

THE CHILDRENS MEETINGHOUSE



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FAMILY HANDBOOK

WELCOME TO THE CHILDREN'S
MEETINGHOUSE

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Welcome to TCM!



At TCM we believe that children are born as capable beings ready to learn. We believe that each and every child had the right to be loved, cared for, and to be respected as members of the community. Children have the capability to make friends, play, ask questions, and to find answers during their time at school. We make it our mission to help parents raise creative problem solvers, thinkers, and peacemakers for their future.

The primary goal of our school is to provide quality care to the families we serve. We strive to provide children with enriching learning experiences that promote a positive self-image as well as strong cognitive and social skills. Our programs provide extensive opportunities for infants, toddlers and preschoolers to fully explore their surroundings. We work hard to provide a warm, safe and nurturing environment that encourages independence and self-respect, as well as sensitivity to and awareness of others.

The curriculum is emergent, child initiated and developmentally appropriate. The children's emotional, social, cognitive and physical needs are met through emergent curriculum implemented by teachers who promote respect, responsibility and resourcefulness. Fostering a sense of trust, positive self-esteem, and recognizing problem solving opportunities through play are all core components of the TCM curriculum. The indoor and outdoor environments are also carefully planned and enhanced on a daily basis as an important part of the curriculum.

Parent Code of Conduct

In order to maintain an orderly, respectful and secure educational environment for the students and staff of The Children's Meetinghouse, it is essential that all parents and visitors to our school be aware of their responsibilities and to adhere to the expected code of conduct set forth below.

Respect

All members of the The Children's Meetinghouse, including, but not limited to employees, volunteers, students, parents, board members and the Director are entitled to be treated with dignity and respect at all times.

Safety and Conduct on School Property

The Children's Meetinghouse is a place of work and learning. The School is responsible for ensuring a safe environment. As such, certain limits must be set for parents, and other persons who visit our schools and classrooms. All persons on school property or attending a school function shall conduct themselves in a respectful and orderly manner. The Director or his/her designee is responsible for all persons in the building and on the grounds. The following rules apply to visitors to the school:

- Anyone who is not a regular staff member or student of the school will be considered a visitor.
- Visitors attending school functions that are open to the public, such as parent-teacher organization meetings or public gatherings are not required to register with the director
- Any unauthorized person on school property will be reported to the director or his/her designee. Unauthorized persons will be asked to leave. The police may be called if the situation warrants.
- All visitors are expected to abide by the Code of Conduct outlined below for the safety of our students and employees.

Prohibited Conduct on School Property

No person shall:

- Act in a disorderly or disrespectful way to The Children's Meetinghouse students and/or employees through speech and/or actions.
- Intentionally injure any other person or threaten to do so.
- Intentionally damage or destroy school property or the property of a teacher, administrator or other school employee or any other person lawfully on school property, including graffiti or arson.
- Disrupt the orderly conduct of classes, school programs, or other school activities.
- Enter any portion of the school premises without authorization or remain in the building after it is normally closed.
- Obstruct the free movement of any person in any place to which this code applies
- Violate the traffic laws, parking regulations or other restrictions of vehicles.
- Possess, consume, sell, distribute or exchange alcoholic beverages, controlled substances or be under the influence of either on school property or at a school function. *If a person is suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance, the school reserves the right to call local law enforcement or DCF prior to releasing a student to that person's care.
- Possess or use weapons in or on school property or at school function, except in the case of law enforcement officers.
- Loiter on or about school functions
- Gamble on school property or at school functions.
- Refuse to comply with any reasonable order of identifiable school officials performing their duties
- Violate any federal or state statute, local ordinance or board policy while on school property or while at a school function.

Persons in violation of the Code of Conduct

The authorization of a visitor, to remain on school grounds or at any school function shall be withdrawn and they shall immediately be directed to leave the premises if they are in violation of this code of conduct. If they refuse to leave, an administrator of the school will call the local law enforcement agency to remove them from school grounds for the safety of students and all other persons. Depending on the nature of the conflict, the school may pursue a no trespass order against persons in violation of this policy.

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Reggio Emilia Philosophy



Principles:

These principles are in sync with the Reggio Emilia approach in Early Childhood Education. The philosophy was developed in Reggio Emilia, Italy right after WWII. Mothers initiated a complete overhaul of the early years education system in order to build a better future for their children.

The environment as a third teacher:

There is a large amount of care and process in setting up the classroom & choosing materials to be offered. The children engage with the materials & the environment to express their intellectual & creative stimulation.

The image of the child:

The teachers see the child as capable of taking care of their own learning. Children can think in very elaborate ways and can figure out complex ideas if we allow them to do so. They are individual members of the community starting at birth.

Teacher as researcher:

The teacher is not always expected to have all the answers but has the willingness and the skills to support the children in their quests. Teachers & children are co-learners together.

Learning through relationships:

Reggio Emilia educators are aware that human beings are always connected to each other and no person can learn and exist without another. In the classroom, learning is co-constructed through interactions and dialogue.

General Information

Our History

The Children's Meetinghouse (TCM) is located at 1413 Lowell Road in Concord, MA. TCM was founded in 1984 to provide quality child care for the faculty and staff of Middlesex School as well as for families in the surrounding community. TCM today is a vibrant, independent, non-profit organization and has a relationship with the Middlesex School. We have two classrooms – one for infants and toddlers and one for preschoolers. The Infant/Toddler program serves children ages 4 months to 2 years, 9 months and the Preschool program serves children 2 years, 9 months to 5 years.

TCM is a non-profit corporation funded through tuition and is governed by a volunteer Parent Board of Directors and the Director. We are licensed by the Dept. of Early Education and Care (EEC) of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Our curriculum and philosophy is influenced by the Reggio Emilia approach in early education that fosters inquiry based emergent projects and values aesthetic classroom environments as a teaching tool. TCM is a member of the Boston Area Reggio Network (BARIN) and CAPA, the Concord Area Preschool Association, as well as NAREA (North America Reggio Emilia Association).

TCM does not discriminate in providing programs or activities to children and their families on the basis of race, religion, ethnic background, gender identity/expression, age, sexual orientation, handicap or disability, marital or family status or genetic formation or any other classification protected by law. TCM accommodates children of all backgrounds and needs, including those with special challenges when the needs of the child can be met appropriately in our school's environment. We welcome everyone who wants to be part of our community of families and teachers!

General Information

Parent Participation

Because our school relies on and values its tradition of parent participation, we believe that the school experience for our children is richer, safer and more satisfying when parents are actively involved in their child's school. Each family is asked to donate approximately 10 hours per school year in a variety of ways according to skills and interest. Some parents may find it fulfilling to serve on a fundraising committee while others are willing to help keep our garden in shape, assist with maintenance tasks, or offer any other talents to the school. Please note that material and monetary donations are tax deductible.

