Welcome to The ChildLight Montessori School 2019-2020 Student Handbook

To new and returning families, we extend a warm welcome to the new school year. We are so happy you are a part of our ChildLight family. Over the course of this year our children will grow in a Montessori environment to become self-assured, vibrant students who love to learn. Parents are the most important teachers in the lives of their children and are a very important part of what makes our school community so special. We are honored to be partners with you in the development of your child. We rely on your communication, energy, support, and involvement to ensure a successful experience for your child.

As we begin our 25th year, we are delighted to share the many wonderful aspects of ChildLight Montessori School and orient you to our policies, procedures, resources, and events. Please carefully review the information included in this handbook; it is important that you read it thoroughly.

We do our best to remain in close communication with our families in a number of ways.

- We use email to send our monthly newsletter and to communicate important information. Please make sure that we have your most updated contact information.

- You may visit our website at www.childlightmontessori.org for information about the school. Our school calendar and copies of all the required forms can be accessed on the website. Payments for Tuition, Enrichment Program, Summer Camps, Auction, and the Annual Fund may also be made through the website.

- We will periodically post pictures and events on the school’s Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/ChildlightMontessori/ and Instagram Page: https://instagram.com/childlightmontessori?igshid=85vlqwr5e87k
  Be sure to follow us!

- If you want to discuss how your child is doing or have suggestions, ideas or concerns, we suggest you contact your Head Teacher, Monique, to set up an appointment to meet. Monique can be reached at monique.childlight@gmail.com

- If you believe your ideas or concerns are not being addressed, please contact the Head of School and set up a time to meet by calling the office at 207.384.0153, or emailing at montessorichildlight@gmail.com

- Questions about enrollment and billing should be directed to the Head of School by stopping by the office, calling the office at 207.384.0153, or emailing at montessorichildlight@gmail.com

- Questions and concerns about the school may also be directed to ChildLight’s Board of Directors by contacting the Board Chair, Pat Haas through email at pathaas@comcast.net

- If you have suggestions, ideas or concerns about Friends of ChildLight, our parent organization, or about community events or fundraising, please contact Rachel Engelman at rachel.childlight@gmail.com

We look forward to another wonderful and productive year!

ChildLight Montessori School is a nonprofit organization operated by a Board of Directors and our Head of School. We are licensed by the Maine Department of Human Services. Jennifer Martel-Pettit is our Child Care Licensing Specialist and can be reached at 207-446-0819 or at Jennifer.Martel-Pettit@maine.gov. Our school is a member of the Maine Montessori Association and is affiliated with The American Montessori Society.
Our Mission

The mission of ChildLight Montessori School is to provide a loving, peaceful learning environment for children ages three through six using the philosophy and materials developed by Maria Montessori.

The school....

-- recognizes each child as an individual spirit and works to assist each child in developing self-confidence, independence and a love of learning while experiencing social, academic and physical activities.

-- recognizes that our community includes the families of each student and is dedicated to including parents in the students’ Montessori experience through education and involvement in curriculum activities.

-- is dedicated to functioning as a non-profit facility with efforts made by the school community to raise funds for scholarships, materials and children events.

-- recognizes the importance of an early childhood curriculum education and provides a Montessori alternative to children of all ethnic, racial, religious and economic backgrounds from the Berwicks, Rollinsford, Dover and other neighboring communities.

ChildLight’s Founder

Pat Haas founded ChildLight Montessori School as a nonprofit facility in 1995. For 13 years the school was located in a classroom attached to Pat’s home. In 2008, Pat was able to oversee the construction of ChildLight’s present solar/geothermal building.

Pat served as a Head Teacher of a Primary Class and the school’s Head of School for over 20 years. In 2017 she retired from the classroom and in 2018 she retired from ChildLight completely. She currently serves as a Montessori Consultant for the school and on the ChildLight Board.

Pat received her BA in English from Lafayette College in Easton, PA. After graduation, she was employed at Rodale Press (Prevention Magazine, Organic Gardening). Pat continued her education through graduate courses in New York City and at local colleges here in the Seacoast area. Pat received her Montessori certification in 1990.
Our Staff

Monique Lavergne-Morgan serves as the Head Teacher in our Primary classroom. She also serves as the Lead Teacher for the Science and “World Around Us” classes in the Extended Day program. Monique received her AMS certification through the Northeast Montessori Institute in 2014.

