THE CHILDREN'S HOUSE PARENT HANDBOOK

2026-2027 Version

A copy of this handbook will also be available on our website:
www.tchindy.org

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Yearly Forms & Change of Information
It is vital that we have complete and accurate records for each child. All records are held in strict confidentiality. Every school year we must have the following forms on file;

a) Field Trip Permission
b) Photo Release
c) Medication Authorization
d) Allergy Information, if applicable

School Hours / Contact / Programs

Preschool Monday – Friday
School Hours: 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM
Extended Care Hours: 7:00 AM – 5:30 PM
(Extended Care is included in Preschool Tuition)

Montessori School Monday – Friday
Early Drop-Off begins at 7:00 AM
School Hours: 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM
After School Care: 3:00 PM - 5:30 PM

Contact Information
Phone: 317-253-3033
Email: admin@tchindy.com

Please be on time
It is essential that your child arrive by 9:00 AM to begin the morning with the rest of the children. We recommend children arrive at 8:45 AM so they have time to put away their things and settle in before morning work begins. Late arrival of even five minutes can be extremely disruptive to children who have already started their work. Please contact the school if there will be a delay in arrival, or your child will be out due to sickness

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For arrivals between 9:00 and 9:30 AM you can access the door code on the TCH Student Portal.

Preschool Program
The preschool is a multi-age group. Our class covers a two to three year age span. This allows the youngest children to experience the stimulation of older students while giving the older ones the benefit of leadership roles. The students not only learn with each other, but from each other, without feeling the pressure of competition.

Elementary and Middle School
The elementary and middle school curriculum includes the traditional course selections in mathematics, reading, writing, oral expression, literature, geography, history, biology, music, art, yoga, Spanish, and physical skills. Additional classes such as Latin, algebra and geometry are available to students depending upon their skill set. The curriculum is designed to spark the children's imaginations. Children at this age are much more social, learning best while being an active part of their environment. Students will leave the building throughout the school year to study topics and educational issues that are of interest to them.

Arrivals and Departures

Drop-Off & Pick-up Procedures

Children may be dropped off beginning at 8:45 AM. We encourage you to drop off your child with enough time to put away their things and be ready to start their day at 9:00 am. You are welcome to walk preschoolers into their classroom. **Please park your car if you plan to come into the building to drop off or pick up your child.** Parking in the circular pick up area backs up the line for other parents waiting to pick up their students. Do not park in the circular pick up line during arrival (8:45 to 9:15 AM) and dismissal (2:45 to 3:15 PM) times.

Children will not be released until dismissal time at 3:00 PM. If you need to pick up your child earlier please notify staff by phone or email. When you arrive please queue between the yellow circular lines. A staff member will release your student to your care once you have put your car into park.

Children are not allowed to leave school with anyone who has not been authorized by their parent or guardian. If someone from your authorization list is unable to pick up your child for any reason, please inform the Administration that morning by phone or email. If your child is going home with another child on a given day please send a message to the Administration stating when and with whom the pick up will be. The staff member on duty may request ID from anyone new who is picking up your child.

Please do not give verbal messages to staff members while they are working. Arrival and departure times can get hectic! Feel free to send in a note or email if you have a message to convey.

Supervision of Children

Our responsibility begins and ends at the car door, or when children are dismissed to go home by other means selected by the parents. During school hours children are under the direct supervision of the staff at all times. They may not leave the school grounds during school hours except with their own parents or guardian, or as part of a field trip.

During school activities that take place outside of school hours, parents are to be in charge of their own children. Disciplining children who do not belong to you is not appropriate. Please discuss issues in a kind and respectful manner with involved parents.

Car Seats

Children under 40 pounds belong in a full car seat in the back seat; children 40-80 lbs and under 57" should be in a booster seat. If dropping off a car seat in the morning for a carpool please give it to a staff member. When picking up a car seat it will be located in the front hall of the school. Car seats must be labeled with the child's name. As of January 1, 2018, all children from ages 4 to 8 or less than 4' 9" are required to ride in a booster seat. Per Indiana State Law, Children 12 and under must ride in the backseat.

