

Perth Children's House Inc. - Montessori School
2017-2018 Parent/Guardian Handbook & Policy Statement

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1. Philosophy and Program Statement

Hours of Operation

Perth Children's House (PCH) operates Monday to Friday 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. PCH generally follows the Upper Canada District School Board calendar. PCH produces a school calendar which details all PA days, Holidays, March Break, and special events. Please hang it prominently in your home and refer to it often.

Please note: When there is enough demand and staffing resources are available, extended hours is often arranged for parents/guardians who need earlier drop-off or later pick-up.

Snow days

Previous to the 2016-2017 school year, Perth Children's House (PCH) did not operate on days deemed "snow days" by the Upper Canada District School Board (UCDSB). However, effective November 28th, 2016, the board has changed the school policy and procedure based on Parent/Guardian feedback from previous years. PCH **will** operate on days deemed "snow days" by the UCDSB.

When the UCDSB declares a "snow day" and the buses are cancelled, but the UCDSB schools remain open, then PCH will be open. The Vice-Chair or the Communications Director will update PCH's Facebook page and send an email to Parent/Guardians and teachers by 6:45am.

Parent/Guardians please check your email to make sure that you are fully informed!

****Parent/Guardians should call the school or email ViceChair@perthchildrenshouse.ca by 8:30am to let us know if your child will NOT be attending that day.**

When the UCDSB schools close due to inclement weather, PCH will close too. The **Vice-Chair** or the **Communications Director** will update PCH's Facebook page and send an email to Parent/Guardians and teachers by 6:45am.

PCH may close midday if the UCDSB closes their Perth Area schools midday, or if the teachers and the **Vice Chair** and/or **Communications Director** agree that the school should be closed down. In the case that the school closes midday, the teachers will call the Parent/Guardians to come and pick up their child(ren) as soon as possible.

Perth Children's House Program Statement

PERTH CHILDREN'S HOUSE program, philosophy and approach to working with children is inspired by Maria Montessori and as such is built around independence, a sense of order and completion of tasks. PCH is a not for profit organization and a registered charitable organization with a parent run board. Perth Children's House is licensed under the CCEYA- Childcare Early Years Act and follows HDLH - How Does Learning Happen -Ontario's pedagogy for the early years.

The HDLH (How Does Learning Happen) document is a resource that models learning through relationships with a focus on the child and the family. Learning and development happens within the context of relationships among children, families, educators, and their environments. The four foundations of HDLH are **Well Being, Engagement, Belonging and Expression**. PCH Educators, along with the Parent Board of PCH, strive to model these 4 foundations by ensuring that the following points stated below are respected and carried out each day. Teachers always consider these foundations when creating policies and making decisions for the students of PCH.

PCH will promote health, safety, nutrition and the well being of all children and are considerate of each child's emotional, physical, and psychological state, providing supportive, positive and responsive daily interactions.

Nutrition - Healthy snacks are provided daily and a Health Hot Lunch program is available for students. Teachers and other staff monitor lunches to ensure that the students are eating healthy foods.

Safety - All teachers and volunteers have Vulnerable Sector Checks completed before being on-site. The staff and students practice Fire drills on a monthly basis to understand what to do if a fire happens. Students line-up and remind themselves to be safe with their saying "...Children hold partner hands, keeping them safe and walking careful" while walking to the library and other outings.

Health - The program provides quiet time for resting and recovery; outdoor play for fresh air, fun, learning and recreation; practices safe and regular hand washing to ensure germs are kept at bay.

As part of our Grace and Courtesies curriculum students will be taught self help tasks eg. blowing nose, independent toileting skills, zippers, washing hands and how to prevent colds and germs from circulating. PCH staff will ensure healthy snacks are served, lunches sent from homes are full of healthy well balanced foods. The one on one teaching time, as well as constant observations that are offered by PCH teachers allows a more intimate knowledge of each child's emotional, physical and psychological state. Staff are conscious of modelling positive interactions and using kind words to reflect the core values of our Montessori Philosophy.

PCH views all children as competent, capable, curious and rich in potential. All children develop at their own pace and will take different cognitive and social skills from our Montessori program. Each child will experience their own unique and individual journey while attending PCH and will be given equal opportunities.

The school offers a Casa Montessori program which has as a fundamental tenant, that a child learns best within a social environment which supports each individual's unique development. The Montessori Casa program is essentially a 3 year program which includes first year (preschool), second year (JK) and third year (SK). Perth Children's House (PCH) offers children:

- a carefully prepared child-centered environment
- mixed age groups
- an opportunity to progress at his/her own pace
- activity based learning
- freedom and responsibility
- co-operation and collaboration - not competition

The Montessori program provides opportunities, challenges, and experiences through which the child acquires co-operative and self-guided skills, initiative, and self-expression. In addition, there are a variety of games, songs, drama, arts and crafts, and outdoor play to stimulate the child's interests and development. Individual progress in learning and enjoyment are keynotes of the program.