Monique grew up in Boston and graduated from the Massachusetts Maritime Academy with a BS in Marine Safety and Environmental Protection as well as a Coast Guard Near Coastal Mate’s License. Through work and school, she was able to fulfill her dream to visit different parts of the world.

Arleen Howard joined the staff of ChildLight in 1997, serving as an Assistant in our Primary program and as Science Teacher in the Extended Day program. Arleen has a great love of science. College studies in science at Regis College, work as a Yale University lab technician and experience as a high school science teacher all have advanced her knowledge in the area. She has continued to mentor Monique in this area as she has passed the torch for the science program. Arleen continues to serve as the Lead Teacher for the Math program and an Assistant Teacher for the Language program for the Extended Day.

Arleen was first introduced to the Montessori philosophy while working at a New Haven, CT Montessori school where she developed a science program within their curriculum. Arleen has continued her studies through attendance at Montessori Assistant and Advanced Assistant Training programs.

Marcy Sewell-Knight joined the ChildLight staff in 2017 as an Assistant Teacher in a Primary classroom. Starting this year, Marcy will be the Lead Teacher in the Language program for the Extended Day students. Marcy has a BA in English Literature from the University of Southern Maine. She loves reading, and especially loves reading children's books! Marcy completed her Assistant’s Training and her Advanced Assistant’s Training through the Northeast Montessori Institute.

Sandi Valentino joined the ChildLight staff in 2016 as our After Care Teacher. She received an Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education and has spent 20 plus years developing fun, creative learning environments for young children. Sandi loves art, music, songs, and story-telling, and shares that joy with the children of ChildLight. Sandi has continued her studies, receiving her Montessori Assistant Training through Northeast Montessori Institute.

We are excited that this year, Sandi will be transitioning After Care into an Enrichment Program. The availability of longer hours each day allows more curriculum content to be added. Sandi will also be joined by a new Assistant Enrichment Program Teacher. We look forward to presenting this new staff member in the coming months.

Laura Eves has been part of the ChildLight community since 2008 as a parent of three former ChildLight children. In 2014 she joined the staff as the Assistant to the Administrator. Laura currently serves as the school’s Administrator.

Laura received her BS in Education and Social Policy with a concentration in Psychological Services from Northwestern University. She obtained her Masters in Marriage and Family Therapy from Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary.
**Admission**

At ChildLight Montessori School we offer a peaceful environment for a child to learn and develop at his/her own pace. When enrolling children for our programs each year, it is important for the school to consider a variety of factors including varying learning styles, temperament and age distribution of the class. These considerations allow us to enroll children in a program that will provide the benefits of a Montessori environment and will allow the environment to evolve each year to be the most beneficial to the children who learn within it.

To ensure a positive experience for all parents and children who inquire about our facility, we have established the following admission procedures:

1) The family is invited to speak with the Head of School regarding the programs and procedures and a packet of information is mailed.

2) Interested families are welcome to observe our Montessori environment during program hours. An application may be submitted at this time.

3) After agreement between the Head of School, the teachers and family that ChildLight Montessori School is a beneficial environment for their child, parents are asked to forward a non-refundable deposit, securing a position for the child in the program.

**Non-Discrimination Policy**

ChildLight Montessori School, Inc. is dedicated to providing equal opportunities to all individuals regardless of race, color, religion, ethnic or national origin, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, veteran’s status or any factor that is a prohibited consideration under applicable law.

ChildLight Montessori School, Inc. does not discriminate in admissions, educational programs, scholarship awards or employment on the basis of any factor outlined above or prohibited under applicable law. Students, faculty, and staff are assured of participation in all programming and in the use of facilities without such discrimination.
Parent Participation

A positive school experience for the children is the result of efforts made by both parents and teachers. At ChildLight, we have enjoyed the enthusiasm and caring of our parents as they participate in their children's first learning experience. Parents are encouraged to observe in the classroom, attend conferences and education nights, and communicate with the teachers any questions or concerns. Teachers do ask that parent conversations and questions do not occur during class time so the teachers' focus can be on the children.