We welcome parent visitors during the year to share enriching cultural experiences, participate in a special classroom activity, or simply spend time during the morning and experience the class. The staff in each classroom will coordinate with parents regarding these opportunities. Parents volunteering in the classroom on a regular basis need CORI and SORI clearance. The Director will initiate the process.

Parent Board

The parent board is currently composed of a group of volunteer parents that make up an Executive Board of 5 members: Two Co-Presidents, Treasurer, Clerk, and Middlesex Representative. In addition, the Director serves on the Board in her role as head of the school. Parents interested in participating on the parent board should contact the Director or the Co-Presidents of the Board. All parent board members serve for an entire year beginning in June. Board meetings are held once a month, during the school year, on a mutually agreeable date and location.

Classroom Policies & Procedures

Hours of Operation

TCM hours of operation are as follows:

- Drop off is flexible and fluid beginning at 7:30am. We ask that all children are dropped off by **9:15am** to ease the transition into the daily routine & curriculum
- **Half day program- 7:30-12:30** with pick-up starting at 12:15pm. Please note the morning program ends promptly at 12:30. Children & adults should be exiting the building by 12:30pm.
- **Full Day Program- 7:30-3:30** with pick-up time starting at 3:15pm. Please note the full day program ends promptly at 3:30pm. Children & adults should be exiting the building by 3:30pm.
- **Extended Day- 3:30-5:30** with pick ups at 4:30 & 5:30. Final pick up for the day should start at 5:15 exiting the building at 5:30pm.

***If you want to connect with your child's teacher about your child's day please plan ample time to have a conversation, pack your child's belongings up and exit the building before closing.*

Classroom Policies & Procedures

Daily Schedule- I/T

*The following schedules for TCM are flexible and often vary according to curriculum plans and weather.

- Arrival- wash hands (parents. must assist children in this transition)
 - Morning Provocations: Open activity time that may include experiences at the sensory table, blocks, rugs, stories, paints, and other manipulative
 - Clean up time
 - Snack
 - Diapering and toileting
 - Group time with singing and stories
 - Art or other indoor activities that encourage both large and fine motor skills
 - Outside play or walk in the stroller
 - Lunchtime
 - Diapering & toileting
 - Prepare for 12:30 pick up
 - Full Day- Rest time; children will rest on mats or in cribs
 - Diapering & toileting
 - Prepare for 3:30 pick up
 - Extended Day
-

Classroom Policies & Procedures

Daily Schedule- PS

*The following schedules for TCM are flexible and often vary according to curriculum plans and weather. Snack will start at 9:00/9:15am

- Arrival- wash hands (parents. must assist children in this transition)
 - Morning Provocations: Open activity time that may include experiences at the sensory table, blocks, rugs, stories, paints, and other manipulative
 - Clean up time
 - Snack
 - Outside time
 - Morning Meeting- core curriculum events where children and adults discuss their work together. It will also help the children feel connected to their class.
 - Project time- Activities are based on the specific interests of the children. A variety of teacher facilitated experiences are offered to contribute and to support the children's questions about a particular interest. The children are encouraged to work together.
 - Lunchtime
 - Prepare for 12:30 pick up
 - Full Day- Rest time; children will rest on mats for at LEAST 45 minutes. Children who are not going to sleep will be offered quiet activities like looking at books, listening to music or other
 - Prepare for 3:30 pick up
 - Extended Day
-

Classroom Policies & Procedures

Clothing & Shoes

Each child has a cubby that is exclusively for use of their personal items. The cubbies have hooks for their coats, backpacks, indoor/outdoor shoes and lovies. Preschoolers have extra hooks for their coats in the cubby room.

Each family should bring multiple sets of weather appropriate clothing to place in their child's extra clothes bins. Each child should attend school with a bag or backpack of some sort and indoor/outdoor shoes. All of these items must be labeled.

We also suggest that children wear play clothes to school as they are involved in “messy” activities during the day including finger-painting, water play, gluing, art projects, and sand play. Although we suggest that the children wear school smocks for messy activities, we do not force them to do so. At TCM we value messy experiential play where children explore, discover, and learn. Please do not send your children in any clothing that may be ruined during indoor/outdoor play.

We play outside daily, in all weather, so please send your child prepared for outdoor sandy play. In cold weather all children should be sent to school with boots, hats, coats, snow pants and mittens (preferable). In the winter, there may be days, based on several factors such as temperature, wind chill, stamina of the group and teacher’s discretion, that we may choose to stay indoors.

Please consider choosing clothing, shoes, and outerwear that promote your child's ease in dressing and undressing. In warm weather and summer months, please send your child with shoes that will be easy and safe for your child to run, jump, climb, kick balls and get wet in. Clogs and slip-on sandals are not always safe for school activities. Sneakers or rubber-soled shoes provide the best support and stability especially for playground activities.

Classroom Policies & Procedures

Clothing & Shoes

TCM also asks parents to limit clothing with media and commercial images and messages. Examples include tv characters, movie characters, and commercial slogans. Sadly, competition over t-shirts and other clothing with these images on it begins as early as the preschool years. We'd like children to value one another for their unique personality qualities and skills rather than media-enhanced clothing.

Seperation

Separation can be a difficult time for both children and parents. School is a new environment and it takes time to get used to a new routine. At least for the first couple of times, it is helpful to spend some time in the classroom when dropping off with your child, reading a book, doing a quick art project, or playing for a few minutes. This will ease the child into a comfortable trusting relationship with the teachers.

The most important aspect in the separation process is to say "good-bye" directly to your child. This helps the child master the separation and not be surprised later to find out the parent has left. The "good-bye" process should be kept short, simple, and consistent. If a child starts to cry, it is usually short and the child becomes involved in toys and other activities quickly. The staff is there to comfort the child and redirect his/her attention.

Most likely, there is no benefit when the parent stays at school to prevent the child from crying. Dragging the process of separation often adds stress to the child's process of dealing with the situation. Children are very in the moment people and let us know, if they are upset right away but also are capable of cooling down and engaging quickly!

Classroom Policies & Procedures

Seperation

If you have concerns about the process of separating from your child, please feel free to discuss them with the staff. We try to individualize and support parents during these transitions. We want everyone to feel comfortable with the process

Handwashing

We request parents help their children with washing their hands upon arrival in the classroom in the morning. If arrival occurs on the playground then the staff will ask the children to wash their hands when they go inside. Children are asked to wash their hands after toileting, before/ after meal times, after outside time and before/ after using the sensory tables.

Snacks & Lunch

TCM IS A NUT FREE SCHOOL! PLEASE REFRAIN FROM BRINGING ANY PEANUT OR TREE NUT PRODUCTS!

We provide a morning and extended day snack for each child consisting of a choice from 2 food groups and water. Snacks most often served are: Cheerios, rice cakes, goldfish, graham crackers, apples, bananas, pears, berries, other seasonal fruit, cheese slices, crackers, fruit spread, bagels, cream cheese, raw vegetables, applesauce, other types of fruit cups or occasional popsicles for special celebrations. Please alert the staff of any diagnosed food allergies that your child may have. Parents whose children have food allergies or specific food requests have the option of providing snacks for their child that will be kept at TCM and labeled with their child's name on it.