Children will not be allowed to go on field trips without the proper safety seat if traveling by car. The bus is equipped with five point harnesses for our younger students.

Attendance

It is important for students to report to school promptly each day. Arriving with the rest of their classmates will help your child adjust more easily to the school day and more quickly become a part of any activities that may already be in progress.

The Children's House considers regular school attendance essential for success in school. It is important that parents and students recognize the relationship between academic success and regular school attendance. Students should remain out of school only when absolutely necessary in order for them to achieve their maximum potential. Regular attendance is essential to establish continuity and community for your child.

School Calendar / Closings / Outdoor Play

School Calendar

Outlined in the school's calendar are holidays and scheduled school closings. Summer camp will be open during the months of June, July, and August. Scheduled closings will also be published on our website, and TCH student portal. The school reserves the right to amend the schedule as needed. You will be notified of changes immediately.

Severe Weather Closings

At the beginning of the year you will be given the opportunity to sign up for text notifications from the school. We will only send messages related to weather or school emergencies. You may request to be added to the text notification list any time by emailing or signing up on the TCH student portal.

If The Children's House should need to close due to inclement weather **we will send an email or text** once the decision has been made to close the school or delay opening. **Please DO NOT call or text staff members' phone numbers to ask about delays or closures.** We will typically follow the public school systems in our area. Because our families are geographically widespread please use good judgment and exercise caution during inclement weather. The top priority is the safety of our children, parents, and staff members. The decision to delay or cancel school is not an easy one to make and many things play a part in this decision. We suggest that you have a back up plan in place prior to the winter months.

Outdoor Play/Lost Items

Please dress children appropriately for the weather. Make sure your child brings warm outerwear, including hats, coats, snow-pants, gloves, galoshes or other boots for poor weather days. All outdoor clothing must be labeled. Please do not expect the staff to search for your child's lost items.

Financial Arrangements

Please make checks payable to The Children's House and note your child's name and payment description on memo line. Tuition is due on the date indicated on your contract. A late charge will be added to your account after that date or according to your contract. You may sign up to pay your tuition and relevant fees electronically; send an email to the Administrator to start the process.

Contract
Each family will receive a contract for the school year. Your child may not attend classes until the administrator has received your signed contract.

Registration Fee
A registration fee of $100.00 is required upon application to the school. This fee is non-refundable.

Materials Fee
A non-refundable fee of $200 is required and is included in your tuition contract. The materials fee is used to purchase educational materials for the classrooms as well as supply students with all materials needed to do their work in each class. This includes pencils, erasers, paper, notebooks, etc.

Field Trip Fee
This fee is provided to The Children's House for the purchase of educational / cultural programming (theatre tickets, art museum entrance fees, etc.) & the maintenance of the school's bus.

Tuition & Late Tuition
As per the enrollment contract there are three payment plans: 1) one annual installment, 2) an initial deposit plus nine monthly installments, or 3) an initial deposit plus two semester installments. Tuition payments are due on the due date indicated on your tuition contract. There is a seven-day grace period from your due date. Payment received after the grace period will be assessed a late charge of $40. Children will not be allowed to start a new month unless the previous month has been paid, unless arrangements have been made with the administrator. Full payment is required regardless of absences. We understand that families may occasionally experience financial difficulties. In such instances, we are willing to work with you. Please call our administrator as soon as possible so that we can make every effort to reach a reasonable solution. If you have not contacted the school by the 7th day past your due date, you will be billed the late charge of $40. There is a sibling discount available.