The Montessori method allows children to develop skills at their own pace. There are also different "Works" which promote learning of the same skill in different ways. Progress is tracked individually and encourages proceeding through each skill at it's own appropriate pace. Students are to be designated a day of the week to be taught materials or more often if possible. This ensures all students are given opportunity with new materials and have one on one teacher time. PCH staff invest time and give their attention with each child, allowing relationships to grow and a better understanding of each child's learning style and individual needs.

PCH fosters ongoing engagement and communication with families regarding our Montessori program and your child. PCH plans for and provides positive, and creative learning environments both in the classroom and during outdoor play.

Communication will be ongoing with the use of the HiMama online app as well as through attendance of the First Year, Second Year and Third Year Orientations that are organized for the parents each year. There are also many other events throughout the school year from BBQ's to board meetings to fundraisers, wine and cheese evening which continue to allowing families to remain engaged with the program. PCH participates in community events. PCH attends the public library monthly and in the winter skates weekly at the local arena. All educators are to participate in collaborative reflective inquiry and ongoing opportunities for educators to engage in critical reflection and discussion with others about pedagogy and

practice to support continuous professional learning and growth. All educators attend professional learning conferences and workshops to stay current in the field of Montessori and ECE.

On top of providing a Montessori learning environment, we have weekly French classes for the different levels (1st, 2nd and 3rd year students) which have prepared students for starting Grade One (1) at French Immersion level. Montessori students learn diverse vocabulary to emphasize fluency and comprehension as it relates to interactive themes reflecting everyday life. This is enhanced with the AIM (Accelerated Integrated Method) that incorporates gestures, songs, plays and games to enhance the Montessori Method. The French language is reinforced throughout our time together to emphasize oral communication.

Students also take part in a weekly 45 minute group music session. The music session rotates through different days of the week and times of day to ensure that as many students as possible can take part. Music is presented live mainly through voice with guitar accompaniment. Small rhythm instruments of professional quality are shared with the students. Basic techniques in rhythm, tempo, volume and pitch are introduced throughout the year. In each music class children are invited to listen, sing, dance, create and play along with the shared music.

Outside the classroom we strive to provide a diversity of activities in keeping with the philosophy of learning through play. We are active in our community with monthly visits to the library, and in the winter there is the weekly trip to a skating rink. We also have a variety of field trips throughout the year.

As a parent, you can expect ongoing feedback on your child's progress, an invitation to participate in many aspects of school life, and an environment where parents/guardians and teachers support each other with the desire to help your child be successful.

Perth Children's House is committed to providing a schedule that meets the needs of parents/guardians while maintaining a learning environment consistent with Montessori philosophy. Children may attend the school full-time (5 full days per week), half-time (5 half-days per week), or part-time (as few as 3 half-days per week). Second and third year students are required to attend a minimum of 5 half-days per week. First year students may attend as few as 3 half-days per week. All students attendance must include 3 different days of the week. Children can be registered for a combination of half days and full days (full days count as two half-days for the purpose of determining tuition and minimum attendance).

All educators are to use electronic documentation (himama) to document (pics and written explanations of observations) and communicate with families. Staff will show on a bi weekly basis or more frequently if possible, "HOW LEARNING HAPPENS" in our Montessori Classroom. A monthly curriculum for outdoor play and monthly activities will be posted and implemented into our yard. An "Art Wall" or display area is also offered outside for completed works and to show "HOW LEARNING HAPPENS" in our yard.

PCH will provide an environment that will allow children to take manageable risks, allow active play and exploration. Encourage children to initiate and seek out their interests and actively explore and investigate their surroundings and in doing so will promote a healthier growing sense of self.

In collaboration with promoting peace in our learning environment, PCH staff will observe outdoor play and allow freedom to explore their indoor and outdoor environments. PCH staff will judge accordingly if a child is in distress or needs a teacher to intervene. Our PCH philosophy is to promote play, provide child-initiated and adult supported play, as well as observe and prevent behaviour that would cause serious harm, abuse, control, or intentional harm or cruelty. PCH supports a stimulating, active and interesting environment where a child may establish a true sense of self and where self regulation is independently applied.

All educators are to participate in collaborative reflective inquiry and ongoing opportunities for educators to engage in critical reflection and discussion with others about pedagogy and practice to support continuous professional learning and growth.

PCH staff attend planned bi-weekly reflective practice meetings. Monthly staff meetings and monthly board meetings. Discussions are initiated by THINK, FEEL, ACT videos prepared by the Ministry of Education as well as daily student observations, books and literature that might assist teachers with developing a reflective and curious mind and outlook on their work.

