



Parent Handbook 2023-2024

Early Childhood Programs:

Where Families Play a Part from the Start since 1974.

501 Tompkins Avenue, Mamaroneck, NY 10543

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Chief Business Administrator:
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MISSION STATEMENT:

Using productive play as a vehicle for learning, the nursery school helps our children grow as individuals and community members in a safe, caring and challenging environment.

Our program is licensed by the NYS Office of Children and Family Services. Our OCFS# is 458050. It is your responsibility to be well versed in the regulations that we must comply with. Please feel free to come to the office or go to http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/childcare/regs/418-1_CDCC_regs.asp and download the regulations. A copy of the regulations is available in the Parent Resource area at the top of the stairs next to the office.



Mamaroneck Community Nursery School

Board of Directors 2023-2024

Co-President	Virginia Watts
Co-Presiden	Joanna Gonzalez
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MAL(Diversity & Inclusion)	Shanna Ortega

Administration/Chain of Command

Melissa O'Halloran, Director
M. Charlene Abney, Assistant Director
Dina Ahne, Chief Business Administrator



Any reference to "he" in this manual can be assumed to refer to "she" as well for ease of communication.

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Dear Parents,

Welcome to the **Mamaroneck Community Nursery School**. We are happy that you have chosen us as your child's school this year. Your child will have many rewarding experiences here, and we look forward to sharing them with you and your child.

Because we are a cooperative, you are a **SHARE HOLDER** in the school; an equal owner with all the other parents enrolled for the coming school year. As a shareholder, you play an important role in the success of our school, as such you are asked to vote yearly to elect our Board of Directors.

We keep the needs of the children our top priority. In order to keep your child happy and content, we offer a safe, nurturing, and loving atmosphere in which your child can experience many creative activities at his or her own developmental level.

It is hoped that this handbook will help to acquaint you with our policies and procedures. We've tried to cover the different aspects of our nursery school to help you and us keep the operation running smoothly.

PLEASE READ THIS HANDBOOK CAREFULLY AND USE IT AS A REFERENCE WHEN QUESTIONS ARISE.

Our staff is always available to answer any questions that you may have. We will also try to answer any child-related problems that arise. If we don't have the answers, we will give you some names and numbers of those who may be able to help.

We are looking forward to a wonderful school year. Our doors are always open to you. We are also available via email and we welcome your suggestions and questions anytime.

Melissa O'Halloran, Director
Charlie Abney, Assistant Director
Dina Ahne, Chief Business Admin.

OUR SCHOOL

CO-OP PHILOSOPHY:

As a parent cooperative, MCNS invites parents to participate in a meaningful way in the beginning educational life of their children. Our 2 year old classes do not have parent participation but we do welcome family members as guests when appropriate. There is the opportunity for parent participation in our 3-5 year old classrooms. As a Co-op MCNS relies on parent volunteers to keep the school functioning properly. Although the Director handles the day-to-day operation of the school, an elected group of nursery school parents, the Board of Directors, is responsible for the overall functioning of the school. All MCNS parents have an obligation to play their part in the running of the school, especially in regard to fundraising, special event planning, and attendance at the State of the School meeting. Without parents' volunteer efforts, the school cannot function properly.

ENROLLMENT:

Mamaroneck Community Nursery School is open to all children who are age-eligible for the specific program. Priority enrollment is given each year to those who are presently attending the nursery and to those of sibling alumni. Remaining spots are offered to new students in the order their application is received. We admit students of any race, color, religion, and national or ethnic origin.

ORGANIZATION:

The Director is responsible for the educational program at the nursery school. The Director and the professional staff meet frequently for planning sessions and evaluations. The Board of Directors, which is an elected group of nursery school parents, is responsible for the overall functioning of the school. It is this board that selects and carries out the various fundraising events and formulates school policy. The Board is also responsible for setting tuition, salaries and approval of any major expenditures.

PHILOSOPHY:

We believe that play is a child's vehicle for learning. Each child is an individual growing at his or her own rate of readiness and ability. Developing self-esteem, learning to communicate, sharing and to socializing within one's own peer group are our basic goals. We believe that learning is a natural and ongoing phenomenon, which emerges as we interact with and respond to our environment. Here at the nursery school, the child has a place to explore, create and experiment freely.

PURPOSE:

Nursery school is a new and exciting adventure for a child, for it offers a first opportunity to explore the world outside of the home and family and to enter into relationships with peers and adults other than parents. Nursery school is an educational supplement to the home, offering a variety of developmentally appropriate experiences for physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development.

Our school enables the child to explore with his natural curiosity. Our purpose is to create an atmosphere for thinking, doing and experimenting, which will enrich the child as a whole and help him to become a contributing and well-adjusted group member. By doing this, we reinforce a child's respect for himself as a capable and worthwhile individual.

The child is encouraged to grow creatively and express himself through a free choice of numerous activities. He is also introduced to democratic procedures in a few simple routines including clean-up time, snack time and cooperating at story and music time.

MCNS' S COMMITMENT TO FAMILY

MCNS is committed to working with families. We strongly encourage you to participate in every aspect of your child's program. Our main focus remains with your child. If you have any concerns or questions, please immediately contact us by calling the office at 914-381-2655 or by emailing Melissa at preschool@mcnschool.org, Charlie at toddler@mcnschool.org or Dina at bookkeeper@mcnschool.org

It is vitally important that you as parents/guardians communicate your needs and desires regarding your child's development openly and honestly with your child's teachers. You are encouraged to discuss any developmental milestones you have encountered and share any other information that may be appropriate.

Parents are encouraged to share personal interests including hobbies, talents, cultural backgrounds, favorite recipes, etc. in the classroom or with the school. Parent involvement is valued and therefore encouraged.

