counter medication.
- All prescription medications must be in the containers in which they were originally dispensed and with their original labels affixed. Over-the-counter medications must be in the original manufacturer's packaging.
- Unused or expired medication will be returned to the family.
- Whenever a child is given medication at COS, it will be documented.

Emergency Evacuation Plan

During any emergency, the Head of School, or designee if the Head of School is not on-site, is responsible for determining whether conditions require an evacuation or shelter-in-place response. The Head of School or designee will contact or be notified by the Winchester Police Department and Winchester Fire Department as appropriate.

In the event an evacuation is required, staff will follow the established procedures practiced during monthly fire drills. All classrooms will exit the building using the posted evacuation routes.

If an emergency affects the immediate area of COS (e.g., fire, hazardous materials release) and remaining on-site is unsafe, all children and staff will evacuate to:

Entrance of Loop Trail at Chardon Rd, Winchester, MA

Attendance will be taken prior to departing the COS campus, and the Head of School or designee will call the appropriate town authority informing them of the school's evacuation. The classroom lead teachers will guide the children safely along the fence by the back playground to North Gateway to the designated meeting place. One adult will lead each classroom group while the other follows at the end of the line, keeping a visual check that the group stays together. Upon arrival, attendance will be checked again, and all parents will be contacted by phone via the list in the emergency binders.

Monthly Evacuation Drills

Each classroom follows a set procedure for exiting the building and gathering on one of the playgrounds away from the building. The procedures are posted at each classroom exit, and drills are conducted monthly, on different days and times of day.

Shelter in Place

In certain situations, such as severe weather or environmental concerns, the school may initiate a shelter-in-place procedure. During a shelter-in-place, children and staff remain safely inside the building until it is determined that it is safe to resume normal activities or dismissal. Families will be notified as appropriate.

Emergency Dismissal

In the event of prolonged loss of power, heat, or hot water, the classroom staff will prepare children for dismissal while the office staff notifies parents to pick up their children.

Mandatory Reporting of Suspected Abuse or Neglect

Every educator is a mandated reporter under Massachusetts law. This means that if an educator has reasonable cause to believe that a child in our program is experiencing serious physical or emotional harm, they are required to make a report to the Department of Children and Families (DCF), regardless of where the injury occurred or who may have caused it.

If a COS staff member is named in an allegation of abuse or neglect, the school will follow all applicable Massachusetts reporting and licensing requirements, including notifying the Department of Children and Families when required. The staff member may be placed on administrative leave or reassigned pending the outcome of the investigation to ensure the safety and well-being of children. Families will be informed as appropriate and in accordance with legal and confidentiality requirements.

Missing Child Procedure

Children's Own School maintains procedures to prevent and respond to a missing child emergency. If a child is unaccounted for, staff will immediately conduct a search of the school and grounds while ensuring the supervision of all other children. If the child is not located promptly, emergency services and the child's parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified. All incidents will be documented and reported in accordance with EEC requirements.

Parental Rights

The Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) is the state agency responsible for licensing and regulating center-based early education and care programs in accordance with 606 CMR 7.00: Center-Based Child Care and Preschool Programs.

All licensed early education and care programs are required to comply with these regulations to ensure a minimum standard of health, safety, and program quality for children in care.

In accordance with EEC regulations, the licensee is required to inform parents and guardians of their rights under these regulations at the time of enrollment. These rights are outlined below:

Parent Participation and Access

Parents and guardians have the right to:

- *Visit the program and their child's classroom while their child is present*
- *Be informed about their child's experiences in care*
- *Participate in their child's education and provide input on program policies and practices*
- *Request and receive communication from program staff regarding their child's development and program activities*

Progress Reports and Conferences

Parents/guardians have the right to:

- *Receive written progress reports on their child's development at least twice per year*
- *Participate in conferences with teaching staff upon request*
- *Be informed of significant developmental concerns in a timely manner*

Child Records and Access

Parents/guardians have the right to:

- *Access their child's record upon request*
- *Review all portions of their child's record*
- *Request copies of records*
- *Add information, comments, or documentation to their child's record*
- *Request amendments to their child's record*

Confidentiality of Records

All child records are confidential and may only be shared with individuals directly involved in the care and education of the child, unless written parental consent is provided or disclosure is required by law.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Department of Early Education and Care

MEDICATION CONSENT FORM 606 CMR 7.11(2)(b)

Name of child: _____ Name of medication: _____ Please ✓ one of the following: Prescription: _____ Oral/Non-Prescription: _____ Unanticipated Non-Prescription for mild symptoms _____ Topical Non-Prescription (applied to open wound/ broken skin) _____ My child has previously taken this medication _____ My child has not previously taken this medication, but this is an emergency medication and I give permission for staff to give this medication to my child in accordance with his/her individual health care plan _____
Dosage: _____ Date(s) medication to be given: _____ Times medication to be given: _____ Reasons for medication: _____ Possible side effects: _____ Directions for storage: _____ Name and phone number of the prescribing health care practitioner: _____ Child's Health Care Practitioner Signature _____ Date _____ I, _____, (parent or guardian) gives permission (print name) to authorize educator(s) to administer medication to my child as indicated above. Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____ For topical, non-prescription NOT applied to open wound / broken skin (parent signature only)