PCH Educators promise to students and parents/families of PCH to ensure that all of the above stated approaches that are set out in the program statement are implemented into the daily curriculum.

Ages of Children

The Perth Children's House has a non-discriminatory admission policy. Any child that meets the age and toilet training requirements may attend. The Perth Children's House has facilities and staff to accommodate 16 children per half-day, ages 2 1/2 years (31 months) to 6 years. To be clear, your child must be 31 months by August 31st of the year of enrollment if he/she is starting in September. Note, if your child is beginning in January, it is preferable that he/she be 31 months of age by August 31st of the preceding year. Your child must be toilet trained and is encouraged to have independent toileting skills. The maximum teacher child ratio is 1:8. Because the Montessori program is a multi-year program, children will not be accepted into the first year of the program past their 4th birthday, unless they are transferring from another Montessori school.

Children with special needs

Children with special needs are admitted on a one month trial basis, pending the approval of the Chair of the Board and the Directress. The one month trial period is used to see if the child and the environment suit each other. The Montessori program philosophy runs on the concept of a cooperative and respectful atmosphere; therefore, the environment may not suit a child with extreme behavioural problems (i.e. destructive, disruptive or aggressive behaviour, or a need for constant one-on-one attention). Perth Children's House recognizes that every child is a unique being and each child will be treated respectfully as an individual.

Perth Children's House has access to the County organization LEIP - Lanark Early Intervention Program, which can provide special resources and one-on-one attention within the classroom environment for the child with special needs. LEIP has very specific criteria for assessing the needs of a child within the classroom. The LEIP program will provide a support person in such

cases where a child's needs in the classroom meet LEIP's criteria.

No more than one child with special needs can be accommodated per half-day period.

2. Enrolment and Service Terminations

PCH will not collect fees or deposits and will not charge for placing a child's name on the PCH waiting list. The waiting list will be managed, maintained and kept confidential by the Registrar. Information of where a child's name is on the list will be given to Parents or Guardians of that child. All parents will have access to the knowledge of where their child is placed on the waiting list via the Registrar.

Teachers will direct parents who are inquiring about the Wait List to the proper email:

registrar@perthchildrenshouse.ca

Pre-registration packages can be found along with the Parent Handbook in the coat room, and also can be found and completed online. These will be given/available to all interested families. Forms can be completed and returned to PCH and placed in the Registrar's mailbox pocket or mailed to 36 Foster St. The Registrar will then receive the paperwork and place the child in the appropriate wait list order based on the above information. The Registrar will send an email reply to acknowledge that the form was received.

All teachers will direct inquiries regarding "The Wait List" to the Registrar.

When a waiting list has been established or is being maintained the following order of enrollment will be honoured.

Priority of Enrollment

The following list describes the priority sequence for children enrolling at Perth Children's House, in descending order of priority:

- i. returning students;
- ii. date of application submitted by siblings of returning students;
- iii. date of application submitted by siblings of former students who have completed the 3 year program;
- iv. date of application submitted by children of full time staff members;
- v. date of application submitted by a new student.

The Registrar will maintain a single waiting list of children for future enrollment.

Parents/guardians of currently enrolled children with siblings are encouraged to put the sibling's name on this list as early as possible to avoid disappointment.

Discharge

If, at any time, it is decided by the Teachers and the Chair of the Board that it is not in the best interests of the child and/or the classroom at large for a student to continue attending the school, a meeting between all parties will be held to inform the parents/guardians of the decision. A written notice will also be given to this effect. Parents/guardians may be given up to one month's notice to make alternative arrangements for their child, unless the Teachers and Board of Directors determine that immediate discharge from the school is in the best interest of all parties. In all such cases every effort shall be made to advance the interests of the particular

child, keeping in mind the interests of the school at large.

Bullying is not acceptable and will not be tolerated at Perth Children's House. The problem will be addressed promptly and if the problem persists immediate discharge from the program will result.

Withdrawal

One month notice is required if parents/guardians decide to withdraw their child from Perth Children's House during the school year. The child may still attend the school during the paid notice period. Tuition for the month that the notice period occurs in will be retained by the school. Please note that in all cases, the last month tuition pre-payment will not be refunded.

At the discretion of the Board, in consultation with the Directress, a temporary withdrawal may be possible for personal reasons. Your child's spot in the program will be held as long as tuition is paid during the absence.

3. Registration/Orientation Procedures

Students may pre-register *at any time* by completing a pre-registration form. Pre-registration entitles the child to be placed in sequence on a waiting list. (If you wish, you may even pre-register an infant to reserve a spot 2 to 3 years in the future! No child can attend Perth Children's House without a completed pre-registration form on file at the school. Please note that, as with most other policies, a more detailed enrollment procedure is available at the school or on the website.