Milk cups are also welcomed for lunch. Similar to bottles please send all milk cups already prepared and labeled.

Classroom Policies & Procedures

Snacks & Lunch

For Infants: If your child uses a bottle please bring the bottle fully prepared. Each bottle should be labeled with the times and ounces of the bottles. Bottles are not refrigerated and they are warmed in a container with hot tap water. Please send a cooled bottle bag with your infants required, labeled bottles.

Parents will be providing the children with their own lunch and labeled water bottle. Please include a small ice pack in your child's lunch bag/box. TCM encourages parents to send nutritious lunches with their children and suggest a combination of some of the following food items: yogurt, crackers, raw vegetables, pasta/noodles, fruit, cheese, sandwiches, pizza, etc.

As required by EEC State Regulations, please chop or cut up food into bite size pieces ($\frac{1}{4}$ " size for infants and $\frac{1}{2}$ " size for toddlers) especially if they are known to be foods that cause choking in young children. Round or tube shaped foods such as grapes, cheese sticks, pasta and hot dogs must also be cut lengthwise and then in half for toddlers and preschoolers younger than 3 years of age.

We request that parents use a thermos if they would like their child's food to be warm. Food will stay warm in a thermos until lunch time. Utensils, napkins and straws are available if needed. Lunchtime is an opportunity for encouraging language and social development and for educators to engage the children in conversation as well as support their self-help skills.

Classroom Policies & Procedures

Toothbrushing

Regulations require educators to assist children in brushing their teeth whenever children remain in care for more than four hours and /or consume a meal in child care. The regulation is intended to help children learn about the importance of good oral health. At TCM, our discussion about bodies, in regards to keeping ourselves healthy and safe, are embedded in our day to day curriculum and we value this aspect in our program. For infants, gums are wiped with a clean damp cloth after feeding and toddlers are assisted with tooth brushing. Preschoolers can brush and use a disposable cup for rinsing.

Parents may choose, however, not to participate in tooth brushing while present at the child care program. Should parents choose to opt out of the tooth brushing they will complete the Oral Health Non-Participation Form. The form is kept in the child's file amongst all other forms as an indicator to the EEC licensor.

Diapers & Toilet Training

Parents of children in diapers are asked to bring in large package of diapers and two boxes of wipes when your child begins the program. The staff will inform you when additional supplies are needed. Please respond in a timely manner. Wipes may be shared by the group unless your child has sensitive skin. When your child begins the process of toilet training please re-read our toileting document attached to the handbook. Our staff has had many years of experience helping families in the process. Please consult in this developmental process. Remember during toilet training to dress your child with t-shirts instead of onesies and easy to wear pants/leggings that can be pulled up easily.

Classroom Policies & Procedures

Security Objects & Toys From Home

We understand how important it is for some children to bring something from home to help them feel secure at school. It also gives them practice in learning how to be responsible for something that belongs to them. Favorite items such as a blanket, stuffed animal, photograph or a favorite book are excellent choices to bring in. children are encouraged to show the item to their teachers and friends upon arrival in the classroom. The items will be put away until rest time after arrivals.

We would appreciate it if you would not send in toys that are expensive or that have sentimental value. We will expect the children, with help and reminders from teachers, to be responsible for getting their items into their cubbies safely. It would also help if you would label all items you send with your child.

Please DO NOT SEND IN WEAPONS OF ANY KIND real or imaginative including toy guns, knives, swords, to school. Although we have a no weapons policy, children may use their imaginations in play and mention weapons or other activities that use force. Teachers will observe and guide the children in their play to work on peaceful solutions and dialogue with others while respecting cultural beliefs at all times.

Birthdays

On your child's birthdays their classmates and teachers will sing "Happy Birthday" if the child wants. We will respect the child's wishes. Rituals and classroom routines may be changed from time to time according to the teachers' creativity and the children's ideas. Parents are welcome to come in and enjoy morning or afternoon snacks with their children. Teachers, parents and children can prepare and enjoy a healthy treat at school for the celebration. **Due to a variety of food allergies we insist that parents do not bring in baked goods for any occasion.** We thank you for your understanding.

Classroom Policies & Procedures

Birthdays

.Birthday Book & Baby Picture: It has been a custom in our program that the birthday child brings or donates a book and baby picture that they will share with the classroom in honor of their birthday. The parents are encouraged to inscribe the child's name in the Birthday book so we know whose book it is. Please check with staff if you need suggestions for book titles. Donating a book is completely optional but greatly appreciated. Depending on the developmental level of your child, it may work best if the parent either purchases a second copy of the favorite book to bring to the classroom or buys two copies, so the child can keep one at home.

Field Trips

Field trips, especially for preschoolers may be scheduled throughout the year. A fee is sometimes charged for each child to help cover the cost of admission. Field trips are designed to enhance and enrich the curriculum. Teachers will ask parents to drop off and pick up their children at the designated field trip location instead of the school. TCM is not responsible or liable for transportation to and from the field trip location.

Parents may arrange carpools independently from school. Staff will not organize carpools and cannot drive the children. TCM will seasonally visit Saltbox Farm for our walking field trips in the Fall with parent volunteers.

Classroom Policies & Procedures

Holidays

Holidays are a special time of the year but can be overwhelming for young children. At school, we greatly listen to children's needs and their views of the world. Often during the holiday season the classroom is a safe haven for the children where the commercial stress and the overstimulation of our society is on hold. Although we do not focus on holiday curriculum, we do appreciate and value the various ways families celebrate at home. Parents are always welcome to share a family tradition with their child's class. In the past some parents have chosen to read a special story and share a craft or special song related to a particular holiday with us. We try to connect holidays to family and relationships which makes the children appreciate their culture and traditions even more. Check in with your child's classroom teachers if you would like to share a tradition- teachers can help gearing the activity to the respective age group.

It is our belief that it is difficult for young children to understand the abstract meanings behind most traditional holiday celebrations. It is also very difficult for teachers to know about and include all of the diverse holidays and traditions in our curriculum. This is why we choose not to support the commercialization of many holidays and believe strongly that this does not fit into our educational goals for the children in our program.

Parent/Staff Communication

General Information

An open, cooperative, partnership between parents and staff is vital to providing your child with a quality program. Staff and parents should keep in touch with each other to ensure consistent care between home and school. No detail is insignificant if it helps the staff to understand your child better. Keep us posted on home happenings and other helpful hints about changes that impact your children's daily routine.

Classroom teachers will send a weekly newsletter with curriculum information and reminders for the upcoming weeks. You will receive pictures via BrightWheel as well. Parents are also invited to view the documentation in the classrooms and common spaces that make the children's learning visible to the community.