Work Day Deposit
In order to help maintain our school building one member of each family volunteers to work at The Children's House one day per semester (generally a weekend). The work days are scheduled throughout the semester and require a couple hour commitment. Each family is assessed a $200.00 work day deposit ($100.00 per semester at the beginning of their attendance at The Children's House. As long your family fulfills your work day obligation per semester this money remains as a deposit in your school account. If you choose not to participate in the work day your family will be reassessed the work day fee of $100.00 for the semester missed. When your child leaves The Children's House you can donate your work day deposit to the school or submit a written request for a refund. Work day deposits may not be used to pay off tuition account balances. If your child leaves the school you may not request a work day deposit refund unless your child's tuition account balance is $0. In order to continue receiving financial aid you must fulfill your workday requirement each year.

Before/After School Care
Elementary students may be dropped off between 7:00 and 8:45 AM and picked up anytime between 3:00 and 5:30 PM. You may sign your child or children up for Extended After Care for $1,500 per year per child which will be billed according to your tuition payment plan. The hourly rate for Before/After School Care is $20.00 per child. Parents will be invoiced for the use of hourly Before/After School Care. For students using the hourly rate extended care plan, charges start at 3:00 PM in half hour increments.

Late Pick-Up
After School Care is available until 5:30 PM. A late charge of $5.00 will be assessed for every 5 minutes past 5:30 PM. You will be sent an invoice, payable by the end of the week. Please make every effort to pick up your child on time; children are very sensitive about being picked-up late.

Returned Check
There will be a $40.00 service fee on all returned checks. The amount of the original check plus the service fee will be due immediately.

Health

Our goal is to do everything possible to contribute to your child's healthy and joyful development. Essential to this is physical health. We ask that every child be in good health and free of communicable diseases each day the child participates. Please do not send children to school if they have an excessive runny nose or cough, fever or any other communicable disease.

As parents and staff we know that children may arrive at school apparently well then become ill during the day. In such cases we will notify you immediately of your child's symptoms of illness. Because many childhood illnesses are contagious ill children must be picked up as soon as possible. Please make alternative care arrangements should your child display any symptoms of illness. We must, within reason, do everything possible to protect all children, staff, and their families from exposure to contagious illnesses.

Please look over our Health Policy carefully so you will know exactly which illnesses or conditions require your child to stay at home.

Health Forms
The following health forms must be on file at the start of school:

1. **MEDICATION RELEASE FORM**
    a. This form is necessary for any medication to be given or taken at school, whether intermittent, chronic, or illness specific.
2. **ALLERGY FORM**, if applicable
    a. If your child does not have any allergies you do not need to fill out this foorm.

Medical Emergencies:
There are staff members who are trained and equipped to respond with First Aid and CPR. Parents will be notified immediately of accident or injury. If emergency services are needed 9-1-1 will be called. Upon arrival to the emergency room we will continue to try and reach you or one of the people listed on your contact form. In any emergency, a staff member will remain with your child. Someone will accompany your child in the ambulance and through any procedures at the hospital until a parent/guardian has arrived.

Medications:
The Children's House strives to offer services that help meet the needs of our families. We recognize that some children will need to continue taking medication after they have returned to school and are no longer contagious. Children may also need to take medications for ongoing or chronic conditions. Please be sure medications are clearly marked with your child's name and any specific dosing requirements. Include the proper prescription/non-prescription form along with the medication. **In order to administer medication we must have a medication authorization form on file.**

The procedure required by state law is as follows:

1. All medications must be in the original container.
2. A medication release form must be fully and accurately filled out with both prescription/non prescription names, dosage amount and administration instructions.
3. All medicine must be handed directly to a staff member by the child's parent or guardian. No medicine may be brought to school by the child or put in a backpack or lunch. Medication will be stored under lock and key.
4. Parent must provide any over the counter medicines to be administered to their child. This includes Ibuprofen and Tylenol.

Keep a portion of your child's medicine AT HOME in case it is forgotten at school. The staff is NOT available to reopen the school if medicine is left at night.

Allergies
Please list all allergies on the medical forms. If your child's allergic reactions are severe please notify the staff in writing so an allergy plan can be enacted.