Registration Periods

There are four distinct periods throughout the year during which parents/guardians can enroll their children. The first period is for returning students and their siblings. The second is for new students. The third is for new students who are registering during the summer after the schedule has been set. The fourth period is for students who are registering from October through December for a January start.

Registration for Returning Students and Siblings

Registration for returning students and their siblings is done during March-April. Returning students do not need to complete a Pre-Registration Form as one is already on file, but siblings of returning students must complete the Pre-Registration Form. The process begins in early March and ends with the submission of cheques and completed forms in late April (exact dates will vary from year to year). Once this process is complete, spaces for new students are known and the registration process begins for new students.

Registration for New Students

The process for new students who have already pre-registered begins in April and ends in late May (exact dates will vary from year to year). In April parents/guardians will submit a schedule request. The Registrar will accommodate the requests as best as possible with the remaining spots. Once a schedule has been agreed upon, completed registration forms and post-dated cheques are due toward the end of May. At this point, if vacancies still exist, potential students will be recruited through a second Open House,

newspaper ads, and other recruiting procedures.

Late Registration for New Students

Late registration is open from June to September and is intended to accommodate parents/guardians who missed the previous registration period. Parents/guardians are advised spaces during this registration period are filled on a **first come basis**.

Registration for a January Start

Perth Children's House school year runs from September to June. When spots are available, provided students meet the minimum requirements, new students may start in either September or January of the current year. In order for a child to start in January, PCH Admittance Policy prefers students to have reached the minimum age of 31 months by August 31st of the current school year. If needed, and in order to help maintain the PCH operating budget which is based on 90% capacity, children aged 31 months or older as of January 1st of the current school year may be considered for admittance at the discretion of the board, in collaboration with the teachers, based on an assessment of the classroom and the evaluation of the individual child, on a case by case basis.

Orientation Procedures

Once the Registrar determines the class enrollment and the number of vacant positions, students on the waiting list will be offered positions. Waiting list students (including siblings) have 48 hours in which to accept or refuse the offer of a position. If it is not accepted within 48 hours, the position will be offered to the next person on the waiting list.

An orientation with the Teachers and the prospective student and his/her parent(s), is required before the child attends in order to introduce the child to the staff and for the staff to get to further know your child. Please note that each child is admitted on a one month trial basis. Within that time, if parents/guardians and/or teachers are not satisfied that the child and the environment suit each other, the child may be withdrawn from the program.

New children begin in a staggered start to help children adjust to the new environment and to allow more one on one with teachers and new students. Your child's particular start day will be determined and communicated to you by the Directress no later than the last week in August. Tuition for the first year students will be based on the number of days attended in September.

Switching Attendance Dates and/or Times

It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians of a currently enrolled child to notify the Registrar in writing if a different position is desired, (e.g., if you wish to switch from morning to afternoon or part time to full-time).

While adding days be added at anytime when space is available, a child may only decrease the number of days before the end of October (during the 1st term) or the end of February (during the 2nd term). Requests to decrease days after these dates may be sent to the Registrar, but refunds will not be provided. If a position becomes vacant during the school year, it will be offered first to currently enrolled students whose parents/guardians have indicated an interest in switching dates and/or times.

This "internal switching list" will operate on a first-come-first-switched basis (i.e. the sequence in which these notices are received by the Registrar will determine the sequence in which the

possible moves are offered). Once the Registrar contacts the parent with notice of an available position for the child, the parent/guardians has 48 hours in which to accept or refuse the move. Once the 48 hours has passed, the Registrar will contact the next family on the "switch list". If the parents/guardians accept the switch, the Registrar must receive a cheque(s) for the increased tuition where applicable.

4. Illness in a Child and Degree of Illness which precludes child from care

Illness In a Child

Please do not send your child to school if he/she is ill. This is unfair to staff and other students. If your child becomes ill during the day, you will be contacted to take him/her home. Illness in a child which would exclude them from the classroom are vomiting, diarrhea and fever or abnormal behavior that prevents them for participating along with other reportable diseases that are listed on the Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit website. In the event of one of the above symptoms should occur the child will be given a quiet spot to rest until he/she is picked up. Take care that all emergency contact names and numbers are up-to-date in case the school needs to contact someone other than you.

Staff members are required to provide a medical note from a doctor upon employment; records of updated TB testing every 10 years (or as required); up-to-date records of other immunizations stated in their employment contract.

The current Perth Children's House Medical Policy states:

Fever

Should your child develop a fever while at PCH you will be contacted to come and pick up your child. The child will be isolated from other children and given rest until you arrive.