Teachers are available to discuss issues that require a more private or in-depth discussion via scheduled meetings outside of the classroom. If you would like to discuss a matter with your child's teacher, please ask via email or in person for possible times.

Newsletters & Emails

Communications to families is conducted via email or BrightWheel App. The Director will inform the community about events, health concerns, and other all school related subjects: director@thechildrensmeetinghouse.org

IT & PS classrooms have their own email account and will contact you with classroom specific information:

toddler@thechildrensmeetinghouse.org

preschool@thechildrensmeetinghouse.org

Parent/Staff Communication

Newsletters & Emails

Please feel free to utilize email for informal and non-time sensitive notes, but also understand that the teachers may not have time to check email during the school day as their number one priority is the children. The classroom teachers will sometimes send brief updates and reminders through BrightWheel and email. The BrightWheel account will help with more time sensitive notes from both teachers and parents. Teachers and the Director will have access to this app at all times throughout the day.

To help with communication with families the staff will try to communicate with you in person on a daily basis. We hope to share short anecdotes about your child daily. Please seek out any teacher to ask questions or share information. Parents are encouraged to communicate verbally with teachers during drop-off times as the children tend to arrive at various times. Mid day pick-up time, communication is more difficult due to the teacher's schedules, lunch/rest, transitions, parking limitations, etc. Please allow enough time at pick up for discussions as transitions can be difficult.

BrightWheel App

Each parent will have their own code used to sign your child in and out daily. We ask to use the tablet in the entry way or the QR codes on the gates/ in the entry way to sign in and out everyday. We ask that all parents use this app to help track attendance. This will become a daily occurrence. Please send any notes, messages, or information through this app for your child to have a successful time at TCM.

Parent/Staff Communication

Reports & Journey Books

The staff collects a variety of samples of children's work and schedule conferences with parents twice a year for Toddlers & Preschoolers, every three months for Infants. Along with conferences your child will receive a written 1-2 page report based on their growth and development at the time of conferences. All educators look at the growth and development of each child in the domains of Cognitive, Social/Emotional, Language, Fine & Gross Motor and Life Skills. Since children learn through play, we are especially interested to share your children's approach to play. All information is shared with the parents and discussed during parent conferences that occur in the Fall and in the Spring. Parent conferences are scheduled at TCM during the regular school day. Teachers will schedule appointments with parents in advance.

Your child's journey book chronicles learning and development, as well as the joy and happy moments while with classmates at TCM. These journey books are based on observations and documentation of the child's progress in a range of activities over time. The journey book will start with your child their first year and stay at TCM until they graduate TCM. Parents can view or borrow their children's book at any time during their enrollment at TCM. Although parents are not required to attend conferences, we encourage all parents to attend. Teachers have valuable information to share with you about your child's progress and their learning. Teachers work in a team so the specific teacher conducting the conference is sharing the views of all teachers.

Progress reports for infants less than 15 months and children on Individual Education Plans are written every three months.

Parent/Staff Communication

Observing in the Classroom

We have an open door policy for our students' parents. Feel free to come and go as you please. Other family members such as grandparents are also welcome to come and visit the classroom to see the children at play. In order to prevent the confusion numerous visitors on any given day, we ask that you call the school in advance to arrange a visit if a family member other than the parents would like to visit.

Specialist/Referral Policy

If a staff member has any concerns about any area of a child's development such as their physical, social/emotional, cognitive or language development we will meet as a team to discuss the needs of the child and share any observations. If staff members continue to have concerns about the child's development the appropriate next step is to refer the child to a specialist. The referral allows TCM to gather more information and knowledge regarding the child's needs in order for the child to become more successful in a school setting. Before a referral is made, the staff will discuss their concerns with the parents and parents must give written permission in order for TCM to contact the appropriate agency or individual to observe and assess the child. Referral resources will be given to the parents. The role of TCM is to be a support system as well as a resource for TCM families so the children will benefit from intervention at the earliest age possible. As a school, we strongly believe in early detection and intervention. The public schools have an early childhood assessment team that screens and evaluates preschoolers before they enter kindergarten. The team evaluates the child and gives feedback to the parents and staff.

Parent/Staff Communication

Specialist/Referral Policy

As early childhood professionals we thrive to be the best setting for all children to develop successfully and at their own pace. We will work closely with the parents and specialists to make all children's experiences at TCM a positive and developmentally successful one. We welcome diversity of all kind to aid in helping everyone learn and grow!

Late Arrival/Early Pick Up

TCM asks that all children arrive daily by **9:15am** to help ease daily transitions to snack and clean up from morning free play. If you are going to be late please call the school. We do ask that all children arrive to school no later than **11:30am**. Lunch time is a hard time for children to enter the classroom due to the transitions (clean up to lunch to rest). We are always thinking of the child when preparing for the day and aim to help with drop off procedures. During transitions it makes it especially difficult for the child to enter the classroom and for the teacher to step away and help.

If your child is going to be picked up early please let a teacher or administration know as soon as possible.

If your child will be picked up by someone new, that person has to be on their pick up list and a pick up form must be completed before pick up by the child's guardian. We do ask that all new pick ups bring licenses to confirm their identity.

Health Care Policies

Health Forms

Before the start of the new school year, the parents/guardians will receive a documentation package which must be completed and submitted at the latest by the start of the school year in August. No child can be dropped off at school without these documents filled out. You will have to take your child home if the required documents are not submitted before or on the first day of school. The medical forms require documentation of a physical within the past year and a current immunization record. The Department of Public Health requires all children, regardless of risk, to be screened for Lead at least once between the ages of nine and twelve months old and annually thereafter at ages two and three. For children who live in a high risk community, another test is due at age four. As of August 1998 all children entering Preschool who have not had chickenpox must not receive the chickenpox/varicella vaccine.

If children have not received the required immunizations parents must submit a written verification stating they object to such immunizations on the grounds that it conflicts with their "sincere religious beliefs". A physician's statement that such a procedure is contraindicated is also acceptable.

Health Care Policies

Health Forms

Healthcare Consultant: TBD

Emergency Telephone Numbers: Fire, Police, Rescue: 911

Non-Emergency direct line for Concord Fire Department: 978.318.3488

Police: 978.318.3400

Poison Center: 1.800.222.1222

Designated Adult: **Eric Rasmussen**

(If needed as a neighbor/contact at MX School)

Hospitals utilized for emergencies:

Emerson Hospital, Route 2, Concord, MA 978.369.1400

Children's Hospital, 300 Longwood Ave., Boston, MA 617.735.6000

(The Children's Meetinghouse, 1413 Lowell Road. Across from Middlesex School)

Emergency Procedures

A certified staff member will administer first aid- the Director or designated educator will call for an ambulance if needed. A staff member will accompany the child to the hospital and will bring the child's file. If the child's parent can not be notified, the emergency contacts will be called. All injury report forms will be completed as outlines in the regulations. On field trips or any outings into the playground or neighborhood, first aid backpack will be taken along with emergency information on each child.