GENERAL GOALS FOR CHILDREN

- To offer a safe, nurturing and loving atmosphere in which children can experience creative activities in an atmosphere of exploration and experimentation.
- To enable children to be self-directed and exhibit self-control.
- To recognize each child's strengths and build upon them.
- To promote the building of self-esteem, the ability to communicate and the acquisition of social skills within the peer group.
- To maintain an atmosphere of the nursery school as an educational supplement to the home with an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust.
- To establish a curriculum based on play as a vehicle for learning and the interests of the child presented in a developmentally appropriate manner.

SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITY TO PARENTS/ GUARDIANS

- To provide meaningful parenting educational opportunities.
- To establish an atmosphere that welcomes families in all their diversity.
- To establish a method of communication and maintain a dialogue between school and home.
- To create, maintain, and promote an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust.
- To meet all legal regulations for health, safety, nutrition, staffing patterns, program, emergencies, illness and other matters.
- To release child only to those people designated in writing by the custodial parent or guardian.
- To plan the appropriate program for each child, taking into account language, culture, age, differing abilities, and all other pertinent factor.
- To maintain confidential records of children's development and progress, and to make these records available to the parents upon request and only to others if authorized in writing by the parent.
- To establish other policies where needed and apply them uniformly among staff, children and parents.

PARENT/ GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITY TO SCHOOL

- Make tuition and all other payments according to the operational policies of the preschool and the contract in their possession.
 - Assist in the classroom (3, 4 & 5 year old classes only) on a monthly basis. If you are unable to attend on your assigned day, you must arrange a switch with another parent or pick an open day to switch to and notify the office. If this is not possible, a \$50.00 administration fee will be charged.
 - To attend Back to School night and vote on the MCNS Board of Directors slate in May.
 - Parents and children should dress in clothes that are comfortable and can get messy.
 - Parents must dress their children appropriately for outdoor play. On chilly days, boots, mittens, hats and warm winter coats are a must.
 - To be involved with staff in setting program's direction and daily experiences by volunteering or serving on parent boards and participating in parent meetings.
 - To agree in advance and in writing to follow all program policies.
 - To provide information about your child or family that may be affecting his development.
 - To discuss any areas of concern with the appropriate staff member or the director.
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MCNS'S EDUCATING EVERY CHILD POLICY

MCNS's "Educating Every Child" Policy philosophically aligns with the following definition of inclusion, based on a Joint Position Statement of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), April 2009:

Early childhood inclusion embodies the values, policies, and practices that support the right of every young child and his or her family, regardless of ability, to participate in a broad range of activities and contexts as full members of families, communities, and society. The desired results of inclusive experiences for all children and their families include: a sense of belonging and membership, positive social relationships and friendships, and the ability to reach their full learning and developmental potential. The defining features of inclusion that can be used to identify high quality early childhood programs are access, participation, and supports.

Access – means providing a wide range of activities and environments for every child by removing physical barriers and offering multiple ways to promote learning and development.

Participation – means using a range of instructional approaches to promote engagement in play and learning activities, and a sense of belonging for every child.

Supports – refer to broader aspects of the system such as professional development, incentives for inclusion, and opportunities for communication and collaboration among families and professionals to assure high quality inclusion.

MCNS shall:

1. Create high expectations for every child to reach his or her full potential.
 2. Develop a program philosophically consistent with the definition above.
 3. Establish a system of adequate services and supports to ensure staff and parents cooperatively address the needs of every child.
 4. Help the staff meet each child's needs, which may include facilitating staff participation in special education meetings on behalf of children in their care and assisting staff in integrating the recommendations from those meetings into the curriculum.
 5. Incorporate ADA/IDEA guidelines in order to maintain a facility that is useable for all children
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IMPORTANT PARENT INFORMATION

ABSENTEEISM, ATTENDANCE AND VACATIONS:

Our nursery school runs on an annual budget based on annual tuition rates. The contract you signed is a legally binding agreement between the family and the school. No credit can be given for absenteeism. Your tuition can be prorated following a letter of withdrawal in accordance with the contract. Please also read the section in this handbook titled "Notice of withdrawal" for more details.

Please notify the school if your child is unable to attend for any extended period of time (more than 2 sessions) and notify us immediately if your child has a contagious illness. We need to let other parents and teachers know that they or their child may have been exposed.

ANNUAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTION PROCEDURES:

The school executes the following procedure related to the annual Board of Directors Elections:

- Notification is made of nominations for officers. These notifications will be sent home via email in late-April. To be an officer on the Board of Directors the person must have a child enrolled in the preschool for the following year.
- A final slate of nominations will be presented to the general membership in May for vote.
- The Board of Director's term of office is from July 1st until June 30th.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURE

Drop Off	<u>Morning</u> 8:45 A.M.	or	<u>Afternoon</u> 12:15 P.M.
Pick Up	Preschool Classes 11:35-11:45 A.M.		2:35-2:45 P.M.

We are asking that all parents, with the exception of our Bumblebee, Butterfly and Firefly classes, use the drop off and pick up line.

Please follow the instructions below for a safe drop off and pick up procedure. Rain or shine, arrival and dismissal will take place outside.

Bumblebee, Butterfly and Firefly parents may walk your child to their classroom through the playground gate to their classroom door. For these families please note that the nursery school has no parent parking in the parking lot at 501 Tompkins Avenue. Please find parking on the street. Remember to obey all the posted parking signs to avoid ticketing.

3, 4, & 5 year olds' parents will use the drop off /pick up line. You must **ENTER THE PARKING LOT FROM THE BOSTON POST ROAD. DO NOT** enter using the Tompkins Avenue entrance to the parking lot. **DO NOT PASS ANY CAR IN FRONT OF YOU!**

If you arrive after the scheduled drop off time, please ring the doorbell and wait at the front door. A staff member will come to check your child in.

