

Parent notes

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....



The Children's House

Our Parents' Handbook



The Children's House

Mission statement

Overton Children's House provides child centred environments where independence is encouraged, individuality celebrated and children are given freedom within boundaries to follow their interests. Children are prepared for tomorrow's world through learning life skills, developing creative thinking, and a love of learning, as well as being encouraged to love themselves and the world around them.

'Only through freedom and environmental experience is it practically possible for human development to occur'

(Montessori, The Absorbent Mind)

Introduction

This is your guide to The Children's House and provides you with information about life at The Children's House. Starting nursery school is a big step for both child and parent and it may be the first time that you have been apart for any significant amount of time. This handbook aims to help make things a little easier for you.

We believe in working closely with parents - after all, you are the closest people to your child. Later in this handbook we explore ways in which we can work together to expand this partnership.

Please feel free to contact us with any query you may have - we are always happy to discuss anything with you. Confidentiality is

Useful contacts

Overton Children's House - 01256 770245

E-mail - overton@the-childrens-house.co.uk

Steventon Children's House—01256 398741

E-mail - Steventon@the-childrens-house.co.uk

Director - Marianne Preece

Office - 01256 770720

Mobile - 07917 110168

Email—mariannepreece@the-childrens-house.co.uk

Website - www.the-childrens-house.co.uk

We're now on Facebook! For regular news and updates check out our new Facebook page.

And

You can now follow us on twitter!



Toys at school

Please can these be left at home whenever possible. It can be devastating for a child to see a favourite toy broken or lost. We do however welcome children bringing items related to our current topic to show during circle time.

The nature table

Our nature table is where we have all sorts of interesting items - both living and dead, many of which the children have found in the garden. Children are encouraged to bring in items they may have found on a family walk or trip to beach. Items could include shells, flowers, pebbles and anything attracting the interest of your child.

Policies and procedures

A list of our policies and procedures are on the parents' notice board in school and within the prospectus. These are available by request and can be sent through e-mail, or read in our policies folder which is kept in the school. Copies can also be made for you.

These are all reviewed annually following a meeting to which all parents and people associated with the school are invited. Please remember that all mobile phones must be switched off and put away while on the premises. Photos can only be taken by the designated camera for each setting.

assured at all times. Our contact details are shown on page 11.

Session times and activities

Mornings sessions:

9.00 to 12.30 every weekday morning.

9.00 to 12.00 an option for the younger children.

Please do not arrive before the time you have booked as we may have insufficient staff cover for your child.

All Day sessions:

9.00 to 15.00 on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays (Steventon only) and Thursdays.

On our all day sessions children are able to start at 9.00, 12.00 or 12.30. There are also flexible finish times available of 12.00, 12.30, 1.30 and 3:00pm.

Our afternoon sessions are aimed at the older children and include more whole group based activities. On Monday afternoons we may organise a walk into the village, cooking or music a dance session. On Tuesdays we have a French session and on Thursdays we run a sport session for the children.

Slippers

When children arrive, they are encouraged to put on their own slippers. This is to help maintain a clean environment within the school, encourage independence as well as promote a homely atmosphere. All slippers should be named.

Dropping off and picking up

All children are encouraged to be dropped off at the door by the parent, unless a) the child is settling in with us, or b) the parent needs to talk to a member of staff. This reduces parking problems, disruption and congestion around the entrance.

The children will hang up their coats, put on their slippers and post their names when they arrive, helped by a teacher if necessary.

At the end of a session the children will be handed over to their parents/carers individually in the reception area to ensure confidentiality. If the weather is inclement, all parents/carers will be invited in to pick up their children.

If your child is to go home with a different carer from normal, staff should be informed beforehand and an entry made in the collection book. A password will be required if the carer is unknown to staff.

Ground rules

We encourage all children to respect themselves, each other, the materials and the whole environment.

These are the boundaries in the classroom for the well-being of all:

"We walk, we talk and we are considerate to others."

Parental Involvement

The Children's House recognises that the children's first educators are the parents themselves. We believe firmly in the active involvement of parents and aim to create a partnership between parents and school.

Parent/grandparent/carer activity

Parents, carers and grandparents are warmly welcomed into the nursery to share activities with the children, such as a hobby, cooking, dancing, playing an instrument, film-making or talking about their culture or country eg Scottish dancing, songs and stories from around the world. Parents can also talk to the children about their work which can later lead to role play as children explore these worlds for themselves.

Please speak to us about any idea you may have, or if you would like to come in to read to the children.