Your child must be fever free without medication (Tylenol) for 24 hours before returning to our school. If a fever develops at home, or elsewhere, the 24 exclusion policy still applies.

Please call the school to let us know your child's health status. We are required by the Health Unit to report certain types of illnesses ASAP.

Vomiting and Diarrhea

If your child has any vomiting or diarrhea while at PCH you will be contacted to come and pick up your child. Your child will be isolated from the other children and given rest until you arrive.

Your child must be symptom free without any medication for 48 hrs before returning to school. If vomiting develops at home, or elsewhere, the 48 hour exclusion policy still applies. Please call the school to let us know your child's health status. We are required by the Health Unit to report certain types of illnesses ASAP.

Communicable and Reportable Diseases

Please refer to the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark Health Unit Communicable Diseases leaflet. It gives specific exclusion times for specific childhood illnesses as well as illness which must be reported to the health unit.

Health and Administration of Drugs

The Day Nurseries Act stipulates that prior to admission; each child must be immunized according to the local Medical Officer of Health standards. A medical record sheet is provided with the Registration form and must be updated and submitted each year the child attends. A doctor's visit is not required, but parents/guardians must fill out the form, completing the immunization chart, medical history, and relevant medical information and/or conditions affecting their child's health.

Separation Anxiety

Students are not the only ones who suffer from separation anxiety. Parents/guardians suffer as well. As the adult, be honest about your feelings and recognize how you feel about leaving your child. Your child picks up cues from you. When leaving your child, be cheerful; wish them a great day, and leave. Watching your child from a distance and dragging out farewells for one more hug is very stressful for your child and heightens their anxiety.

Staff is ready and willing to accept responsibility for your child. Students experiencing distress are given attention immediately and usually stop crying as soon as the parent has left. If your child continues to cry for an extended period you will be notified and strategies will be discussed to make the separation process as smooth as possible.

Accident Procedure

Procedures outlined by the Ministry of Community and Social Services in their manual "Serious Occurrence Reporting Procedures" are followed. Staff will assess the nature and severity of the child's injury. If medical attention is needed, the Supervisor will call 911. The child will be kept calm until an ambulance arrives and the Supervisor will accompany child to hospital. The child's parents/guardians will be notified immediately by the teacher remaining in the classroom and direct them to the appropriate location. This teacher will also call for a substitute teacher or volunteer to assist in the classroom (in order to maintain the 8:1 student: teacher ratio). In the event that the injury is not as urgent, parents/guardians will be notified immediately to come and take their child to be examined by a physician.

Fire Safety and Emergency Procedures

Our designated emergency shelter is the Perth & District Union Library.

General fire safety rules are as follows: no smoking allowed on the premises; flammables are stored in the kitchen away from the classroom; there are no open flames (e.g. jack-o-lanterns or lit Christmas trees); fire drill procedures are written out and posted in prominent places.

Fire Drills are to be held as frequently as necessary at the beginning of the year so that all children have a chance to practice the drill. Once all children have been taught the drill and are comfortable with the procedures, fire drills are to be practiced once a month until the end of the year.

In the case of an emergency, parents/guardians will be contacted through the phone tree, a message will be left on the school answering machine and a note will be placed on the school entrances, if the school has been evacuated. The school is prepared to care for children during regular school hours. If you are unable to pick up your child or cannot be reached during an emergency, the school staff will care for your child until your return.

5. Administration of Medications

Perth Children's House staff may administer prescribed medication and over the counter homeopathic medication. Prescribed medication must be supplied in the original container with pharmacist's labelling and have the following:

- the child's name
- name of medication
- exact dosage to be administered
- time and interval dosage
- date medication was dispensed
- instruction for storage and administration

Over the counter medication must also be in original packaging and labelled with child's name and date of purchase along with dosage and frequency.

An **Administering Medication Form** must be filled out for written consent and signed by parent before any medication is given. **The first dose of any medication must be given at home.**

*****Never leave medication of any kind in your child's cubby or backpack. Always hand deliver medication to staff with your child's name on it.*****

6. Fee Payment Policy and Payment Options

As Perth Children's House is a parent-run school, tuition fees and fundraising activities must cover our annual operating expenses. Tuition fees are calculated on an annual basis and tuition payments are made on a monthly basis. Payment of tuition fees may be made in the three possible ways: either post-dated cheques, email money transfer or Royal Bank e-transfer:

Payments are broken into 10 monthly payments as per the following schedule:

- One non-refundable payment dated June 1st of the current year which covers June tuition for the upcoming school year
- Nine payments on the first of each month from September 1st of the new school year until May 1st

Details for each payment option are as follows:

Post-Dated Cheques will be provided in June and made payable to "Perth Children's House"

Email Money Transfers are to be sent to deposits@perthchildrenshouse.ca with description to detail who the payment is from and why, as email addresses aren't always clear.