Parents are also encouraged to participate in the parent group, Friends of ChildLight, a non-profit organization committed to developing social, educational and fundraising activities for the betterment of the ChildLight community of families. As a non-profit facility, the future of ChildLight Montessori School depends on the efforts of current families, alumni and friends who are part of our school community. We ask that at least one (but the more the merrier!) parent from each family volunteer on at least one of the Friends of ChildLight committees. We have found that the more parents we have who are willing to volunteer even a little time keeps our community and school strong and vibrant!

Tuition and Fees

Tuition and fees have been established to cover the costs of materials used in the classrooms, special activities for the children, costs related to the American and Maine Montessori Societies, staff salaries and office expenses. On-time payments allow us the ability to maintain consistent quality in our programs.

To help families best meet their budget needs, we offer three payment options:
Plan 1) Tuition balance paid in full - due August 1
Plan 2) Quarterly tuition payments - due August 1, October 15, January 1 and March 15
Plan 3) 10 monthly payments - due on the first of each month, August 1 through May 1

A late fee of $25 will be added to a family’s account for tuition payments received 15 days after the due date. An additional late fee of $100 will be added to your account for tuition payments received 30 days after the due date unless previous arrangements have been made with the CMS Board. A $25 fee will be charged for returned checks.

We understand that things happen and circumstances change. We do our best to accommodate the needs of our families. Please speak to the Head of School if financial issues arise.

Additional costs include an Application Fee and an Activity Fee which assists in covering costs for special events during the school year including class visitors, guest speakers, field trips, rentals and gift-giving projects. In addition, these fees help cover the cost of licensing requirements and professional affiliation and memberships.

Payments can be made by check (made out to ChildLight Montessori School), cash or credit card. To pay by credit card visit http://childlightmontessori.org/parents/ Note: When paying by credit card you must add an additional 3% to your payment to cover the cost of the processing fees.
Enrichment Program and Before Care

The Enrichment Program at ChildLight Montessori School continues the school’s dedication to the Montessori philosophy. The program offers children a place to play, make friends and be a friend, and learn. Parents’ extended care needs are met while their children experience a familiar environment. The program provides a post-classroom environment which ignites opportunities to explore new materials and creative experiences.

The Enrichment Program has both similarities and differences to the students’ regular classroom. The program maintains the Montessori qualities of freedom of choice, mutual respect, exploration, movement, consistency and kindness. While a child in the Enrichment Program may still choose to use the Montessori materials of interest to him/her, each student will also learn about the interests of peers in the program. With this knowledge the classmates join with the teacher to share ideas and determine a topic for the week. Together the community of children and staff then develop and enjoy individual materials, art projects, and group activities related to the topic.

The Enrichment Program staff recognizes the specific needs of each child enrolled for the Program’s extended hours in the school day. The teachers provide opportunities for “down time”, movement activities and, of course, a very healthy snack. The staff also recognizes the importance of maintaining open communications with parents. They welcome opportunities to talk with each parent about their child’s experiences in the Enrichment Program.

Sandi Valentino serves as Enrichment Program Coordinator. Sandi has served as a ChildLight Montessori School staff member for 3 years. She has developed an Enrichment Program that offers a loving community where each child is free to explore, create and discover.

Before Care and Enrichment Program Policies:

Billing and Fees

We welcome all children to participate in our Enrichment Program either by contracting set hours, or by same day drop-in. Contracted hours must be requested in advance by completing an enrollment form. Invoices detailing your Before Care and Enrichment Program costs will be provided for those choosing to register for the year. This statement will be based on the number of calendar school days for 2019-2020 and the days/times you have reserved.

Each family participating in the Enrichment Program will receive an invoice at the beginning of each month with your balance details. This will include an outline of the accumulated fees from the previous month for reserved Enrichment Program hours, any drop-in Before Care or Enrichment Program Hours, and any payments you have made. You are always welcome to pre-pay for your reserved Before Care and Enrichment Program hours. Balances will be due by the 15th of the month.

If balances are not paid in full by the end of the month a $20 late fee will be incurred unless specific arrangements are made with the Head of School prior to the due date. Your child will not be able to participate in the Before Care or Enrichment Programs if payment on your account is 45 days past due or if there is an outstanding balance from a previous year. There is a $25 service fee for any returned checks. Any early drop-offs or late pick-ups will be billed at the drop-in rate.
Hours and Attendance

Parents are welcome and encouraged to use the Before Care and Enrichment program beyond their reserved hours at the drop-in rate. If a parent would like to reserve additional hours, all efforts will be made to accommodate a Parent’s request. Requests for additional hours must be made in writing to the Head of School. All changes are contingent on staff coverage and availability.