Toilet Training

To help the children and provide consistency between the home and school environments we do all we can to support the child with toilet training. We provide a potty and trainer seats and will support the system used at home.

To help your child help themselves, please send them in clothes that they can manage to undo, for example track suit bottoms and leggings. Dungarees and body vests with poppers cause frustration for the children and are fiddly and awkward for teachers especially during the toilet training stages.

provided. Milk, water and sometimes fruit juice are available to drink. The children help prepare the food and are free to have it when it suits them during the morning. The children pour their own drinks, butter their crackers and are encouraged to help each other.

All children sit down when they are eating or drinking. They learn to pass food to each other and good table manners are encouraged. The children wash up their own plates and cups when they have finished.

Birthdays

We have snack time together on these occasions and a treat from home is welcome. We play the birthday game in which we talk about events and milestones in the child's life, and sing 'Happy Birthday'.

Lunches

Children staying for the full day will require a packed lunch. Drinks, utensils and plates will be provided by the school. When making up the lunch box please keep the amount of packaging to a minimum and use only materials that can be recycled if possible. As we are encouraging healthy eating please consider the nutritional value of the food. Sweets and chocolate in particular are not considered suitable for school lunch.

Children set the table and as with snack time good table manners and consideration of others are encouraged. They are then encouraged to wash up and clean the tables.

If any child has an allergy which may affect others, all parents will be informed.

Parents' Notice Board

This is situated in the reception area. It is for you the parent to use. Please share information you feel other parents may be interested in.

Illness

Let us know as soon as you are able if your child is unable to come to school that day.

Following diarrhoea or vomiting please do not send your child in for 48 hours after the last episode.

If your child has whooping cough you will need to wait 5 days after commencing the antibiotics or 21 days if no antibiotics are taken.

No children should come in until fully recovered from flu or a bad cold. Children needing medicine to lower their temperature or to reduce symptoms should not attend.

Children suffering from chicken pox, measles, scarlet fever or mumps should be kept away for 5 days from the onset of the rash or from the commencement of treatment.

Following the start of an antibiotics course please wait for 48 hours before returning the child to school.

It is acceptable to send your child with impetigo as long as lesions are covered, and with conjunctivitis as long as staff are made aware. There is no need to keep your child away with head lice as long as you inform staff and are treating the problem.

Long hair needs to be tied back.

If a child becomes ill at school, parents or parent's emergency contact will be informed immediately and the child will be cared for until the parent/guardian arrives.

In the event of an accident or emergency requiring treatment the school will administer appropriate treatment and inform the parent immediately.

Emergency contact numbers

It is the responsibility of the parent to keep the school updated with all number and contact details. Remember, if you have a new 'phone please tell us.

My Montessori Child (MMC)

During your child's first month with us, we will give you a password to access our record keeping system MMC. You are able to find information about us, Montessori education, send us messages, find contacts for your child's friends as well as looking at some of their latest observations and latest achievements. Please do keep an eye on this to make sure we have the correct details for your child.

Medication

We are not able to administer any medication unless it is prescribed by the child's doctor. If a parent requires a member of staff to administer medication, written permission is needed. This should include the name of the child, parent and prescribing doctor; the date medication starts, the name of medication, the dose and times or how and when the medication is to be administered. All details will be recorded in the medication book and signed by the parent and teacher who is to administer the medicine. All medication should be clearly marked with the child's name.

Health and Safety

We take this very seriously, not only with collection of children and the locking of the door, but through regular risk

assessments, daily checks and regular fire drills. Safety issues are included in 'circle time' for example, on how to carry chairs and why we 'tuck them in'. We aim for all staff to be first aiders and to attend health and safety training.

Through the exercises in the 'practical life' area and 'circle time' discussions, children are all shown the importance of personal hygiene including how and when to wash hands, toilet use and how to blow noses.

Clothing

We like to go outside in all weathers! A warm coat and wellingtons are therefore needed during cooler months and a sun hat in the summer. A change of clothes should also be left at school. Practical clothes are best worn so paint, glue and mud etc. can be easily washed off. Aprons never seem to quite cover everything! Please can all removable items of clothing and shoes be named.

Children are encouraged to wear our sweatshirts and use our bags both of which are available from the school.

Sun cream

During sunny days children are requested to come to school already wearing sun cream. If a top-up is necessary during the day it needs to be supplied in a named container.

Snack time

We have an organic fruit box delivered every week which is often supplemented with our own home grown produce. Crackers, dried fruit and other food is sometimes also