Royal Bank E-Transfers, may be made in RBC on-line banking:

Choose Pay Bills & Transfer Funds.

Choose Other Royal Bank Customer. Click Submit.

Fill in Branch Number 03762, Account Number 1005230.

To Company Name: Perth Childrens House. Click Confirm.

Please email deposits@perthchildrenshouse.ca to let our bookkeeper know what the payment is for.

As stated above, the payment for June is to be pre-paid on June 1st of the **current** year and is

non-refundable.

An administrative fee of \$20 will be applied to cheques returned for “insufficient funds.” Interest of 1.5% will be charged on all late payments.

If a child’s attendance frequency increases there will be an increase in tuition. The difference in tuition must be paid at least one week prior to the change in schedule taking effect.

If a parent fails to make the appropriate payments, a notice letter will be sent to them at the end of 30 days non- or under-payment informing them that they are not in good standing with the PCH. At the end of 60 days non- or under-payment, the child is considered withdrawn from the program and will not be allowed to attend the PCH. Steps will be taken to recover the funds owing.

PCH provides payment receipts annually for all tuition fees paid.

7. Fee Payment Policy relating to absences due to illness and/or Vacation

In the event that your child is ill on a day that they would regularly attend PCH, all sick days and Vacation days are non-refundable. Your tuition reserves the placement of your child.

8. Arrival, Departures, and Release of Children from the Program

Arrival and Departures

Morning drop-off occurs between 8:30 - 8:45 AM in the coat room.

Children attending in the morning only, must be picked up that day between 11:45 AM - 12:00 PM in the backyard.

Afternoon drop-off, for children attending in the afternoon only that day, occurs between 1:00 - 1:15 PM in the back yard.

Children present at the end of the school day must be picked between 4:15 - 4:30 PM in the back yard.

Release of Children to Custodial Parents

Please note that ***without a court order on file***, Perth Children’s House staff are unable to legally prevent the release of a child to his/her non-custodial parent. Perth Children’s House ***must*** have a copy of the court order on file.

Punctuality

A sense of order and punctuality is consistent with Montessori learning. We strongly encourage students to arrive in time for the start of class. A student arriving late for class is both disruptive and distracting to the ongoing learning process. Late arrivals miss out the invaluable introduction of new topics and materials by the teacher. If for any reason you may be running late dropping off your child, please call the school and let the staff know. We will anticipate your arrival and help create the least disruptive entry as possible.

Late Fees

A late pick-up fee of \$15 per portion of 15 minutes after scheduled pick-up will be charged to parents/guardians who are late picking up their child(ren). Parents/guardians will receive a bill at the end of the month for the accumulated late fees incurred. If you know you will be late, please inform the Directress ahead of time. Doing so will result in the late fee being waived for rare occurrences. These late fees are designed to limit late pick-ups to real and infrequent emergencies. Consistent lateness is stressful for the child and inconsiderate to the staff. If your schedule prevents timely pick-up, please make alternate arrangements for child care or pick-up. Speak to the Directress about the options available to you.

Parking

When dropping off and picking up your child, please observe parking restrictions along the streets adjacent to the school. Perth Children's House wants to maintain friendly relations with local residents and other tenants. **Parking in the school driveway is strictly prohibited.**

Please note: Perth by-law (#4091) requires and Perth Children's House requests that you turn off your vehicle while picking up and dropping off your child. Idling vehicles are a large source of dangerous air pollution that adds to human health problems. Additionally, children feel the effects of air pollution more than adults. They breathe faster and inhale more air per kg of body weight. For the health of our children, please turn off your vehicles.

9. Guiding Children's Behaviour/Code of Conduct

Guidance

Children are re-directed in a positive manner in order to promote self-discipline, ensure health and safety, respect the rights of others and maintain equipment. Any guidance will be administered at a level appropriate to the child's actions and age.

Behaviour that interferes with the proper procedure and conduct of the class is discouraged. We encourage respect for the learning environment and other students.

Should conflicts arise, students are encouraged to talk at the peace table. If conflicts cannot be resolved and behavior continues to be challenging parents/guardians will be contacted by staff.

The following is an outline of our policy:

- a. The child will be talked to by the teacher on an individual basis.
- b. If the behaviour continues, the child will be removed from the situation and other children, and again told that that type of behaviour is not acceptable.
- c. If the behaviour persists, the teachers will call the parents/guardians to discuss the behaviour.
- d. If the matter is not resolved to the satisfaction of either the parent or the Directress a further meeting can be requested. This meeting will be attended by the parents, Directress, the Board Liaison and/or Chair and an action plan will be devised for a set trial period. A second meeting will then be held to follow up on the effectiveness of the action plan and to address any remaining issues.