Health Policy

The Children's House follows the most recent policies laid out by the Indiana Department of Health in conjunction with the Indiana Department of Education. The baseline health policy is that a child will need to be symptom free for 24 hours BEFORE returning to school. Our standards are in place to protect, as much as we can, the overall health and safety of the children and the staff. We reserve the right to send a child home from school if we deem them too sick to comfortably engage in learning. A child is considered too sick to attend school if (a) the illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in school activities, (b) the illness results in a greater care need than the school staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children, or (c) the child has any of the following conditions:
(**Bold Print** is the illness, *italicize*d *print* is when your child may return to school.)

a) **Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye):** f*or purulent conjunctivitis (defined as pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow discharge, often with matted eyelids after sleep and eye pain or redness of the eye) the child must be cleared by a doctor to return. For bacterial conjunctivitis, 24 hours after starting antibiotics.*

b) **Diarrhea (**that is increased number of stools, increased stool water, and/or decreased form)**:** *24 hours after diarrhea stops.*

c) **General Sickness & Malaise** (such as unusual lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty with breathing, wheezing, or other unusual signs): *until medical evaluation indicates returning to school is okay.*

d) **Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease:** *until the child is fever free, doesn't have lesions that weep, and feels well enough to participate in classroom activities.*

e) **Impetigo:** *until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated, and with no weeping lesions.*

f) **Lice, Scabies or other infestation:** *after treatment, and child is nit free.*

g) **Measles:** *until 6 days after onset of rash, or if the child is not immunized; until doctor clears the child to return to normal activities*.

h) **Meningitis:** *On a case by case basis depending on strain (viral or bacterial), and symptomatic/ asymptomatic status, follow doctor's recommendation.*

i) **Mumps:** minimum five days from onset of parotitis, and until health care provider states the child can attend school.

j) **Nosebleed, Persistent:** *until medical attention is received.*

k) **Pertussis (Whooping Cough):** *until 5 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment to prevent an infection have been completed, or 21 days if not treated.*

l) **Respiratory Illness, Unspecified:** *fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication, and once the child feels well enough to participate in school activities without respiratory distress.*

m) **Ringworm:** child may attend school as long as rash is covered and being treated.

n) **Rubella:** *until 7 days after onset of rash, or if the child is not immunized; until doctor clears the child for return.*

o) **Seizure:** – *until medical attention is received.*

p) **Strep Throat & Streptococcal Viruses:** u*ntil 24 hours after initial antibiotic treatment, and cessation of fever.*

q) **Temperature** (100.4° or higher)**:** *24 hours after temperature returns to normal without fever reducing medication such as Ibuprofen and Tylenol.*

r) **Varicella (Chicken Pox):** *until 6 days after onset of rash or until all sores have dried and are completely crusted over.*

s) **Vomiting** (two or more episodes of vomiting in the previous 24 hours): *until vomiting resolves or until a health care provider determines the illness to be non-communicable, AND the child is not in danger of dehydration.*

Note: Please inform the office via TCH Student Portal OR email if you are keeping your child at home for any contagious condition so that we can inform the school community.

** As with all matters, confidentiality will be respected in regards to your child's health. We will always announce contagious conditions to be on the lookout for, but NEVER who has said condition or in which class the symptoms have appeared. **

The Children's House reserves the right to send a child home because of reasonable suspicion of illness.

Lunch

Packing lunches is a daily responsibility. Planning with your child and preparing the afternoon or evening before can ease the morning stress and the temptation to include less nutritious items. Be sure to notify the teacher in your child's class of any food allergies or restrictions. A microwave is available for students in the Math and Science rooms only. If your child needs utensils make sure to pack them. Please be mindful that there are only 30 minutes allotted for lunch.

REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE
Please put all beverages in a thermos drink bottle, or other suitable container. We have several drink stations at which children can refill their water bottles. Use Tupperware, Rubbermaid, or other reusable containers for food items when possible. We do recycle but using reusable containers is preferred. All reusable containers should be easy to open by little hands.