Health Care Policies

Emergency Procedures

The emergency contacts listed on the Child's Enrollment Form and the child's pediatrician will be contacted.

Location of First Aid Kits:

- **Infant/Toddler Kitchen Area-** Cabinet over the sink and in Go Bag in IT stroller
- **Preschool-** Hallway cabinet; one for field trips also in Preschool hooks in the Go Bag

Location of First Aid Manual:

- Preschool- Hallway Cabinet

First Aid is administered by the Director or teachers depending on the circumstances and availability of the staff.

First Aid Kits are maintained by the Director of the other designated staff members

Contents of the First Aid Kits are: Band-Aids, gauze roller bandage, gauze pads, adhesive tape, disposable non-latex gloves, eye patches, tweezers, scissors, thermometers, instant ice packs, cotton balls, eye wash, eye cup, nail clippers, and CPR mouth guard.

Health Care Policies

Allergies & Asthma

Upon enrollment to the center, children with allergies/asthma or other chronic medical conditions will be identified. All staff will be informed and the children's names will be posted in a manner that protects the privacy of each child. Types of allergies that can be life-threatening (such as food, insects/bee stings, environmental, drug or latex) and the possible reactions will be available in the classroom as well as in the child's file. Emergency medications such as EPIPENS must be immediately available for use and will be brought with children for outdoor play or walks, as required. The program will develop an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) in collaboration with the parent or guardian, program educators and the child's licensed health care practitioner who must authorize it. The IHCP will include the description of the condition which has been diagnosed by the health care practitioner, the description of the potential side effects of the treatment and an outline of potential consequences to the child's health if the treatment is not administered. There must be one person trained in the implementation of the child's IHCP whenever the child is at the program. In addition to licensed health care practitioner, training to implement an IHCP may be given by the child's parent or the program's health care consultant with the licensed health care practitioner's written consent. The IHCP is valid for one year unless withdrawn sooner and must be renewed annually, or when the child's condition changes, for administration of medication or the treatment to continue.

Health Care Policies

When Your Child is Sick

Please notify the school by phone, email or Brightwheel when your child is not well. Any information regarding a change in your child's health, including confirmation of a communicable disease/infection must be shared with the staff in a timely manner. In order to warn other parents of their child's possible exposure and to contagious diseases/infections and in the spirit of keeping our community healthy, the Director will send out a health notification to the TCM community. Child's name and circumstances will be kept confidential.

- When to keep your child home:
 - Keep your child home for 24 hours after the fever, vomiting or diarrhea has ended. A child must be fever free for a minimum of 24 hours without any fever reducing medicine before returning to school. If an epidemic is suspected the EEC and Department of Public Health may issue additional guidelines the school must follow.
 - Keep your child home if they are exhibiting heavy nasal or chest congestion causing breathing to be difficult.
 - Keep your child home when they display an unusual rash or eye inflammation
 - Keep your child home anytime a doctor has declared the child has a communicable infectious disease. When the child is on medication for 24 hours the child may return with a doctor's note.
 - If antibiotics are prescribed for a contagious disease such as a strep infection, impetigo or conjunctivitis your child must be on the medication for at least 24 hours before returning to school.
 - A child who has vomited will be able to return to school 24 hours after the last vomit occurred, and once the child is able to eat a regular diet again.
 - When it's the first time your child is on medication we ask them to stay home for 24 hours to prevent unknown allergies, rashes, etc.
-

Health Care Policies

TCM's goal is to keep all children, families and staff as healthy as possible. In order to do this we need everyone's cooperation as a caring community. We will be strict in enforcing the above sickness policy. If your child is sick (s) he must be kept home for everyone's protection. If TCM has concerns, we may request a letter from your pediatrician that states what the diagnosis is and when the child can return to school without being contagious.

If Your Child Becomes Sick at School

If a child arrives at school, displaying symptoms as mentioned above, the staff may request that s/he return home. If a child becomes sick at school the parents will be notified immediately by a phone call . Since we are unable to provide individual care for a sick child and do not want to risk exposure to other children, we ask for your cooperation in picking up your child as soon as possible. If parents are unavailable, then the 3 persons listed as emergency contacts on file at the school (and part of the required documentation upon enrollment) will be called in the order as listed to come and pick up the child. Please let the staff know if on any given school day, you will not be available in case of an emergency. Parents may want to also notify their emergency contacts if they will not be available on any particular days.

Administering Medicine

All staff are trained on the 5 "Rights" of Medication Administration as required by EEC annually or as needed. If the child has never taken a particular medicine, the first dose cannot be given by the school in case of any side effects. All staff are also trained in recognizing common side effects or adverse reactions. All medicine administered will be documented. All medicines have to be labeled with the child's name and dose as prescribed by the doctor. In addition, parents need to fill out a medication consent form. Medicine will be stored in a safe manner and any unused medicine will be returned to the parents.

Health Care Policies

Vaccine Policy

TCM asks that your child stays home for the remainder of the day after they have had a vaccine. The child can return to school the following day provided they are feeling well enough to be in group care. The teachers will be observing the child to ensure they are feeling healthy and will call the parents should anything change in their health.

Sunscreen & Insect Repellent

During the Spring and Summer month TCM will ask that each child brings their own sunscreen and insect repellent. The children will arrive to school in the mornings with sunscreen and insect repellent on and the teachers will reapply for all children after rest time. The mid-day pick up children do not need to bring sunscreen or insect repellent as we do not have to reapply before they get picked up.

Tick Removal

Although TCM gets sprayed for ticks and mosquitos, we tend to find these insects in our yard at times. Should your child have a tick on their body during the school day we will contact the parent immediately. The parent will choose to come to the school to remove the tick or pick the child up. If the parent removes the tick and the child stays at TCM we will then monitor the bite and the child's health for the remainder of the day. We always suggest calling a pediatrician after a tick removal.

Enrollment Policies

Enrollment Procedure

Anyone interested in obtaining information about TCM should refer to the school's website at www.thechildrensmeetinghouse.org for an overview of the program, the curriculum. Open houses typically take place in the Fall. School tours are generally provided by the Director. Visitors meet the Director, visit the classrooms and facility, and obtain additional information about the program. Information is exchanged about the needs and interests of their family and child(ren).

Applications for currently enrolled families are typically given out in January. Enrollment contracts for current families are usually provided by May. After that new families are offered acceptance into the program – space permitting. The enrollment process takes into consideration the needs of children currently enrolled in the program, siblings, staff, Middlesex families, and new families. Both the Infant/Toddler program and the Preschool program offer flexible enrollment schedules. The school maintains a waiting list throughout the year and fills openings that occur during the year with children who meet the needs of the entire program and the specific available openings.