The Before Care and Enrichment Programs will follow the same school calendar used for the classrooms. The program will also close for all snow days or other school cancellations. There will be no charge for cancelled school days. A credit for these days will be added to your account.

Your Before Care and Enrichment Program Invoice will include 5 days without charge for a child’s absence due to illness or personal/family commitments. Days missed beyond the 5 days will still be billed at the contracted rate. Missed days cannot be “made up” and will not be reimbursed.

Lunch, Snacks, and Rest

Children staying in the Enrichment program starting at 11:30 will provide their own packed lunch. Around 12:30 pm, per our licensing regulations, the younger children are required to have 20 minutes of rest time. The children will be given a mat and are welcome, but not required to sleep. They will be allowed to participate in quiet restful activities on their mat. They can bring a special blanket or stuffy for use during this time. A daily nutritious snack will be provided to all the children who are still present at approximately 2:00 pm.

Withdrawal and Reduction in Hours

You must provide a written statement of withdrawal to the Head of School at least 30 calendar days prior to withdrawing your child from the reserved hours of the Before Care and/or the Enrichment Programs. You will be responsible for the payments owed for 30 calendar days from the date of submission of the written statement of withdrawal.

Any reductions to the reserved number of hours for your child’s participation in the Before Care or the Enrichment Program must be submitted in writing to the Head of School at least 30 calendar days prior to the change in hours.

To enroll your child(ren) in the Before Care and/or the Enrichment Programs, please complete the Enrichment Program Contract form. In order to allow for appropriate staffing of the programs, forms must be turned in to the Head of School no later than June 3, 2019. Hours requested on forms received after this date will be subject to staff coverage and availability.

Available Program Hours: Monday through Friday, when school is in session

By contract:
7:45 am – 8:15 am
11:30 am – 5:30 pm
*If there is a 2-hr delay due to inclement weather, the reserved hours will be held from 10:30 am until your regularly scheduled pick-up time.

Contract Rates:
$9.00/hour (in ¼ hour increments) for < 8 hours per week
$8.50/hour (in ¼ hour increments) for ≥ 8 hours per week

By drop-in:
7:45 am – 8:15 am
11:30 am – 3:30 pm
**If there is a 2-hr delay due to inclement weather, the drop-in hours will be available from 10:30 am to 3:30 pm.

Drop-in Rate: $9.50/hour (in ¼ hour increments)
Arrivals and dismissals

Parent’s schedules are often hectic, particularly in the morning. Teachers, too, are busy in their classrooms before the start of the class day. We ask that you arrive with your child between 8:15 and 8:30 a.m. If you need to arrive earlier, we have Before Care available starting at 7:45 am.

Please note: Late arrivals cause a child to miss the bonding experience of first circle. Too, late arrivals can disturb the focus of your child’s classmates. If you must arrive late please say good-bye to your child outside the classroom so distractions will be kept at a minimum. Please try to arrive on time!

Dismissal time (11:30 a.m.) at the conclusion of the morning program can be a busy time. It is the time of day when teachers and children are transitioning to a new situation….some students move on to lunch and the Extended Day or Enrichment programs, some go home with parents, some are picked up by babysitters and nannies. To make sure these transitions are safe and comfortable for the children and to allow the teachers the opportunity to give full attention to the children’s needs, we ask that you assist us with on-time pick-ups.

We enjoy talking with parents and are always open to conversations about your child. However, drop-off and pick-up times are a time when the teachers need to focus on the children. If you would like to talk with one of your child’s teachers, please request to set up a time to meet. This way the teacher is able to give the conversation their full attention.

As part of the “Child Record” form, you will be providing a list of persons who have your permission to accept your child for pick up at dismissal. If you would like to add or remove persons from this list, it must be provided in writing to the Head of School. If there is a shared custody agreement in place concerning your child, ChildLight Montessori School requires both parents to provide written agreement for a person to be added or removed from the dismissal list.

Attendance, Illness, and Medication

Please let us know if your child will be away from school, whether for a day or a week. This helps the teachers and other students better understand the absence and allow us to hope for a speedy recovery if a friend is sick or wish fun times to someone off on vacation.