Violent behaviour directed toward other students, staff, or volunteers will not be tolerated. In a situation that the staff, feels puts other children at risk, the staff may, at their discretion, request

that a parent or guardian remove the child from the PCH environment for the remainder of the day. Tuition will not be reimbursed for that day. A follow-up meeting will be scheduled to discuss the incident and to draft an action plan to prevent further incidents.

Bullying is not acceptable and will not be tolerated at Perth Children's House. The problem will be addressed promptly and if the problem persists immediate discharge from the program will result.

Prohibited Practice:

Volunteers and students will be supervised by an Employee at all times and are NOT permitted to be alone with any child.

PCH does not permit physical restraint unless for purpose of protecting the child from harm. PCH does not permit yelling, demeaning language, corporal punishment, verbal, physical or psychological abuse. It does not permit locking of exits for the purpose of confining the child or the use of degrading measures or threats, nor humiliating language that would shame or undermine his or her self-respect, self-worth or dignity. No child will be deprived of basic needs, shelter, toilet use, food, drink or clothing. PCH will not permit any infliction of bodily harm or force on a child.

Parent-Teacher Communication:

Each school year, there are four formal opportunities for the Teachers to communicate how your child is doing in the classroom and on the playground. Twice per year the Directress will provide a written report in which she will describe your child's social and academic activities and progress to that point in the year. Twice a year, you will have the opportunity to meet with the Directress and the Assistant in a "parent-teacher interview" to discuss in more detail your child's progress. Parents/guardians are also encouraged to communicate directly with the Directress at any time during pickup and drop off or at a mutually convenient pre-arranged time.

Classroom Observations

We encourage that you schedule at least 2 observations during the year to get a true sense of the development of the classroom throughout the year. Observations are offered from November until May. Monthly sign up sheets will be posted in the coatroom.

Dr. Maria Montessori felt that observation was an important tool for education of the observer, whether it be a parent, teacher, or child. The purpose of an observation is to capture the child or children as they naturally respond to the Montessori environment.

Prior to your observation, prepare your child for your visit. Explain that you will be coming to the classroom to quietly watch him/her doing work. Let them know that you will be leaving after 30 minutes and that you will be back to get them at pick up time. Please note that your child may be more excited in the classroom than is typical for him/her. It is often difficult for young children to manage their emotional attachment to you and at the same time maintain their independence in the classroom.

Please refrain from initiating conversation with the children during your observation. If a child approaches to greet you, feel free to say hello then tell them you are here to watch them work. Feel free to accept or refuse any snacks that the children offer to you as part of the 'food

preparation' and 'grace and courtesy' works.

Enjoy watching your child and the group dynamics. Some things to notice:

- the variety of choices the children make
- how they interact with each other
- the respect with which they treat their environment and the responsibility they take for it
- different levels of concentration
- different levels of independence / self directedness

If you have interested extended family members (Grandparents or Aunts and Uncles) you are welcome to arrange observations for them as well.

Please note: Frequently, staff will post information on the school information board regarding special outings, material cleaning and laundry schedules, etc, and it is the parents/guardians responsibility to check the board periodically.

Code of Conduct

Our Registered Early Childhood Educators (R.E.C.E.) are responsible to the children, their parent/guardians, colleagues and to the profession. R.E.C.E. are responsible to the community and to the Society. This code of ethics and standard of practice define the professional knowledge, expertise, and ethical values and behaviours expected of R.E.C.E and as members of the College of Early Childhood Educators.

10. Field Trips and Off-site Activities

Field trips are made to places of special interest during the year. Parents/guardians will be asked to list any individuals who might transport and be responsible for their child on a field trip, in the event that they can not attend. This is part of the Registration Package called "**Release Of Child**". Parents/guardians will be notified in advance of the details, usually by general notice outside the classroom door or via email. A **transportation form** will be sent with any Field trip information via e-mail and will **need to be signed and returned before each field trip**. Any volunteer drivers who are acting on behalf of PCH rather than specifically for another PCH family will be required to have a Vulnerable Persons Police Check on file at the school.

In accordance with the Highway Traffic Act (Reg. 613(4.5.50)), where a child is transported in a personal vehicle for the purposes of a field trip, child seating and restraint systems used are:

- Based on the birth date, age, height or weight of the child
- Installed in accordance with manufacturer recommendations
- Certified by the Canadian Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (CMVSS)
- The child is observed to be in a seating and restraint system based on the birth date, age, height or weight of the child and is properly secured.

Please ensure that your seat is in compliance with the Act.

11. Children's Belongings

Your child should be dressed in outdoor clothing that is appropriate for the season and the weather. An extra set of clothes (socks, underwear, pants, and shirt) must be brought to school on the first day and replenished as needed. All students are required to have a pair of non-marking indoor shoes or slippers. Please do not bring toys to school. Please label **all**

outerwear (including mittens). The Day Nurseries Act requires that each child's name be written on the front of lunch bags or boxes.

