



# Orchard House Handbook & Academic Calendar

A guideline for parents

Dear Parents,

Welcome to another school year at Orchard House! In order for you to become familiar with our school and our policies we have put together a handbook for you to refer to. Please take the time to review it as it contains information that will be useful to you for all your years with us. Please keep it handy for referral. Please know that we are always available to answer your questions and concerns.

Respectfully,

Miss Stefanie

514.630.3993

[administration@orchard-house.ca](mailto:administration@orchard-house.ca)

## **Schedule**

The centre is open from 7:30 am - 6:00 pm daily, Monday to Friday.

7:30 – 8:00	Early drop - off (communal time in the gym)*
8:30	Morning session begins (classrooms open)
8:30 -11:30	Tumble Tots
8:30 - 11:30	Thoughtful Threes
8:30 – 11:30	Flourishing Fours
11:30 – 12:30	Lunch Bunch
12:30 – 3:00	Afternoon Activities
3:00 – 6:00	Extended day care *

*\*Extra fees will apply.*

## **Attendance**

If your child is unable to come to school, or will be late for any reason, please advise the school at your earliest convenience.

## **Dropping Off and Picking Up**

Children must be dropped off at the door of the school and personally handed to a staff member. We do not allow children to wait outside for their parents or guardians.

## **Release of Students**

When anyone other than the parent, guardian, or other authorized adult is asked to pick up a child from school, the following procedure must be followed:

- 1- The teacher/director must be notified in advance and given the name of the person picking up the child.
- 2- The person picking up the child must provide photo id to show at pick- up.

## **Illness and Absenteeism**

Please do not send your child to school if they show signs of:

- fever,
- diarrhea,
- throat infection,
- stomach ache,
- ear ache,
- enlarged glands,
- rash,
- profuse amounts of mucus from the nose,
- vomiting,
- red or discharging eyes
- head lice or nits

If a child shows any of these signs at school, parents will be contacted and asked to pick up their child. A child should be free of fever for 24 hours before returning to school after illness.

Non-prescription medicine will not be administered.

In case of emergency, parents (or, alternatively, the emergency contact person) will be contacted immediately. If necessary, the child will be taken to hospital and the school will act in the parents' name until the parents arrive.

## **Medication**

Orchard House can administer non-prescription medicine (for example, acetaminophen) with the parents' written consent clearly indicating the appropriate dose. The medicine must be in its original packaging.

If your child is taking antibiotics, it is mandatory for parents/guardians to fill out the necessary consent forms granting permission to the Orchard House team to administer the medication to your child. Medication must be brought to school in its original packaging. The appropriate dose must be clearly written on the pharmaceutical label.

Children who have allergies that require an EPI PEN are required to keep their EPI PEN on them at all times. We recommend putting the EPI PEN in a pouch that is fastened around the child's waist. A second EPI PEN should be left in the office, labeled clearly with your child's name.

### **Sun Block**

Please put sun block on your child before arriving at school. Teachers will be applying sun lotion to the children before going outdoors **IN THE AFTERNOON ONLY**. Because of the time involved in putting lotion on the children, and because of the risk of contamination and allergies with different types of lotions, we have found by experience that we cannot have individual bottles of sun lotion for each child. We use Ombrelle Children's Lotion SPF 45 which is recommended for daycare use for children over 6 months of age. If your child has extreme sensitivity to the sun or an allergy and requires a special lotion please advise the office.

### **Notification**

If you have a change in personal information (e.g. address, parental contact numbers, pick up arrangements), please notify the school immediately in writing.

### **Clothing**

Children must wear comfortable clothing to school. Shoes, boots and slippers must be easily handled by your child: Slip on shoes or shoes with Velcro fastenings are best. Laces are not permitted.

For winter attire, mittens attached with clasps or on a string are highly recommended. Please ensure that all clothing & boots are **LABELLED**. Keep in mind, your little ones do not always recognize their own belongings. Orchard House is not responsible for lost items.

