

Parent Handbook



**1220 S. Lake Street
Mundelein, Illinois 60060
Telephone/Fax: 847-949-6340
Owner: Ed Berez
Hours: 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.**

INTRODUCTION

ACCREDITATION AND HISTORY

Children's House Creative Montessori is a member of the American Montessori Society, Montessori School Council of Illinois and licensed by the State of Illinois. Originally, Mrs. Voros housed the school in her home. The school officially opened in September 1983 was located at Half Day School for two years and Fairhaven School for three years. The school moved to its current location at 1220 S. Lake Street in Mundelein on July 15, 1988. With the help of families and friends, an empty store front was transformed to a three-classroom school. Mrs. Voros also taught at the Near North Montessori School for four years, starting the first 4-7 year-old class there. She also worked in the suburbs of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and Champaign, Illinois, starting up the first Montessori school in each area.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The school is dedicated to the overall growth of children and the adults working with them. Our goal is the full realization of the child's intellectual, social, physical and spiritual potential with the parents and teachers as co-workers in order to bring about a fully participating citizen of the world who respects nature, his fellow humans and, consequently, himself.

Toward this end, we maintain an educational environment that is geared to the child's interests and abilities, a staff that is fully informed and trained in the Montessori method, as well as the most current theories of child development. We conduct parent education sessions to acquaint the parents with basic psychology and methodology, maintaining a diverse library for their use. We also provide the following:

- A Montessori Handbook
- Periodic newsletters
- Relevant handouts
- Several bulletin board of pertinent events
- Articles of general interest

This is in the hope that home life and the school life complement one another.

We hold bi-annual conferences with the parents so as to exchange information about the growth and development of the child and request that the parents keep us informed of changes that would affect the child's life in home or school, through informal notes or conversations. We like to have the parents come in and browse through the halls and classrooms before and after classes so that they have a better understanding of their children's experiences. We do ask you, however, to limit your conversations with other parents to the west end of the hall by the entrance, so as not to disturb the ongoing classes with your conversation.

We are a small school with small classes. We build on the intimacy of the family unit, hoping to extend this to the classroom environment. We know that in the course of time, parents will become our friends and allies as we work together for the welfare of their child.

The teachers are available for informal discussion of the child after the morning classes have been dismissed and in the late afternoon. You can reach us by phone through the office, and we will call you back at a time convenient to both of us.

FULL DAY

It is our goal to provide children who stay for a longer day with similar yet wider opportunities that they would experience in their home life. An extensive array of toys, building materials, dress-up clothes and outdoor experiences are provided daily with opportunities for the children to initiate activities as well as teacher led activities in crafts, music, gymnastics and active indoor and outdoor games.

The nutritious catered meals we provide are geared to children's appetites. A nutritious cold breakfast is available, as well as hot lunch.

At rest time, each child is assigned his own little "room" so as to create privacy and security. We rub children's backs to relax them as they listen to quiet classical music. If your child naps, you should provide a small cot-sized blanket marked visibly with the child's name.

EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Gymnastics, art, music and foreign language classes will be provided by licensed teachers.

DOOR CODE

We keep a locked building as a measure of safety. A door code has been installed to allow entrance to the building by parents of children in attendance. Several times a year, we will change the access code. We ask that you not release the access code to anyone other than individuals who regularly pick up and are known to us. In certain situations, you may need to have someone else pick up your child. **DO NOT GIVE THEM THE CODE.** They should ring the doorbell so we can check their identification and know who is in the building at all times.

SICK CHILDREN

Children do not need to be kept home in the case of illness unless the following symptoms exist:

- The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in program activities;
- The illness calls for greater care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children;
- Fever (over 100 degrees) with behavior change
- Unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing or other signs of possible severe illness;
- Diarrhea;
- Vomiting two or more times in the previous 24 hours, unless the vomiting is determined to be due to a non-communicable condition and the child is not in danger of dehydration;
- Mouth sores associated with the child's inability to control his or her saliva, until the child's physician or the local health department states that the child is noninfectious;
- Rash with fever or behavior change, unless a physician has determined the illness to be non-communicable;
- Purulent conjunctivitis, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated;
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated;
- Strep throat (streptococcal pharyngitis), until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated and until the child has been without fever for 24 hours;
- Head lice, until the morning after the first treatment;
- Scabies, until the morning after the first treatment;
- Chicken pox (varicella), until at least six days after onset of rash;

- Whooping cough (pertussis), until five days of antibiotic treatment have been completed;
- Mumps, until nine days after onset of parotid gland swelling;
- Measles, until four days after disappearance of the rash; or
- Symptoms which may be indicative of serious disease.