At present there is no set late policy, but a note is made every time a child is picked up after the scheduled time. If lateness becomes a problem, the Board of Directors will deal with this issue on an individual basis. The teachers use their lunch time to prepare the classroom for the afternoon session. Your lateness will further shorten their time. While lateness inconveniences the staff, the real problem lies with the child who has to see all the other children being picked up while he sits and waits, wondering who will be coming to get him. If you cannot avoid being late, please CALL IN ADVANCE so that we can let your child know that you had a slight delay and will be coming to school as soon as possible.

BABYSITTING:

We highly discourage babysitting by MCNS employees for MCNS families during non-school hours. While we cannot stop this, parents who choose to do this must realize that they do so at their own liability. Please do not use school hours to arrange babysitting with an employee.

BIRTHDAYS:

We do acknowledge birthdays at school. In general, birthday celebrations held at school are kept low-keyed so that they do not become disruptive to the daily routines that are so important. The teacher makes a birthday crown for each child and the class sings "Happy Birthday". Please do not send party bags, hats, favors, or sugary treats. For snack that day, why not send in 100% fruit ice pops or some special fruit snack that your child loves, such as yogurt cups or fruit salad? If you would like to donate a book for the classroom library or a game or puzzle for the classroom, please feel free to do so. We will put a special bookplate in the book to give the proper recognition to the birthday child. If you have scheduled a party outside of school, if you are inviting the whole class you may send the invitations to the school, and we will put them in the school bag. If you have a selective guest list, you must distribute them yourself.

CELL PHONE USE:

The telephones at the school are for business use. Personal calls should not be made from the telephone in the school. All cell phones should be set to vibrate during your stay at school and only answered in the event of a real emergency. Your time at school with your child is a special time and your undivided attention will reap you many benefits in the years to come.

COMMUNICATIONS:

It is important that teachers and parents work together. We need to be able to communicate freely with each other. Each day, many things affect you and your child both at home and away from home. We need to know what may be troubling your child when he/she comes to school. We like to know the reasons for this excitement or gloom. Please let your child's teacher know what may be the reason for any changes of that particular day.

Our relationship is built slowly and steadily and is based on mutual respect and trust. We recognize that you are the child's main teacher and a vital part of our relationship with the child. A child will watch how we all react and speak to each other and take cues on this behavior. This is why it is important that we all model a polite, accepting, warm, open and trusting manner when we speak and interact inside and outside the classroom.

Parents and staff educate each other as they communicate together. Parents communicate a wealth of information and insight into their own child. Teachers can inform parents about child development, the preschool curriculum and how their child is coping and learning in a group setting.

If you encounter a problem or concern, please do not speak in front of your child. We would rather speak privately with you. You may schedule an appointment to meet with us or spend some time right then away from the classroom to talk about the issue.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

Information relating to your child is confidential and will not be released unless written authorization is provided by a parent or legal guardian. An exception will be made in the event of suspected child abuse. Any such suspicion will be reported to the Director for immediate investigation and action with the appropriate authorities.

All participating parents must abide by our confidentiality procedure. Please feel free to discuss any issues you may have about a specific child with the teacher or the director. The teacher and director are not authorized to discuss with you this child, but will take your information under advisement. Any parent breaching this confidentiality policy will be asked to not participate and be charged for the remaining participating days for a substitute and the cost of snack.

DIAPERING OR UNDERWEAR CHANGING:

It is not necessary for your child to be toilet trained to attend our school. We believe that when a child shows an interest in toileting, he is ready to begin the process. The school will support your efforts to toilet train if you let us know. Once your child is fully trained and in underwear, we will remind them to use the bathroom and supervise their toileting. Staff will assist the children in their toileting needs as appropriate. This assistance consists of buttoning, unbuttoning clothing, zipping, explaining how to wipe and encouraging, but not wiping a child's bottom, flush and wash hands. If a toilet trained child has an accident, we will change the child who is wet as long as the child has back up clothes at school. Should your child come home with borrowed clothing, please launder and return them as soon as is convenient. The child will be changed within the classroom or bathroom area under the supervision of the classroom staff using Universal Precautions.

DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR:

If a child attending Mamaroneck Community Nursery School exhibits behavior that is disruptive to the school (including biting), the classroom Head Teacher, together with the Director, will notify the parent(s) of the problem. A confidential meeting will be scheduled with the Head Teacher, Director and parent(s) to discuss the problem, to determine how the problem should be handled, and whether additional supportive help (evaluation, counseling, therapy) is needed. If the parent(s) fail to comply with the prescribed plan within a reasonable amount of time and the child's behavior does not improve, the child may be dismissed from the school at the Director's discretion. Additionally, if despite intervention, the child's behavior still demands extensive individual time from the school staff, the child may be dismissed from the school also at the Director's discretion.

Likewise, if a child's parent(s) while at the school are disruptive, abusive or endangering to the staff, children or other parents of the children of the school, their child can be dismissed at the Director's discretion. All dismissals will be reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors of the school.

If a child is dismissed from the school for any of the reasons stated above, a prorated tuition refund will be made to the family excluding any non-refundable charges as of the day of dismissal.

DRESS CODE:

We ask that children come to school in attire that is appropriate for the many "messy-gooey" activities in which your child may want to participate. Your child should feel free to become involved without having to worry about getting dirty. We do provide smocks for those children who want to wear them. Though we encourage the use of smocks, there may be times when a child might feel inhibited by wearing one. Parents, staff and children would benefit if you provide your child with "school outfits" that no one needs to worry about. We do use washable art materials whenever possible.