Items from school

Many of the classroom materials consist of small attractive objects that are appealing to students. Should any of these "mysterious objects" find their way into your home, please return them to school. They may be part of a puzzle or other "set" of materials. These sets are expensive to replace and almost impossible to replace individual parts.

12. Process for Expressing Concerns

Perth Children's House uses a parent volunteer as staff liaison. The role of the staff liaison is to address non-serious issues which can arise between parents/guardians and staff. If a parent or teacher is unhappy or concerned about a situation at the school, s/he should first try to raise the issue with the person concerned. If the parent or teacher is uncomfortable doing so, the staff liaison can be asked to intervene to help resolve the issue(s).

If a serious issue arises, such as a breach of policy by a member of the staff or Board, the parent should take their concern to the Chair of the Board or the Board of Directors. If there is any serious contravention of the Policy by a staff member, on the first occurrence, the Chair of the Board will discuss the situation with the staff member. On the second occurrence, the staff member will receive a verbal and written reprimand from the Board of Directors. A third occurrence will result in termination of the staff member's contract.

Any staff or parent may approach the Board of Directors to notify them of possible contravention of Policy. All matters will be dealt with in strict confidence.

13. Food and Snacks

Lunch

A bagged lunch prepared by the parent or a catered hot lunch are required at PCH for all students who are staying over the lunch hour. Additionally **all students under 44 months** are required by Licensing to be part of the catered hot lunch program. The School Supervisor contacts all parents/guardians about the Hot lunch Program. Children over 44 months are eligible to participate in the hot program as well if it is of interest. Please let the Supervisor know of your interest.

Please note: If your child is not eligible for Junior Kindergarten as of Dec 31st of the current school year, parents/guardians are required to order hot lunches for your child. This is enforced by the Ministry Of Education under the CCEYA. However if you have a dietary reason or any other reason to be exempt from the program please provide a letter stating why and PCH will keep it on file. At that point, parents/guardians would then be able to provide a bagged lunch.

Orders are placed for the whole semester (ie: September-December and January-June) There is not a monthly option. When going on vacation from the school, please give 2 weeks notice and you will be reimbursed along with snow days. Reimbursement for missed days is given at the end of the year.

In the event of failure to provide a lunch for your child, PCH **may** be able to provide an extra

lunch at a premium cost. Failure to acknowledge and pay these lunch fees to PCH can result in suspension from the program.

Snacks

A snack is served twice daily. Snacks are supplied by the school and meet the Canada Food Guide recommendations and Day Nurseries Act requirements. Please advise the school, at the time of registration, of any food allergies or sensitivities your child may have.

Please note: The Perth Children's House is a nut-safe school. No nut products are allowed in the school. If you have any concerns or questions regarding our nut-safe policies and procedures please refer to our Allergy Policy, which can be found at the school or on the school website perthchildrenshouse.ca.

14. Role Of Parents/guardians In Program

Perth Children's House does not receive any government funding other than a provincial wage subsidy grant which directly subsidizes a portion of the teachers' salaries. Therefore, Perth Children's House relies heavily upon, and greatly appreciates, the invaluable help volunteers provide in the running of the school. Parents/guardians are expected to be active in the school, not only in driving for field trips, but also in serving on the Board of Directors and in organizing and participating in volunteer activities.

The school is administered by a volunteer, parent-run Board of Directors. Every school year a number of Board positions are vacated by departing parents. Parents/guardians are asked to contribute some time during the school year to help organize or staff an event, assist in the classroom, drive to field trips, etc. Your involvement and assistance makes a tremendous difference in the life of the school and in your child's introduction to school life. It also provides positive role modeling for your children.

Parent participation is an integral part of the Perth Children's House. Please help establish a strong community of support for the children and staff. Volunteer requests are posted at the school, through email, in the newsletter, and on the website (www.perthchildrenshouse.ca). You may also be called directly regarding a request for your assistance.

The continued existence of Perth's Children's House relies on your active participation!

15. Smoke Free Environment

Perth Children's House has a smoke free environment with a policy and procedure in place for staff, volunteers and students. There is no smoking on school property.

Parent Signature Required

Please detach and return bottom portion of this page

**PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN THIS PORTION OF THE PAGE TO PCH.
(Keep the Parent Handbook for your records)**

I, _____, the parent/guardian of _____,
have read and understood the entire *Parent Handbook & Policy Statement* outlined by Perth
Children's House - Montessori School, and will endeavor to follow the policies outlined herein.

I have also read and understood the Guidance Policy found in this Handbook.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