### **School Bag**

Each child must bring a school bag daily, which contains:

- A water bottle with fresh water replaced daily
- A **HEALTHY** snack (cheese, yogurt, fresh fruits & vegetables)

Every item must be clearly **labelled**.

Your child should be able to open & close the school bag autonomously.

Please ensure that the bag is large enough to contain all items including the school agenda.

### **Items to stay in school**

Each child must leave these items at school:

- Diapers and wipes (if necessary)
- A pair of inside shoes
- Change of clothes

### **Change of Clothes**

Each child must bring a clear Ziploc bag at the beginning of the school year which contains a complete set of change of clothes, to include: pants, top, socks & underwear. Every item including the bag must be clearly **labelled** with the child's full name.

### **Toys**

Toys from home are not permitted. A soft cuddly toy for comfort is allowed.

### **Settling in Procedure**

You and your child will be invited to visit the school prior to starting. There will also be a scheduled time for you and your child to meet his/her teacher prior to the commencement of school.

### **Snowstorms**

Please ensure that your child is well dressed for the winter. In case of severe weather, call the school and listen to the message in case of school closure.

### **Behaviour Policy**

The school follows a policy of positive, assertive discipline. Teachers aim to redirect problem behaviour through gentle reminders, encouragement and distraction to more positive models. When necessary, children are offered "renewal time" away from the group and invited to return to the group at their own accord.

### **Parent Communication**

The school is very much a "Children's House" and we wish to keep disturbances to a minimum. Parents are welcome to visit, or to meet with the teachers, but prior appointments are important. We do encourage parents to enquire about day-to-day occurrences, either verbally or through written notes. Moreover, Orchard House implements a daily communication journal. This agenda is a primary tool for parents and teachers to communicate daily messages, *for example: ask a question; (who is my child playing with?) or a quick note to say that you're going out of town etc...* Parents are expected to read over and initial the agenda daily. The agenda should be brought home each afternoon and returned to school each morning.

### **Parent's Committee**

The parent's committee consists of five parents elected by and from the parents who are clients of the centre. The committee meets four times a year and new members will be re-elected annually. The committee will be consulted by the administration of Orchard House on all aspects affecting the lives of the children attending the school.

### **Child Evaluations**

Children's progress is recorded on an on-going basis through observations and teacher progress charts. The information will be relayed to parents in the form of report cards two times per year.

### **Pedagogical Days**

These days are reserved for professional development, lesson planning, teacher lectures and workshops.

### **Special Needs**

Dr. Montessori initiated her method for children with disabilities. The school aims to maintain this approach and it welcomes children with special needs, so long as we feel that their needs can be effectively met.

### **Snack Time**

Parents should provide a healthy, nut-free snack for their child on a daily basis. We ask parents **not** to send any candies or chocolates for their children's snack. Please bear in mind choking hazards such as popcorn and large grapes. Children staying for afternoon activities must bring in two snacks to school.

We recommend: Cheese  
Yogurt  
Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

### **Peanut and Nut Free Environment**

The school will create a peanut-free environment for the safety of the children. We ask you to support this gesture and to not send any peanuts, nuts or food with traces of peanuts and nuts with your child.

### **Birthday Parties**

If you would like your child to celebrate their birthday in the classroom, please let the teacher know well in advance. We welcome birthday cake for the occasion, as well as napkins, paper plates and plastic cutlery. Candles, balloons & loot bags are NOT permitted. To avoid disruptions, siblings are not permitted to attend the party.

Birthday cards and invitations may only be distributed at school if the whole class is invited.

### **Field trips**

A supervising adult must accompany each child on school outings. One supervising adult may accompany up to three children.

**Withdrawal of Students**

We ask for one full month's notice (30 days) to be given in writing or the deposit cheque of one month's fees to be paid in lieu.

**Confidentiality**

You may be assured of our total discretion and confidentiality regarding your personal details and your child's progress.