We request that you provide your preschooler with an extra set of clothes in case of accidents. These clothes should include a complete change of clothing including underwear and socks. An extra pair of shoes would be helpful, but not mandatory. All items must be clearly labeled with your child's name.

For safety reasons, we ask that all children wear rubber soled, closed toed shoes and sneakers only for outside play. Open toed sandals, clogs, Crocs or party shoes are not appropriate or safe for running around on the playground or for riding bikes and scooters.

DROP-OFF SAFETY (See map and rules on last page):

When dropping your child at school:

Have your child ready on time. Your child should be done eating breakfast or lunch by the time you get in the drop off line.

You are under obligation to the New York State Child Car Seat Law which states, " ... each passenger.... Under the age of four is restrained in a specifically designed detachable or removable seat which meets the Federal motor vehicle safety standards..." The law has recently changed to state that children ages 4,5 and 6 riding in any seating position of a motor vehicle, will be required to be restrained in an appropriate child restraint system. A vehicle's seat belt alone is not a child restraint system. *Children who are at least 4 feet 9 inches tall are exempt from this provision and should be placed in a seat belt.*

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE:

Evacuation in case of an emergency will be handled much the same as for a fire drill. The children will exit the building with their teachers. Our evacuation site is the Church House (the white house in the circle of the driveway). You will receive a call, email or text message as soon as the children are safe. We will make calls, send an email or text message to you or your designated emergency person to pick up your child as soon as possible. A message will also be placed on the message machine at school, if possible. It is important for you to keep your emergency information up to date and accurate.

FIRE DRILLS:

Fire Drills are practiced with the children approximately ten times over the school year. However, if the alarms are sounding at the school when you arrive with your child or when you are picking up there is a special procedure we would ask you to follow. The children are informed that whenever the bells and lights go off, we always go to the playground. We practice this from inside the building and from outside the building.

When the bells are going off when you are dropping off your child:

1. Please leave your child in the car seat and move your car as soon as possible.
2. Park and wait for the all clear sign and then resume the drop off line.

When the bells are going off when you are picking up your child:

You will see the children lining up outside and walking away from the cars going to the playground:

- You should move your car so the emergency vehicles can get through if necessary
- You should park and walk over to the playground fence. Your child will be dismissed from there. Remember your child must be checked out so we know they are leaving.
- There should be someone at the gate to help you.

DO NOT TAKE YOUR CHILD FROM THE LINE. ALL CHILDREN HAVE TO BE ACCOUNTED FOR IN THE PLAYGROUND.

FUNDRAISING:

Why do we fundraise? The funds go directly into the operating budget to help fund those items that may not be allocated in the operating budget. This fundraising also allows us to keep our tuition affordable.

Where does the money go? The amount raised goes directly into the school's operating budget to benefit the children in their classrooms. Proceeds are used to purchase large equipment for the classrooms and/or the office.

What determines which fundraisers are used? The Board of Directors main criterion for choosing a fundraiser is if the fundraiser will bring in a profit and be related to children. The Board takes into consideration also what is asked of the members by way of time and effort required.

What types of fundraisers are used? We strive to make fundraisers family-focused, fun, creative, and useful. Possible fundraisers include but are not limited to – Parent's Night Out, Hop-A-Thon, school photos, Mabel's Labels. While fundraisers are not mandatory, it is our hope that you will cooperate to the extent that you are able in all of our endeavors.

Who determines which fundraisers are done? The Chairperson of the fundraising committee brings ideas to the school's Board of Directors. The board then either approves or disapproves of the ideas.

GRIEVANCE:

Parent Concerns - If you have any problem or concern about our operation or your child's progress, please contact your child's teacher or the Director immediately. Your concern is our concern.

GUIDANCE:

What is "Guidance"? Guidance is the means by which we help children learn about working together, self-control, decision making, problem solving, and conflict resolution in an encouraging atmosphere that maintains their self-esteem.

Young children are just learning how to get along in a group. The role of the teacher is to help children learn acceptable ways to express and meet their needs. Teachers give children cues about which behaviors to maintain or avoid and which alternative behaviors may be more successful. The overall guidance policy is aimed at creating an encouraging classroom environment that helps children develop social skills. One of our goals is to help your child develop a positive self-image. We recognize that children need clearly defined limits set in a non-threatening yet firm manner. We encourage children to be self-directed and exhibit self-control. In order to achieve these goals, we apply principles that build individual esteem and avoid any shaming practices. As such, we accomplish order and thus discipline through close supervision, gentle guidance, and redirection. This practice is rarely employed and never overused. We do not condone or employ corporal punishment as a means of discipline.

HEALTH REGULATIONS:

New York State Law limits services of the school staff to inspection and reporting of health data. The staff has been certified in first aid/CPR, to care for children who become ill, and to contact parents regarding health conditions on an as needed basis. The teachers and directors are unable to administer medicine to children enrolled in the school. However, the nursery school does have trained personnel to administer an Epi-Pen in the event of a life-threatening situation. If your child requires medication during the day for life threatening anaphylactic shock, the procedure is as follows:

- In the event that a child needs to have an epi-pen medication administered during the course of the day, please be advised that medication will be dispensed under the following conditions ONLY. This information must be very clear and easy to interpret.
- Parent or guardian provides medication with clearly written instructions

- A completed food allergy plan is on file at the school. This form can be downloaded from our website at www.mcnschool.org
- The Epi Pen must be in the original box from the pharmacy with the expiration date clearly visible. This procedure is for life-threatening emergency administration and not for ongoing maintenance medications. If any other medication needs to be administered while the child is at school, a parent, guardian or other person designated by the parent/caregiver.