Deposit & Tuition Payment

Upon acceptance to TCM, one tenth of your child's annual tuition is due. The first one-tenth tuition payment will be applied to June of the following calendar year. For billing questions please contact the director or the business manager by e-mail. director@thechildrensmeetinghouse.org and businessmanager@thechildrensmeetinghouse.org

Enrollment Policies

Tuition Payment

In your child's enrollment packet, you will receive a tuition invoice, which states your child's program, session and annual tuition rate. Please retain this invoice for your records. It includes the tax exempt number for income tax or pre tax employer forms.

- You may pay your tuition annually, bi-annually (two payments: September-December and January-May)
- Monthly payments are due on the first day of every month. If your child's tuition is received after the fifth of the month, a \$50.00 late fee will be assessed.
- Annual payments are payable on or before September 1st. Bi-annual payments are payable on or before September 1st and January 1st. The same late fee policy applies to annual and bi-annual payments
- You will not receive monthly statements. Before the end of the school year, you will receive an invoice that will reflect any balance due to TCM.

By accepting a place for your child at TCM, you agree to pay the tuition for the entire year. A monthly payment plan is offered for convenience only and should not be understood to imply that your financial responsibility extends to less than the full year's tuition. Due to the high cost of processing fees and since we are a non-profit corporation, payments by credit cards are accepted through our Brightwheel application. Some families have chosen to set up a direct payment from their bank accounts through their on-line banking system. This option works well for parents as they can set up their payments to occur monthly from September to May and set up payments to arrive on time thus avoiding any late fees. There is a locked tuition box in the lobby if parents bring their checks to TCM.

Enrollment Policies

Withdrawal/Schedule Change

We understand that for a variety of reasons, you may decide to withdraw your child from TCM, prior to the end of the school year. Parents with children newly enrolled to TCM are granted a one-month period during which they are allowed to withdraw enrollment without any obligations other than the first non-refundable installment. For all other Parents, if enrollment is withdrawn at any time before or during the balance of the school year, the undersigned Parents will be responsible for the remaining tuition. TCM requests that any family contemplating withdrawal give notice to the school as soon as possible.

- **Withdrawal for Medical Reasons** - If illness or other medical condition precludes your child from continuing to attend TCM, your obligation to pay tuition will cease upon receipt of written notice that you are withdrawing your child due to medical reasons. This notice must be accompanied by a doctor's note stating that school attendance is medically inadvisable. Upon receipt of written notice, TCM will refund any tuition deposits and/or prepaid tuition.
- **Changes in Hours or Sessions** – We will endeavor to accommodate requests for schedule changes dependent on space in the classrooms and staffing needs. The school requests that families make every effort to limit schedule changes to the extent possible.
- **Reduction in Hours** - A family may request in writing to reduce the hours or days their child attends. Any change will take effect at the beginning of the month following receipt of the written request.
- **Increase in Hours** - A family may request in writing to increase their hours or add additional days. Such requests are dependent upon space being available. Any change will take effect at the beginning of the month following receipt of the written request or at any time during the months. The school will issue an invoice for the increased tuition deposit and partial attendance in a month will be prorated.

OTHER THAN AS SET FORTH ABOVE, NO REFUND OR REDUCTION IN TUITION IS POSSIBLE FOR A CHILD WHO ARRIVES LATE; LEAVES EARLY OR ATTENDS ONLY PART OF THE SCHOOL YEAR.

Enrollment Policies

Mandatory Withdrawal Policy

TCM reserves the right to request that a child/family withdraw from the center due to lack of tuition payment. Refusal of parents to comply with policies may result in the exclusion of the parent from TCM grounds. This may include but are not limited to: refusal to adhere to health and safety guidelines, failure to adhere to the parent compact agreement, refusal to submit the appropriate enrollment and medical documentation as required by the Dept. of Early Education and Care. In addition, inappropriate or abusive behavior (intimidating gestures, invading personal space) or language (swearing, denigrating or caustic remarks) directed toward a staff member is unacceptable. When and if appropriate, a notice will be given to notify the parents in writing of the decision to request withdrawal of the child's/family's enrollment in the school. The deposit and the last month's tuition will not be refunded to the parents under these conditions.

Drop Off/ Pick Up Policy

TCM requests that all parents call, email or send a Brightwheel message when their child will be dropped off after 9:15 or will be absent. Parents are asked to send an email to the Director and copy the classroom email address informing TCM about the absence. Call only if you absolutely need to speak to the teachers on a time sensitive message.

Please arrive and pick up your child on time. Promptness is crucial to a smooth running program and the shift changes of our teachers, as well as the social adjustment for your child. If you arrive early, the parent door code will not work yet but will be released around 7:30 am. Teachers always need a few minutes to prepare the opening of the classroom before the doors are unlocked.

If there is a new person picking up your child you are required by law to send TCM the adults information along with requesting the adult bring their photo identification.

Enrollment Policies

Late Pick Up Fee

In addition to inconveniencing staff, your child may become anxious and upset when you are late. A late fee has been instituted to discourage late pick-ups at the end of the day. Everyone can be late once in a while and we do not want to put extra stress on parents while driving to the school. In case of repeated or frequent lateness, the Director will be issuing a late fee. **Parents will be charged a \$10.00 fee for every 3 minutes they are late. An invoice will be sent to families to collect the fee.**

- Should a family pick up their child after school is closed, 5:30pm, the late charge is \$10.00 per every minute late.

Drop In- Daily & Extended Day

If the program has a vacant space in a session(s) and your child fits the age requirements, parents may request drop-in care for their currently enrolled child. Parents may sign up for drop-in care with reservations taken on a first-come-first served basis. If someone adds one to three hours to their day we charge an hourly rate. The hourly rate is \$25. If someone requests an additional AM or Full day, we charge the amounts below. Rates are for IT and PS. Payment may be made at the time of drop-off by personal check or you will receive an invoice from the business manager. The rates are \$80 for 7:30 – 12:30 and \$115 for 7:30 – 3:30.

Responsibilities of the Program

Interactions Among Educators & Children

The following is our interactions policy that is adopted from the EEC regulations.

The licensee shall direct child guidance to the goal of maximizing the growth and development of the children and for protecting the group and individuals within it. The licensee shall use behavior management in a consistent, reasonable and appropriate way based on an understanding of the individual needs and development of a child.

- The licensee shall use behavior management techniques such as setting reasonable and positive expectations, offering choices and providing children an opportunity to verbalize their feelings, which encourage children to develop self-control through understanding.
- The licensee shall prohibit:
 - spanking or other corporal punishment of children;
 - subjecting children to cruel or severe punishment such as humiliation, verbal or physical abuse, neglect, or abusive treatment;
 - depriving children of meals or snacks;
 - force feeding children;
 - disciplining a child for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet; or forcing a child to remain on the toilet, or using any other unusual or excessive practices for toileting;
 - confining a child to a swing, crib or any other piece of equipment for an extended period of time; and
 - excessive time out or taking a break from a particular area/activity
- Where appropriate and feasible, children shall participate in the establishment of such rules, policies, and procedures.