Snacks

The Children's House has an optional snack time at 10:15 AM. Afternoon snack for those using extended care is at 3:00 PM. Parents or guardians should provide morning and afternoon snacks. Please be sure to pack a snack along with your child's daily lunch.

Other Classroom Information

Clothes
Children's clothes are bound to get dirty or wet while in school and on the playground. Please do not dress them in clothing you do not want to get dirty. We ask that you send along a change of clothes, underwear, and socks, regardless of age, to live at school. To make storage easier put these in a clear plastic bag labeled with your child's name. As the seasons change so should the backup clothes.

Comfortable, Simple and Functional
Your child should also be comfortably dressed for school. It is important that they feel at ease with what they are wearing. It is equally important that children are able to manage their own clothing as much as possible.

Weather Appropriate
Please provide a pair of boots for your child to keep at school. Make sure your child brings outerwear appropriate for the climate of the day. There is an opportunity for your child to go outside every day so please dress children appropriately, remembering the maxim “There is no wrong weather, just wrong clothing.” In the winter they will need hats, coats, gloves and snow boots. On rainy days, please send a raincoat. Please apply sunscreen at home.

Lost and Found
A lost and found is located in the school. Please check it regularly. Items left for longer than one month will be donated.

Toys & Treasures
Each classroom environment is filled with beautiful equipment available to all. We ask that no toys be allowed at school since they sometimes distract children from activities that would be helpful to their development. This includes all electronic devices. An exception is made for preschoolers who would like a stuffed animal or other cuddly toy during rest time.

Student Cell Phones
Students are not allowed to have cell phones out in school. Students who have cell phones must keep them turned off and in either the designated cell phone station or their backpacks. A student who is found to have their cell phone out at school will have the phone taken by their homeroom teacher who will return the cell phone to the student’s parent. If this infraction happens a second time that student will not be allowed to have their phone at school.

Occasionally a school object might inadvertently be brought home. Please assist the child (if needed) with returning the object to school. This does not need to become an issue about stealing

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Holiday Celebrations
Holidays are celebrated in each classroom at the discretion of the school staff. Stories on how other cultures celebrate, songs, special activities and food are usually a part of every holiday. If your family celebrates a certain holiday please inform your child’s homeroom teacher.

Field Trips
The students will go on educational field trips throughout the school year. We require that each family complete the Field Trip Permission Form prior to the first field trip.

Additional Information
Your child’s teacher will contact you to let you know if there are special circumstances which require additional or different prep work on your part.

Natural Disaster Plan
We have practiced procedures for events such as tornadoes and fires. School evacuation plans are posted in each classroom and will be followed in the event of a fire or other need to quickly evacuate the building. Monthly fire drills are conducted to familiarize children with the evacuation procedures. Quarterly disaster drills will also be conducted to familiarize the children with the procedures relating to tornadoes or other natural disasters.

Methods of discipline used in the classroom include;

1. Modeling of desired behavior by adults.
2. Problem solving skills that teach children “to use their words, not their hands”
3. Clear and consistent communications of behavioral expectations by all teachers.
4. Giving the child opportunities to make good choices regarding their behavior.
5. Redirection to an appropriate activity.
6. Write-off’s
7. Confinement to the child’s homeroom until done with his/her classes

If necessary your child’s teacher will work with you to develop a method of contact, or a system to reinforce positive behaviors. If continual behavior problems exist we will work with the family to help resolve the issues.

In the event that the undesired behavior continues, after all reasonable measures have been taken, it may be necessary for the child to withdraw from The Children’s House to a more appropriate educational facility that has the means to care for the child.

Parent Involvement

Observation:
Parents are welcome and encouraged to view their child's classroom any time during the year. We also welcome interested family members and caregivers. It is recommended that those wanting to observe the classroom discuss any concerns and questions with the staff by appointment or phone, prior to or following the visit.

You are also invited to share lunch with your child at any time.