It is the school policy and a requirement of NYS OCFS that all original medical forms and certifications of immunization be on file in the office by September and updated yearly. State law requires that a child is immunized against rubella, polio, diphtheria, measles and mumps, and chicken pox as well as requiring a blood lead level screening unless the child is exempt from this process. If your child is exempt, proper documentation must be on file in the office. In the event that the nursery school is notified of an outbreak of disease by the Board of Health in our community any child who is not fully immunized will not be allowed to attend MCNS until notification is received from the Board of Health that the outbreak is over.

Pursuant to New York Education Law §914, every child entering or attending school in the State of New York must be immunized against communicable diseases listed in public health law §2164. However, not all school children are immunized. Public health Law §2164 provides exemptions to the immunization requirements where immunization would be detrimental to a child's health. There is no longer a religious exemption.

Be advised, therefore, that anyone working, visiting, participating and/or attending Mamaroneck Community Nursery School or any other school in the State of New York, may come in direct contact with an un-immunized child and/or adult.

HEALTH RESPONSIBILITIES:

An important way of helping in our cooperative venture is in our health program. Volunteers with colds or other symptoms of illness may not participate. And we need your help in being observant for signs of illness in your child. Parents seem to feel instinctively when their child is "coming down with something". Please keep your child home if you are in doubt about his health. Better a lost day at nursery school than to expose a lot of children and parents to the contagious beginnings of a cold. Remember, what might only be a slight illness for your child might make another child or helping parent sick for several weeks.

It is also school policy that you should notify the office if your child is unable to attend for any extended period of time and it is mandatory that you inform us if your child has a contagious illness. It is further required that you must keep your child home 24 hours after a fever has subsided without fever medicine. For example, if your child is sent home from school with a fever, he/she should not attend the next day. In regards to colds, no child may attend school for the first few days of such an infection and may return to school only if the infection is subsiding as shown by a diminishing cough and mucous discharge. All children that have chronic allergic nasal discharge or cough must have such facts stated on their health form or notification must be given to the Director.

In the event the following occur, we ask you to keep your child at home:

- A suspected or diagnosed communicable disease as defined by the NYS Department of Health until evaluated and approved for inclusion by a health care provider to participate in the program.
- A temperature of 100° or above
- Or any fever accompanied by:
 - a deep cough, earache or draining ear, spasms of cough, sore throat, behavior change, stiff neck, rash, unusual irritability, poor feeding, vomiting or excessive crying.
 - A rash of any kind until diagnosed, treated or declared harmless by a physician
- Early colds (coughing and sneezing), very bad colds with purulent discharge
- Diarrhea or vomiting the previous evening or before morning - child needs to be free from vomiting or diarrhea for 24 hours before returning to school
- Red, runny or matting eyes - may be pink eye (conjunctivitis) - please call your doctor

- Bronchitis - if your child is coughing frequently
- Looking or acting very ill or getting worse.
- Neck pain when the child's head is moved or touched.
- A stiff neck or severe headache and looking very sick
- A seizure for the first time.
- Acting unusually confused
- Unequal pupils
- Breathing so fast or hard that the child cannot play, talk, cry or drink
- A severe stomachache that causes the child to double up and scream
- A stomachache without vomiting or diarrhea after a recent injury, blow to the abdomen or hard fall.
- Stools that are black or have blood mixed through them
- Not urinating at least once in 8 hours, dry mouth, no tears, sunken-eyes.
- Continuous clear drainage from the nose after a hard blow to the head.

You are required to submit to the office an emergency form that lists two (2) different adults who could take care of your child in the event of an emergency or an illness at school if you are not available.

We are a school for "healthy" children. A child who is not well does not benefit from our program and can adversely affect the health of our other children. If you have any doubts about your child's health, please keep your child home and contact your family doctor.

ILLNESS CHART *Source: US Dept. of Health & Human Services

Illness:	May Return:
Chicken Pox	24 hours after lesions have crusted
Conjunctivitis (pink eye)	24 hours after start of treatment
*COVID	Please see additional Information below
Croup	After illness has subsided
Diarrhea-GastroEnteritis	48 hours after last loose stool or after 1 normal bowel movement
Rubella	At least 7 days and 24 hours after symptoms end
Hepatitis A	At least 7 days after onset of jaundice
Impetigo	24 hours after treatment has started
Fever	24 hours after temperature is normal
Influenza	24 hours after symptoms have subsided
Measles	At least 4 days after onset of rash
Lice	24 hours after treatment has begun
Whooping Cough	At least 7 days after therapy has started
Pin worms	After treatment is completed
Roseola	After illness has subsided
Scabies	24 hours after start of treatment
Strep throat	48 hours after start of treatment
Poison Ivy	After lesions have dried up
Pneumonia or Epiglottitis	Written note from physician
Bacterial (Spinal) Meningitis	When Health Dept. gives OK
Mumps	14 days after swelling begins

*** Current Covid Protocols (Please note that these policies are for everyone despite vaccination status.)**

- Anyone who comes to the program with symptoms or who develops symptoms while at the program will be sent home and encouraged to get tested. The symptomatic child will be taken out of the classroom and brought to the office to rest while waiting to get picked up;
- Anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 should remain isolated at home for a period of at least 5 days and symptoms should be improved and be fever-free for at least 24 hours before returning to the child care program;

- Anyone who tested positive for COVID-19 and is returning to program between days 5 and 10 must wear a well-fitting mask, up through day 10, if they are able to tolerate one; OR may remove their mask following two negative COVID tests taken 48 hours apart. Children who are unable to wear a mask may still return to the child care program if they do not have symptoms;
- Anyone who has had close contact with someone with COVID-19 (this means when they were within six feet of someone with COVID-19 for more than 15 minutes in a 24-hour period) should wear a mask for 5 days after exposure whenever feasible. If they do not have symptoms, they do not need to quarantine and can attend the child care program.

HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS IN THE CLASSROOM:

In an effort to be more informed about the ways our families define their own race, religion, preferred language, and culture, the teachers will send home a request for information about the holidays that you celebrate at home. We would encourage you to come in and share your holiday celebration at school with the children. Since many holidays revolve around food, it is important that you talk to the teachers and provide ingredients for food items you may be bringing in for the celebration because we always have a number of allergies in our classrooms to various food ingredients. We will try to celebrate the holidays in a very low-key manner of the children enrolled in our classes and look to you for help with this.

HOLIDAYS/SCHOOL CLOSURES:

The School is typically closed to children on the following holidays (Please check the school calendar carefully)

- Rosh Hashanah
- Yom Kippur
- Columbus & Indigenous Peoples Day
- Veteran's Day, Election Day, Thanksgiving and No PM the day before
- Holiday Recess
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Winter Recess
- Staff Training Days
- Spring Recess
- Memorial Day
- Parent Teacher conference days
- Juneteenth

ILLNESS OR INJURY DURING A SCHOOL SESSION:

In the event that a child becomes ill at school, every effort will be made to reach the parents, or the person named on the emergency form. We expect that you will come as quickly as possible to take your child home. In spite of care and supervision, children sometimes suffer injuries in the school or on the school grounds. Minor cuts and scrapes are treated with first aid in the office. You will be notified as soon as possible of any injury received at school. More serious injuries needing medical attention cannot be fully cared for at school. You will be notified immediately if your child had such an injury, but in case you are not home we will use the names you designate on your emergency form so that proper medical help can be expedited. In a serious emergency, the director and/or the child's teacher take the injured student via ambulance to the emergency room at Sound Shore Hospital in New Rochelle. Simultaneously, the parent is notified that his/her child is being taken to the emergency room at the hospital and told to meet there. The family physician is also notified, if possible, that his/her patient is in route to the hospital emergency room. If the family physician and the parents cannot be reached, the decision about what to do next will be determined by the physician who treats the child in the emergency room.

NEW YORK STATE LEARNING STANDARDS:

At MCNS, we devote many staff hours to the training of teachers on how we can meet the NY standards and still maintain our philosophy that “Play is our vehicle for learning”. If you are interested in the standards, you can find them online at the New York State Education Department website.

NOTICE OF WITHDRAWAL:

If a parent withdraws their child on or before January 31, 2023, written notice must be received by the School at least thirty days prior to withdrawal. If thirty days’ notice is not received by the School prior to withdrawal, the parent will be responsible for additional thirty days tuition. Prepaid tuition, excluding the \$750.00 registration fee and any tuition due pursuant to the contract will be credited to you. If you withdraw your child after January 31, 2023, no portion of prepaid tuition will be refunded.

PARENT PARTICIPATION:

MCNS is committed to working with families. We strongly encourage them to participate in every aspect of their child's program. Parents are welcome to visit the school any time. Our main focus is your child. If you have any concerns or questions, please immediately contact the Director at 381-2655 or by e-mail at preschool@mcnschool.org.

It is vitally important that you as parents/guardians communicate your needs and desires regarding your child's development openly and honestly with your child's teachers. You are encouraged to discuss any developmental milestones you have encountered and share any other information that may be appropriate. Parents are encouraged to share personal interests including hobbies, talents, cultural backgrounds, favorite recipes, etc. Parent involvement is valued and therefore encouraged.

PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES:

Conversations with parents and teachers go on throughout the year, but scheduled conferences will take place in Dec. and in May. Additional conferences can be scheduled when a child is having difficulty or when you need help at home. We try to schedule conferences during school time, but some conference appointments may need to be made before or after school. Phone conferences are fine if the parent agrees, but face-to-face is always better. **The dates for these scheduled conferences are on your school calendar.**

December Parent Teacher Conference

During this conference, the staff will answer any questions you may have about the philosophy of the school as well as the importance of play in our curriculum. We will let you know how your child reacted to the program, how your child adjusted to the program and how your child has become involved in the activities of the program. You will have a chance to tell about your child and what your goals are for your child.

May Parent Teacher Conference

Appointments are made and prepared for in the same manner as the fall conferences with the following additions. By this time, the staff will have had time to gather information about your child. This information includes artwork, photos, specific skill information and a specific list of skills learned. The teachers will also address the goals from the initial conference and how the child has progressed with them.

PARKING:

As you may know, parking for the nursery school is limited. **There is no parking in the parking lot.** If you need to park, please park on Melbourne or Tompkins Avenue. Please obey all posted signs. (See map on Page 29)

PERMISSION TO OBSERVE A CHILD:

Occasionally, the nursery school will be asked to facilitate an observation of a child who is presently enrolled. In order for us to allow a professional to observe your child, you were asked to sign on the PAF form enabling us to do this. You will always be notified when this will happen.

PHOTOS:

During the school year, the teachers will take pictures of your child to be used for classroom books, slide presentations to parents, workshop presentation for other teachers as well as portfolios which are used for assessment. The photo form that you signed gives/does not give us permission to take photos for this purpose.

PICK-UP SAFETY SUGGESTIONS:**When picking your child up from school:**

- Start early enough so that there is no rushing.
- Enter the parking lot from the Boston Post Road.
- Wait in line until your car is opposite the dismissal sight.
- Stay in your car. Your child will be placed into the car.
- Be on time! It can be upsetting to your child to be the last one left at school.
- Pull up to the front door.
- Wait in your car for the teacher to help your child into the car seat.
- Check doors after you pick up each child.

SCHOOL PICTURES:

Once a year, our school photographer will take individual and group pictures of all the children. The nursery school does get 20% of the sales but you are under no obligation to purchase pictures and can simply return any unwanted photos to our office. Notes will be sent home with all children prior to picture day so that you may dress your child accordingly. We find that regular school clothes make for the best pictures by which to remember your child's nursery school days.