In this young age group, certain communicable illnesses seem to appear each year. It is important to let the staff know if your child is ill so that we can educate the other parents regarding symptoms to watch for. For the sake of all the children who attend ChildLight Montessori School, we ask that if your child is ill, please keep him/her home so that germs will not be passed on to others.

Written permission from a parent is needed for a staff member to administer a prescription medication to a child at this facility. Following the guidelines set by licensing, medication must remain in its original container and the dosage must be clearly marked for the child.
Snow

Our programs will follow the lead of the MSAD #60 Noble School District. If the public schools in this district close for a snow day, or other weather-related closure, our programs will be canceled. In the event of a delayed opening, the morning program will be cancelled and the Extended Day Program will begin at 10:30 a.m. Any morning program students are still welcome to come to school at 10:30 to participate in the Enrichment Program until their designated pick-up time. The first hour (10:30 am – 11:30 am) of the Enrichment Program will be free of charge on any mornings with delayed opening.

We will do our best to post cancellations on our Facebook page and Maine WCSH channel 6, and via an email. You can also sign up to receive text alerts for MSAD #60 cancellations through the Channel 6 website. Please don’t hesitate to call if you are unsure of the status of the school on a snowy morning.

It is our policy that we do not make up any days missed because of weather or power outage closures. Because we are a non-profit organization, and our costs do not change for unscheduled cancellation days, we do not reimburse any tuition for days we are closed.

Please bring. . .

Spills and accidents can cause frequent wardrobe changes during the school day. Therefore, we strongly encourage each parent to provide their child a complete change of clothing to be kept available at school. Children at this age feel most comfortable in their own things and are often saddened when asked to wear another child’s clothing.

Please allow your child the opportunity to gain independence by dressing him/her in clothing that does not include complicated fasteners and buckles. Too, please encourage your child to dress casually. Spills happen and while we make every effort to use non-staining materials, there may be an occasional stain.

We ask that your child bring a pair of slippers to school on the first day. These slippers can be worn inside our environment each day. At the end of each school day the slippers will be kept in the child’s cubby. In our Montessori environment we encourage a peaceful atmosphere. The slippers allow children to move more quietly within it.

When selecting a pair of slippers, please consider that the children will be walking throughout the school with them. Please select slippers that will be nonskid and easy to walk in. Also, because of our continued emphasis on a gentle world, we strongly discourage slippers, shirts or other clothing that depict aggressive or violent characters.

Children are invited to share objects of nature, books and other interesting items with classmates. However, we ask that toys not be brought to school. There is so much within the Montessori environment and in nature to provide fascination and enthusiasm among the children.

We intend to bring the children outside whenever weather allows. So that the children enjoy this experience, we remind parents to provide appropriate outside attire, including hats, mittens, snow pants, boots and jackets as the weather grows cold.
The Peaceful Classroom

Maria Montessori realized that if humankind is to achieve peace, the children must be taught to solve problems by talking rather than fighting, to share limited resources, and to respect other cultures and religions. If we want to see our grandchildren living in peace we must teach our children to live peacefully.

The Montessori philosophy is based on the concept that the environment and its teachers serve as the “living example” of peace. Etiquette, respect for each other and all living things, respect for each other’s work, learning to share and take turns, finding the best in each other.

Violent behavior should never be tolerated at school, even if it’s “just pretend.” Playing super heroes can result in someone getting hurt bodies or feelings. So please let’s refrain from superhero clothing and costumes in our peaceful Montessori school.

Birthdays

We recognize each child’s birthday in our class as a community event, speaking specifically about the birthday child’s special qualities. We also learn about the passing of time in the child’s life with the Birthday Walk, a Montessori activity in which the child (as the Earth) walks in a circle (the orbit) around a candle in the center (the sun). Each time the child circles the candle it symbolizes one year as the Earth would travel around the Sun. The Birthday Walk is a special time for the birthday child. We invite children to bring in one photo showing them at each age of life to spread around the “sun” in the center of the circle. An elaborate poster is not necessary. It’s fun for the children to see the transitions of age.

On occasion, a parent or child asks to bring a special snack to share with classmates during a birthday celebration. We encourage the children to share with their school community in this way but remind all parents that our focus during the school day is to promote nutritious foods. We therefore ask that sugary treats not be brought to school. Often times the simple gesture of sharing a favorite storybook or offering a plant to the class to care for can mark the special day for a child.