Responsibilities of the Program

Interactions Among Educators & Children

Any use of severe punishment is considered abuse and will result in immediate dismissal of the staff member. We encourage and reward positive behavior with children and ignore or not reward inappropriate behavior whenever possible. If a behavior is harmful to the child or to other children in the classroom, the child will be asked to stop immediately and told that the specific behavior is not okay. The goal will always be to empower the children and give tools to solve conflicts with peer peacefully. The teacher is acting as a role model in the classroom for all children.

Licensing Regulations

The center obtains a copy of 606 CMR 7.00, Standards for the Licensure or Approval of Family Child Care; Small Group and School Age and Large Group and School Age Child Care Programs on the premises which are available to any parent upon request. If you have questions about any of the regulations or any of the other school policies, please ask the director. Parents may contact EEC for the program's licensing history. The regional office of EEC is in Worcester at 10 Austin St., Worcester, MA 01609. 508-798-5180.

Parents may contact EEC at any time for information regarding the program's compliance history.

Responsibilities of the Program

Injury Prevention & Managing Infectious Diseases

\Educators will monitor the environment on a daily basis and report potential hazards to the Director immediately. Educators will check children's clothing to ensure that it is free from strings, laces or jewelry that could become entangled or wedged in playground equipment and present a strangulation hazard. Educators will protect children against cold, heat and sun injury. All toxic substances such as cleaning supplies are either in a locked closet or a cabinet out of the reach of children. Items that are hazardous are kept in drawers or cabinets with safety latches. Medicines are put in a locked bag/box either in the refrigerator or in the first aid box which is out of the reach of children. In the IT Program, topical creams will be in the cabinet of the changing table or in the first aid box.

An injury log for both classrooms is kept in the office. Teachers are responsible to inform the Director of any serious injuries of children and will fill out injury reports which the Director reviews and signs. Parents will be informed in writing of each incidence of an injury requiring administration of first aid within 24 hours and an illness/injury report form will be completed and added to the child's file. Parents will receive a copy after they sign and the original will be placed in the child's file. TCM will maintain a record of any unusual or serious incidents including but not limited to behavioral incidents, injuries, property destruction or emergencies. The Director will monitor the safety record of the center on a monthly basis.

Upon leaving the building with children to the playground, on walks or field trips, teachers will bring a first aid bag which includes emergency contacts for all children in alphabetical order by first names. If an emergency occurs and requires professional medical assistance, an ambulance will be called and parents will be notified immediately.

Responsibilities of the Program

Injury Prevention & Managing Infectious Diseases

EEC will be sent the illness/injury report form within three business days. If overnight hospitalization is required, EEC will immediately be contacted by telephone. EEC will review any reports submitted and conduct a further review if needed. This will be followed by a report sent to the center documenting the review and identifying any non-compliance. Asthma attacks, seizures and bee stings do not need to be reported to EEC. All toxic substances such as cleaning supplies are either in a locked closet or a cabinet out of the reach of children. Items that are hazardous are kept in drawers or cabinets with safety latches. Medicines are put in a locked bag/box either in the refrigerator or in the first aid box which is out of the reach of children. In the IT Program, topical creams will be in the cabinet of the changing table or in the first aid box.

The center follows the policies and procedures in conformance with regulations recommendations set by the Division of Communicable Disease Control, Department of Public Health regarding the care of children with infectious disease. The Director informs parents when any communicable disease has been introduced into the center when their child was in attendance via email. For any specific questions regarding the health and safety of one child or the center as a whole, the Health Care Consultant will be contacted for assistance. The Parent Handbook also outlines when parents should keep their child home for the management of communicable/infectious diseases. Written documentation from the child's physician may be requested by the center regarding the child's return to the program.

Reporting

Every educator is a mandated reporter under M.G.L.c 119, 51A law and must make a report to the Dept. of Children and Families (DCF) whenever they have reasonable cause to believe a child in the program is suffering from serious physical or emotional injury resulting from abuse inflicted upon the child. The telephone number is: 508.424.0100. Suspicion may include sexual abuse, neglect, malnutrition, and other harmful circumstances.

Responsibilities of the Program

Reporting

It does not matter where the abuse or neglect has occurred or by whom it was inflicted. Teachers will alert the Director. The Director or/and the teacher shall immediately report suspected child abuse or neglect to the DCF. The Director will notify EEC about any suspicion of abuse or neglect of a child while in the care of the program or during a program related activity. The licensee shall develop and maintain written procedures for addressing any suspected incident of child abuse or neglect. A staff member will be put on leave and will not work directly with children until the DCF investigation is completed and for such further time as the EEC requires.

Infection Control

Staff and children wash their hands with liquid soap and running water using friction. Disposable towels will be used to turn off faucets and hands are dried with disposable towels. Staff and children wash their hands on arrival at the center, including after playing at the playgrounds, before eating or handling food, after toileting or diapering, after coming into contact with bodily fluids and discharges, after handling visiting or caged animals or their equipment. In addition, hand washing by staff must occur before and after administration of medication and after performing cleaning tasks, handling trash or using cleaning products. Hand washing is also encouraged after messy activities such as painting or before using the water or sensory table. Facilities used for hand washing after diapering or toileting in bathroom areas are separate from facilities and areas for food preparation and food service.

All surfaces such as tables and chairs are sprayed with a disinfectant which is a commercially prepared solution to which water is added and it has been registered by the EPA as a sanitizing solution. Spraying and wiping first is a cleaning process followed by a second application that dries without wiping off is used as the disinfectant. Diapering surfaces are cleaned and disinfected after each use. Disposable gloves are used for the clean-up of bodily fluids and of blood spills. The affected area will be disinfected and used gloves will be thrown away in a lined, covered container or double bagged sheets.

Responsibilities of the Program

Infection Control

Staff will wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water after cleaning up a bloodied area. Bloody or soiled clothing will be sealed in a plastic bag, labeled with the child's name and returned to the parent at pick up time. All cleaning supplies and disinfectants will be stored in a secure place and out of the reach of children. All staff will be trained in infection control washing/disinfecting bathroom sinks and toilets, floors, mops, tables, diaper pails, baskets, toys mouthed by infants and toddlers, bibs, cloth towels/washcloths, dress-up clothes, crib sheets and/or resting mats or resting mat

School Safety!

School Door Policy

It is a school policy that only adults open the doors at TCM, including the main entrance door and the doors entering into the classrooms. This policy has been successful in eliminating accidents related to children opening doors and prevents children from leaving the building without an adult. Parents/sitters need to adhere to this policy by not allowing their children to open the doors entering and exiting the school. This policy also applies to all playground gates. Parents receive the door code at the beginning of the school year and may enter the school at any time during the day without notification. The parent door code releases at 7:30 am and closes promptly at 5:30 pm on school days.

School Safety!

Gate Policy- Outside

The outside gates must be shut at all times when entering and exiting the premises. The pin will be in the gate latch when the children are outside to prevent the children from opening the latch.