SECURITY CAMERAS:

One of the regulations states that we must tell you where the video cameras are in the building. There is a camera at the front door with the intercom system. There is a camera on the front stairs, one on the back stairs and one by the main office.

SEPARATION, YOUR CHILD AND YOU:

Your child is embarking on a new and exciting experience. For many, this may be the first regular activity with adult and peer relationships away from home and parents. For the most part, everything is new: teacher, surroundings, children, equipment, and routines. Your child will need lots of understanding from you.

Help your child by letting him know that you do not plan to simply drop him and go away. Expect to stay for at least the first day during the shortened sessions and perhaps longer if necessary. He needs you for security. Initially, he may stick very close to you. Let him do this. A familiar face, a reassuring hug, a touch from you, is all very important. Eventually, he will be ready to move away from you and will let you sit at one side of the room or in the hallway. Think of yourself as a "home base". Your child can come to you when he needs you, but is gradually able to venture further into the room by himself. Avoid following your child around the room. He may feel that you don't believe that this is an OK place to be and will not start to feel comfortable. If your child feels that you are anxious to leave him, it will be more difficult for him to make the adjustment. Next, talk with the teacher and make a plan for leaving. She will tell you when she thinks you can leave. It is important that you tell your child when you are leaving, NEVER "sneak out". Tell your child where you are going and how long you will be away. Say "Goodbye", leave immediately and return promptly at the time you told your child. (Do this even if you leave to go to the office for a cup of coffee). If your child is unhappy while you are away, the teacher will reassure him of your return and

comfort him, as he needs it.

The fifteen minutes can be extended to half an hour the next day, and so on until you, the teacher, and your child work out the “trials” of separation together. REMEMBER: Be patient and do not push your child into independence. It will happen when he or she is ready.

SHELTER IN PLACE DRILLS:

Twice a year we are required by NYS OCFS to conduct a Shelter in Place Drill with all the children in the school. Shelter in Place is a response to an emergency that creates a situation in which it is safer to remain in the building rather than to evacuate.

Some situations that might require sheltering in place are:

- Severe weather conditions
- Extreme temperatures (hot/cold)
- A public disturbance that escalated to violent acts
- Chemical or biological spill
- Rabid animal sighting

SNACKS:

It is our goal that snack time is an enjoyable as well as a nutritious experience that helps foster good eating habits. **Please read the section of this handbook regarding you and your participating day for further information about snack.**

In the interest of preventing choking and encouraging good nutrition the following list is made in accordance with the American Academy of Pediatrics recommendation as well as school policy.

Recommended Foods

The following is a suggested (but by no means exclusive) list of foods you may bring:

- Fresh fruit: apples, bananas, ripe pears, tangerines, kiwi, melon, oranges, peaches, pineapple and grapes. Grapes must be sliced lengthwise to prevent choking.
- Raw Vegetables: green or red peppers, cucumbers, or cherry tomatoes. Cherry tomatoes must be sliced in quarters.
- Cheese: spreads and slices & yogurt

Non-acceptable foods

- No nuts, candy or baked goods of any kind
- No popcorn or string cheese
- No raisins
- No cherries

If there is anything not on this list you would like to serve, please check with your child’s teacher.

Our Toddler classes will be provided snack by the program. Please make sure to notify the staff about specific allergies or special dietary needs your child may have. Since not all children like all foods, we will provide smaller amounts of two different foods. Seeing someone else taste a new food may help develop an attitude where children are willing to try an unknown food and learn to like it. Within the parameters of dietary needs we keep snacks as healthy and nutritious as possible.

TEACHERS AS MANDATED REPORTERS:

All of our staff members, because they work in a school, are mandated reporters for child Abuse and Maltreatment reporting. The staff has been trained and procedures exist for reporting any case that might come to our attention. As a parent cooperative with parents in the classroom every day, we have to be alert to any appearance of procedures not being followed. As a parent at the cooperative, you may never be alone with anyone else’s child but your own while in the school or on the playground. If you have any questions about the procedure, please feel free to contact the office.

TUITION ASSISTANCE FUND:

A tuition assistance fund was set up in the 1990's and is maintained by MCNS. The purpose of this fund is to enable a co-op family to remain active members in the event that they fall on financial hardship. The fund remains dependent on individual donations and occasionally from the profits of fundraising.

Families that are requesting the assistance should submit a brief statement outlining the circumstances or need along with a copy of their most recent income tax forms to the director of the school before the money is due. All requests and circumstances will remain absolutely confidential.

TUITION POLICIES:

Tuition payments are due and payable as set forth in your contract. Tuition is payable by check, money order, or certified bank check on the first of the month in which it is due. No cash will be accepted.

Late fees and delinquent tuition:

If you expect to be late with a tuition payment, please contact the office in advance with the expected payment date. A \$10.00 late fee will be charged on tuition payments that are not received by the fifth of the month unless the office is contacted in advance with the expected payment date. If payment is not made on the expected payment date, the late fee will be reinstated at the sole discretion of the School.

In the event that the office has not been contacted and a tuition payment is not received by the fifteenth of the month in which it is due, an invoice/late notice will be sent home to the parents. If the payment is not received within five days of the late notice, the parent will contact via email. If, by the last day of the month in which the payment is due, the Director will contact the Board of Directors and they will contact the family. For purpose of this paragraph, good cause means a bona fide financial, medical, employment, or family development or circumstance that was unexpected at the time the child was enrolled. If the parent does not demonstrate good cause by the last day of the month in which the payment is due, the Director will notify the Board of Directors and make a recommendation to the Board of Directors whether or not to dismiss the child from School. The Board of Directors shall, within ten days of the Director's recommendation, either dismiss the child or approve an alternative arrangement with the parent. If no alternative arrangement has been made between the Board of Directors and the parent by the last day of the month following the month in which the payment is due, the child will be dismissed. The School reserves its right to pursue its legal remedies for any breach of this contract.