MEDICATION

We discourage parents from bringing their child to school when he is not feeling well. However, if medication is needed after the child is no longer contagious, parents must fill out a medical release form before it will be administered to a child. No medication will be given to a child unless this form is on file with the school (state regulation). Blank forms are located on the metal cabinet close to the refrigerator. Completed forms should be posted on the same cabinet. Once the medication is administered, the staff member will sign it, noting the time and amount administered.

Prescription and non-prescription medications should be in the original container and must be labeled with the child's name. Prescription medicines must also have directions and dates for administering the medication, physician's name, the prescription number and the drug store or pharmacy that filled the prescription. If it requires refrigeration, it should be placed on the top shelf of the refrigerator. If it should not be refrigerated, please it in the medicine cabinet. NEVER PLACE MEDICATION IN THE CUBBY OR SCHOOL BAG.

SCHOOL PROCEDURES

TUITION

Tuition invoices are issued monthly, in advance of the month of attendance. Expect to see your invoice in your child's cubby on the 10th of each month. Payments are due by the 15th, with a late fee charged if not paid by the 20th. If payment is not made by the 1st of the month, the child will not be allowed to attend until the balance is paid. (Example: On August 10, the invoice issued for September's tuition will be in your child's cubby. Your payment is due on or by August 15. If paid AFTER August 20, a \$25 late fee will be charged. If not paid by September 1, your child cannot attend school until paid.)

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

All forms must be completely filled out so we can contact you in case of emergency. The medical form must be on file within two weeks of registration. This is a requirement of the state. No child will be allowed to come to school after that time unless the medical form is completed and on file. The medical form will periodically need updating. The state requires that the form be updated every two years.

Your child should have a Children's House bag with a complete change of weather-appropriate clothing marked with his name, including socks, underwear and an extra sweater DAILY.

Make your good-bye short and feel confident that your child's interest in the people and material will over-ride his temporary anxiety about the separation from you. We will be glad to talk to you about the child's adjustment at pick-up time or on the phone during calling hours.

CLOTHING

One of our goals is to promote independence in your child. A very important part of your child's developing independence is his ability to dress and undress himself. In this spirit of your child's budding independence, we ask that you help us by dressing your child in ways he can manage himself. Straps, overalls or shoe or belt buckles can be allowed only if the child can

manage them independently. Tights and stretch pants for girls should be worn only if your child is able to pull them up and down herself. One-piece jumpsuits or “onesies” (one-piece underclothing) are virtually impossible for a child to manage himself. Pants with elastic waist (no snaps either at the waist or on the inside of the legs for toddlers) are easiest for the young child to pull up and down. This is very important to the child just learning to use the toilet himself.

Distracting items such as jewelry, barrettes and ponytail clips that are constantly removed are strongly discouraged. Shoelaces must be the proper length, flat and made of cotton, so that they will remain tied. Fully laced shoes are appreciated if your child knows how to tie; Velcro shoes if they cannot. An extra pair of “indoor only” shoes are needed to be kept at school year round. We have found that children can easily manage changing from their boots into slippers, boosting self-esteem. Please do not send slippers with superhero imprints or animal heads.

Pull-Ups will be used only for naps. If your child is not completely toilet trained, he should wear diapers until he is. If your child is newly toilet trained, thick cotton pants should be worn and spare pair(s) should be in the cubby. We understand that there may be accidents, but we feel that your child will learn toilet training faster if they understand the consequences of not getting to the potty on time. Pull-Ups do not aid in this understanding.

Warm, weatherproof outer clothing is a necessity since we go outside daily when the wind chill factor is above 30 degrees. Outdoor apparel should fit well, not too small and not too big. Incorrectly sized clothing creates extra bulk or not enough warmth. Your child should be able to fasten his own jacket. Jackets with good zippers are the easiest for the younger children to manage alone – not snaps or buttons. Snow pants should be separate from the winter coat. Pull-on boots, without buckles and ties, are best. Boots should be waterproof to keep your child’s feet warm and dry and should also fit well enough for your child to play freely in them. Label and attach all outer clothing accessories. Please check the clothing in the school bags daily.

In the summer months, children who stay for daycare will have an opportunity for water play in the afternoon. We ask you to send their swimming suits (labeled), water shoes, and a bath towel. Do not send a beach towel, as they are too long and can easily pose a tripping hazard for the children. Do not send your child in sandals. Be sure to keep a sweatshirt in their bag in case the air-conditioned rooms are too cool for your child.