The Children's House Board of Directors
The Board of Directors coordinates efforts in support of the school and teaching staff. It also provides a voice for the parents to the administration and board. Feel free to contact a board member with any school related questions, concerns and suggestions; they are involved parents (and sometimes grandparents) of TCH students! You can find contact information for the board members on the TCH portal app. Board meetings are held on the third Tuesday of the month during the school year. Any parent or guardian is welcome to join board meetings via the link on the TCH portal. You must be a member of the board to vote on issues.

Life Changes
If there has been some significant change in your child's home life, please let your school staff know right away. Often we can help with a little added attention, understanding and loving care. Open communication between parents and the teachers is truly vital. We promise to respect confidentiality.

We want to be in close touch with you. The importance of communication between the parent and teaching staff cannot be overestimated. We encourage a two-way discourse at all times. It is especially important that sharing take place in the case of unusual circumstances that might affect your child. It is very difficult for the teaching staff to chat during class hours, drop off or dismissal, so communication is more productive if you leave a note or call the office for a time to confer. Also, it can be confusing and sometimes humiliating for children to be talked about --positively or negatively-- in their presence. We like to set aside a private time and place for conferring or a convenient time for a telephone call. If at any time the teaching staff sees a need to communicate with you, he or she will make arrangements to do so at your convenience.

Communications

Conferences
Parent teacher conferences take place twice a year. It is during this time that we deepen our collaboration on behalf of your child, looking at his or her development from our respective places. It is recommended that all parents or guardians attend conferences so everyone is informed and working together in a consistent way.

A sign-up sheet for conferences will be shared in advance via email. You may also access parent teacher conference sign ups on the TCH app. Please respect the 15 minute time frame allotted. If additional time is needed a further conference may be scheduled. Throughout the year you or your child's teacher may request additional conferences as needed.

If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions about your child's classroom progress, whether it is about his /her relationship to the environment, the teaching staff, or other children, please talk to your child's homeroom teacher directly and promptly. Questions relating to the operations of The Children's House should be directed to the school administrator.

Contacting the Staff
During the school day the entire staff is very focused on working with your children. We respectfully ask that parents schedule meetings in advance instead of "drop-in" chats during the day. Communication is vital to the success of our children as is the uninterrupted work time of everyone. If you need to contact a staff member please either call the office or send an email. Teachers will not discuss classroom issues during the day. The staff member will return your call as promptly as possible. Keep in mind that the teaching staff cannot take or make calls during class hours. The best time to reach a teacher or administrator is after 3pm.

Special needs
If the teaching staff feels that a particular child may have special needs or is experiencing difficulty in learning, a conference with parents/guardians will be scheduled. At this time the possibility of testing and a plan of action to work jointly in helping the child will be discussed. Each case is handled individually and confidentially; the cooperation and equal participation of parents and school is mandatory in order for continued enrollment in The Children's House. The Metropolitan School District of Pike Township provides services for our students who qualify for Speech, Physical Therapy, or Occupational Therapy. Children who qualify will have an Individualized Service Plan (ISP) put in place for any necessary accommodations.

Indiana Juvenile Code
Any individual who has reason to believe that a child is a victim of abuse, neglect or molestation must make a report with Child Protective Services per Indiana Code 31-33-5 and Indiana Code sec. 35-42-4-3 through 35-42-4-9. The Children's House observes the Indiana Codes and will report any suspected case of abuse, neglect or molestation to the proper authorities. The complete text of these statutes is available from the administrator to parents or guardians upon request.

TCH Student Portal App

Almost everything you need to know can be found on The Children's House Student Portal!

The portal gives you access to required yearly forms, a directory of students, board member contact information and meeting dates, yearly and monthly calendar, parent workday sign ups, and school absence forms. You will also be able to access your student's reports, and bi yearly parent teacher conference sign ups with meeting links, as well as announcements and sign ups for upcoming events.

You will be automatically added to the Student Portal upon enrollment. If you have any issues logging in you may contact the school via email for assistance.