Returned checks:

If a check is returned from the bank without payment, a \$25.00 fee will be assessed.

VISITING THE SCHOOL:

Parents are welcome visitors at school. We encourage parents to visit. Please check in the office before you arrive to insure that we don't have another visitor already in the classroom. For safety reasons, the front door of the school is locked with a security camera and an intercom system for admittance. If you arrive after the door has been locked, please press the intercom button on the brick wall to the left of the door and wait for someone to respond and buzz you in.

Any parent has the right to inspect the Center and be in the room with their child at any time. However, in the event of a non-custodial parent visit, a written notification from a representative of the courts must be on file in the office authorizing impromptu visitation rights.

WEATHER RELATED EVACUATION:

The procedure for closing school because of inclement weather begins with the Rye Neck and Mamaroneck Public School' s decision. If the districts have a delayed opening of one hour, we will delay our opening by one hour. Delays of two hours or more will necessitate the closing of school for the morning session. If the school districts are closed for the whole day, there will be no a.m. or p.m. sessions at MCNS. Closings will be announced on the school website at www.mcnschool.org, via email and/or text message. School closing information is published by 6 AM of the day of the closing. If we need to close school after a session has begun, we will make calls to you or your designated emergency person to pick up your child as soon as possible.

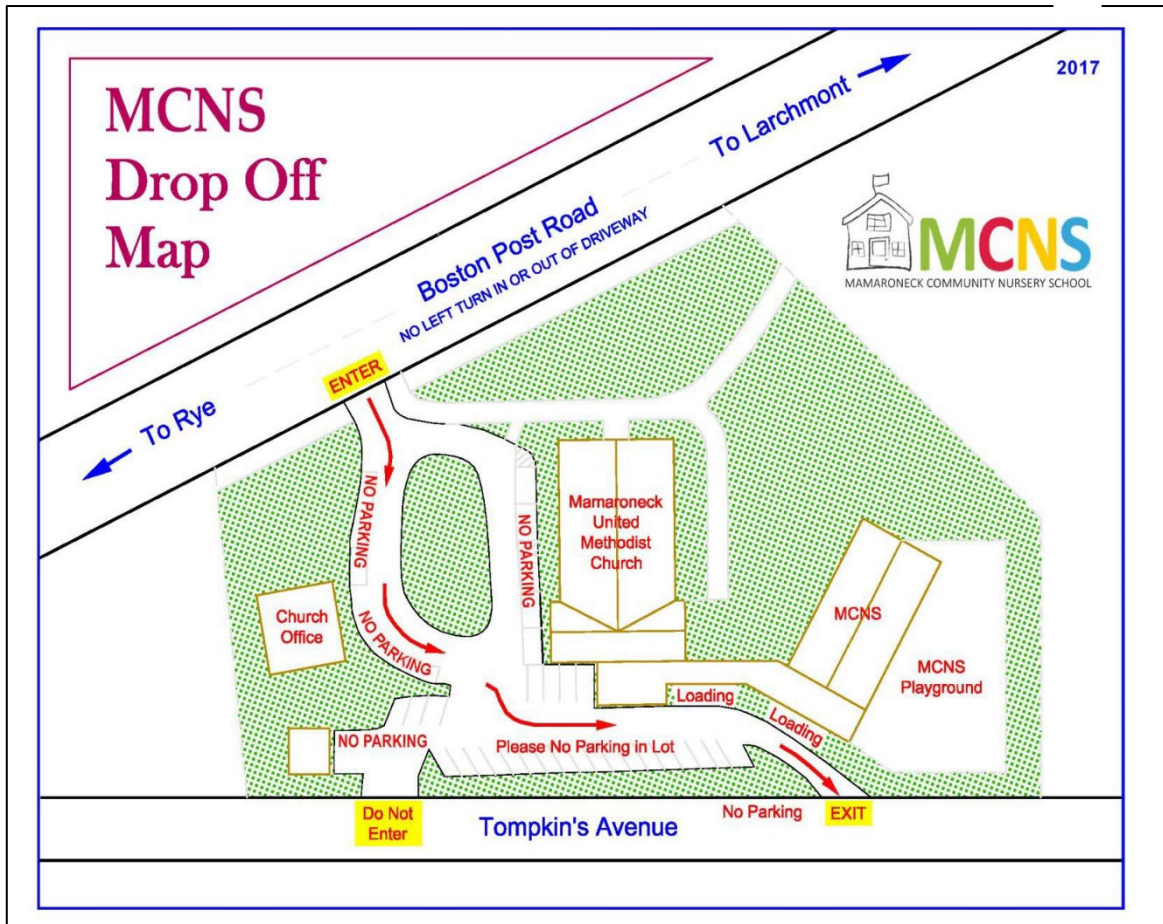


MCNS Drop Off and Pick Up Procedures



1. Enter the line from Boston Post Road NOT from Tompkins Avenue as we have only one entrance and exit for the line.
2. Do not take a left into the parking lot if you are heading North on Boston Post Road. *See alternate route below.
3. Stay in your car and pull up to the end of the driveway (as far as you can go) if you are in front.
4. Wait in your car until someone comes to take your child out of the car or put them in.
5. Do not park or idle your car in the pick-up line more than a few minutes before drop off/pick up.
6. When lined up on Boston Post Road, please do not block Beach Avenue, or the Briggs Antiques parking lot.

Please inform all drivers of your child/children of these



procedures so we can make the drop off & pick up time go as safely and quickly as possible.