SHOW AND TELL

Parents should place appropriate show and tell items in their child’s cubby or the show-and-tell box in the classroom. Any item the child is willing to pass around and would like to talk about with the class is welcome, with the exception of guns and superhero items. We especially enjoy seasonal books, records or articles that allow a full discussion among the children. In the older class, books are discussed first thing in the morning and other items are discussed after work time. If something particularly valuable is being brought, please notify a teacher so that it can be kept in a safe place.

Children’s House is a violence-free zone. We do not allow superhero items or guns at school and prefer that children’s clothing not continue superhero imprints.

FIELD TRIPS

We encourage ALL parents to accompany us on educational and fun-filled field trips. The children will be transported on a school bus from a reputable school bus company. A staff member will have a Field Trip Release for each child, detailing emergency telephone numbers in the case of an accident. We will have parent volunteers and staff members to achieve a ratio of two to four children to each adult. Our field trips are always very productive, focusing on nature, history, science and the arts.

Unless otherwise advised, our field trips take place in the morning and we will be back to school by lunch time.

Children should always wear their Children's House t-shirt or sweatshirt on field trips. If you do not wish your child to attend the field trip, you must make other arrangements for care, as there will be no staff in the school until lunch time.

CLASS LIST

A class list is occasionally provided to our parents, listing the child and parent names, addresses and phone numbers. Please use your list to mail out birthday invitations. They may not be handed out in school unless the entire class is being invited, since other children may feel left out. A place for your initials is indicated on the Contract if you wish NOT to be included on this list.

HEALTHY SNACKS

A healthy snack and 100% juice are served to the children in the morning and afternoon. These snacks are provided by the school.

BIRTHDAY AND HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS

Birthday and holiday treats are welcome, but they must be commercially packaged, unopened and in original containers.

We encourage parents to come and participate in our parties and holiday celebrations. We like to celebrate all historical, cultural and religious holidays that are meaningful to our children. (A notice will be posted prior to any religious celebrations being observed in order to keep you advised.)

These themes lend themselves to learning experiences, and we ask that you share your holidays with us whenever possible. The children participate through songs, dances, books and foods associated with the holiday. These make meaningful experiences and lead to a love of our culture as well as an appreciation of other national and religious groups. With your help, your child will truly become a citizen of the world, open to people of all races and religions, as is our staff and school.

ARRIVAL

Our center opens at 7:00 a.m. Daycare is provided until the start of the school day. Class starts at 8:30 for the 3 to 6 year olds (Blue and Green Rooms). Please try to be on time so that your child will derive the most benefit from the class situation, and thus he will not cause a disruption of the program or be a disturbance to the others.

The Blue and Green Rooms schedule is as follows (times are approximate)

7:00	Feed animals; take down chairs; breakfast if needed
8:00	Open blinds, water plants, sharpen pencils, prepare classroom
8:30	Circle time – group activity; attendance taken
9:00	Individual work; snack available
11:00	Outside play
11:45	Prepare for lunch
12:00	Lunch served
12:45	Story time (or to nap room)
1:00	Group project
2:30	Outside play
4:00	Afternoon snack
4:15	Play time
6:00	Close

The format for the 15 month to 2 year olds (Yellow Room) is similar:

7:00 Help feed animals; take down chairs; breakfast if needed
8:00 Help prepare classroom
8:30 Individual work; attendance taken
10:00 Snack
10:30 Bathroom, then outside play
12:00 Lunch served
12:35 Nap
3:00 Wake up and put away cots
3:15 Outside play
4:00 Afternoon snack
4:15 Play time
5:30 Story time
6:00 Close

PICK-UP TIME

When picking up a child at the end of the day, parents must make contact with a staff member. It is imperative that the children are not taken off the premises, even by an authorized person, without informing a staff member.

If someone other than you (or your regular designee) is to pick up your child after school, you must complete a pink Child Release form (located on the bulletin board on the door to the girl's bathroom). This form should be used even if it is another parent taking your child home for a play date. If the person is not known to us, we will ask for identification. Please do not give the door code to anyone; they should ring the doorbell. We need to know when someone other than our parents is in the building. We CANNOT release your child to another parent – even if you have agreed to have them pick up your child – unless we have your written permission.

SUNSCREEN AND MOSQUITO REPELLANT

When the weather turns warm, we begin using sunscreen on the children each time they go outside. Beginning in 199, we will purchase mosquito repellent and sunscreen in bulk, which will be shared by all the children. We will advise you of the brands. If you want us to use a different brand for your child, please a LABELED bottle in the cubby with your child's name PERMANENTLY affixed to it, then write us a note expressing your wishes.