Emergency Evacuation

An evacuation of the building may become necessary due to fire, natural disaster, or other situations. If an evacuation is necessary, the teachers of each group will take their children, attendance books and parent emergency contacts out to the nearest or safest exit. All groups will meet outside at the assigned space at the playground. If an indoor space is needed, the MX Facilities building next door can be accessed safely as there is a sidewalk. There is also a ramp which makes the building easily accessible for strollers and cribs. Infants and children who are not able to walk would be carried outside or transported in the evacuation crib. The Director or other designated teacher in charge will check the classrooms and bathrooms for any stragglers, take a phone, attendance book, emergency contact information and join the group outside. The staff will use other cell phones as needed. A phone call to MX School will be made as soon as possible to inform them of the emergency. A request for transportation for the children will be made if necessary. The MX School has several vehicles available for our use if needed to go to the main campus. If the entire area requires evacuation, we will follow the MX School's evacuation plan, which may include staying at MX School or having bus transportation to the Concord- Carlisle High School or other designated area as directed by the Town of Concord. Parents will be notified of the situation and requested to pick up their child as soon as possible.

In the case of a missing child, the teachers will first search the building and the grounds. Another staff member will contact the parents. MX School will be contacted to assist in the search. If the child cannot be located within 15 minutes, the Concord police department will be called for help.

School Safety!

Emergency Evacuation

Exit signs and separate evacuation plans are posted for each classroom area. When considering evacuation or sheltering in place, educators must be able to communicate basic emergency information to emergency personnel, bring telephones if needed off the premises and follow the directions of the local emergency management authorities. In the infant/toddler program, an approved evacuation crib may be utilized in moving infants or infants and young toddlers together. The teachers who are with the children in the classrooms will lead the children out of the building. The Director or other designated person will check for stragglers while the other teachers take the attendance sheet, emergency contact information and phone outside to the playground with the children.

Practice evacuation drills are held with all groups of children with the staff on a monthly basis on different days and at different times of the day so as to include all children and staff with their varying schedules. Director logs the information in the Fire Drill Log.

Plan for Loss of Heat & Water

TCM will stay open if possible for the duration of the day, if the room temperature is not less than 65 degrees Fahrenheit and water availability. Our fire detection alarms are hard-wired to the Concord Fire Department. In the event it is necessary to close, parents will be notified of the situation by TCM staff members and requested to pick up their child as soon as possible.

If the water is off in the entire building and will remain off for more than two hours, we will close for the day.

Shelter in Place

If requested by MX School Personnel or other emergency authorities to shelter in place, staff will close the shades and remain calm and carry on in the daily routine as much as can be expected for the safety of the children.

School Safety!

Plan for Loss of Heat & Water

Lockdown Procedure

If a lockdown becomes necessary, teachers will lock the classroom doors, pull down the shades, and barricade all doors with shelves or other heavy furniture. Teachers will gather the children in a designated area away from windows and doors. Teachers will keep the children calm and stay put until emergency personnel, police, or other officials will ask to be let in. Under no circumstances are teachers allowed to open the door without assuring proper identification of the official. Wait for certainty that help has arrived before opening the door!

Safe Sleep Policy

Infants, unless otherwise ordered by a health-care professional, are placed on their backs to sleep on a firm surface manufactured for sale as infant sleeping equipment that meets the standards of the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission. Pillows, quilts, comforters, stuffed toys or other padded materials are not allowed in cribs for infants younger than twelve months. After being placed down for sleep on their backs, infants may be allowed to assume any comfortable sleep position when they can easily turn themselves from the back position.

For toddlers and preschoolers, the program provides mats, sheets and blankets. Bedding is washed on-site each week. The length of sleep, rest or quiet activity is appropriate to the needs of the children who are in care for longer than four hours. Spacing of two feet between cots or three feet between children's faces is ensured. Appropriate space and lighting is available to children for quiet activities who do not sleep.

School Safety!

Parking Lot Safety

Children need to be accompanied in the parking lot and on the playground during drop off and pick up times. Please be advised to hold your child's hand when walking through the parking lot. Cars should never be left with motors running. Children/siblings should not be left in cars unattended during transition times.

Parking is allowed in the parking lot next to the building. The closest space to the building is not a handicapped space but it should be held open for parents in the late stages of pregnancy, parents with newborns, or multiple young siblings. Please do not use the two handicapped parking spaces located closest to the ramp entrance unless you have a special need or circumstance. Please ask the staff for help in times of special health circumstances as they may be able to help with your drop off or pick up schedule. Parking is not allowed on Lowell Road at any time. Be aware that there is an entrance and an exit to the parking lot - please obey the correct flow of traffic into and out of the parking lot, otherwise it can pose a dangerous threat to pedestrians and other cars. Please instruct sitters or other family members about our parking lot safety concerns.

"Change in Authorization" Forms

When someone other than a parent or pre-approved person (someone already listed on your enrollment forms) will be picking up a child, a parent must complete a "Change in Authorization to pick up Child" form and give it to the staff prior to the pick-up. Last minute phone calls or emails are acceptable in emergency situations. If a child is ill during school the parents will be notified first. If parents are unavailable, then the persons listed on the "emergency contact" cards kept on file at the school (and part of the required documentation upon enrollment) will be called to come and pick up the child. These forms are in your enrollment packet and are also available at school. If someone new is picking up, or if a teacher does not recognize the individual, a driver's license or other valid documentation will be required for identification purposes.

School Safety!

Transportation

Regular transportation is not provided by TCM. Despite this, a state regulation requires programs to obtain a “Transportation Plan Form” from each family currently enrolled. This form, like all other forms, needs to be updated on an annual basis. If someone who is on the child’s authorization form is a person who can pick up your child but teachers are not familiar with the individual, a driver's license will be required for identification purposes. Otherwise, never will a child be released to a person not identified as authorized to do so.

Snow Day Policy

School will be canceled on account of inclement weather. TCM typically follows the Concord Public Schools for school closings or delays. Parents are asked to check the Concord Public School website or announcement on local TV stations for information regarding school closure. The Director or a designated person will send an email asap to the TCM community to alert parents to the closure. On occasion, the Director may decide to cancel a session, open later, or close early due to weather conditions or predictions even when the public schools remain open. This is especially the case when a delayed opening is necessary, since Concord Public Schools have a different opening time from TCM. If public schools have any type of delayed opening TCM will always open at 9:30am. All families will be contacted asap via email. Transportation safety is of utmost concern for all staff and families when making these difficult decisions. We will look at surrounding towns to ensure it is safe enough to commute to school!

Thank You!

Thank you for reading and considering these important messages. We hope that the information in the Parent Handbook has been helpful and you feel prepared and confident to start another school year with the TCM teaching team. As always, if you have any further questions, please contact the Director at director@thechildrensmeeinghouse.org

We here at TCM are looking forward to all the possibilities of learning with your children! Welcome, we are happy you have chosen TCM and we are excited to take care of your children and embrace your family!