Snack and Lunch

Children are invited to serve themselves snack during the independent work time in their Montessori environment. A snack schedule will be available at the start of each month for parents to sign-up for the child’s snack day. Snacks should include nutritious foods such as carrot sticks and fruit. Spring water will be served with the snack. Please let us know immediately of any food allergies your child has. We are a nut-free school and ask that no nuts, nut products, or food processed in a nut facility be used in snacks or lunches.

Your child will also be assigned to a “News Day.” Your child is invited to bring in an item to show and discuss with classmates. Topics for “News Day” items vary from month to month and can be found on the snack calendar.

Extended Day and Enrichment Program children joining us for lunch will join in small groups involved in eating, conversation and relaxation. Children are asked to bring healthy lunches.
While sharing in school is often encouraged, we will explain to the children that foods provided by parents for lunch cannot be shared or traded. We believe each parent has chosen carefully what they would like their child to eat. Too, we will ask each child to bring home the foods not eaten during lunch time. This allows parents to understand which foods a child is (or isn't) enjoying. We do have a microwave handy and are able to heat up simple dishes in it if the foods are packed in microwavable containers.

Nut Free Policy

Policy statement:

ChildLight Montessori School aims to practice a nut free policy in order to protect the children who have allergies to nuts (including peanuts and tree nuts). We acknowledge that nut allergies can be life-threatening. Although we recognize that we cannot guarantee that no traces of nuts will make it into our facility, this policy serves to set out all measures possible to reduce the risk to those children and adults who may suffer an anaphylactic reaction if exposed by ingestion of or contact with the nuts to which they are sensitive. We take the safety of all ChildLight children very seriously and therefore all Nut Free Policies will be strictly enforced.

Yearly our new intakes will be made aware that we do not allow nuts or nut products within our setting for snack, lunches or for celebrations or seasonal treats. Our Nut Free Zone logo is sited on our Website and within our school.

Definition

Anaphylaxis (also known as anaphylactic shock) is an allergic condition that can be severe and potentially fatal. Anaphylaxis is your body’s immune system reacting badly to a substance (an allergen), such as food, which it wrongly perceives as a threat. The whole body can be affected, usually within minutes of contact with an allergen, though sometimes the reaction can happen hours later.

Symptoms

The symptoms of anaphylaxis can begin within minutes or as long as an hour after contact with the allergen. Less commonly, they can occur a few hours or even days after contact. An anaphylactic reaction may lead to feeling unwell or dizzy or may cause fainting due to a sudden drop in blood pressure. Narrowing of the airways can also occur at the same time, with or without a drop in blood pressure. This can cause breathing difficulties and wheezing.

Other symptoms:

- swollen eyes, lips, genitals, hands, feet and other areas (this is called angioedema),
- itching,
- a strange metallic taste in the mouth,
- sore, red, itchy eyes,
- changes in heart rate
- a sudden feeling of extreme anxiety or apprehension
- itchy skin or nettle-rash (hives)
- unconsciousness due to very low blood pressure
- abdominal cramps, vomiting or diarrhea, or nausea and fever.
Anaphylaxis varies in severity. Sometimes it causes only mild itchiness and swelling, but in some people, it can cause sudden death. Anaphylaxis can lead to death if breathing becomes severely obstructed or if blood pressure becomes extremely low (known as shock). If symptoms start soon after contact with the allergen and rapidly get worse, this indicates that the reaction is more severe.

**Staff**
The primary responsibility falls on all staff to read and follow this policy both in school and when out on field trips and outings. Staff and volunteers must ensure they do not bring in or consume nut products within the school and ensure they follow good hand washing practice. They also are responsible for checking any food brought in by parents, caregivers, and children to make sure it is in accordance with this policy.

- Caution must be taken at certain times of year such as Valentine’s Day, Easter and Christmas. If Staff distributes candy, care must be taken to ensure that no nuts are included in the product and that it was not processed in a facility that processes nuts.
- Any store-bought food coming into the facility must be in its original packaging and display labels in order for Staff to ensure its safety.
- All product packaging must be checked for warnings directed at nut allergy sufferers and if the following or similar are displayed, the product must not be used in school:
  - Not suitable for nut allergy sufferers
  - This product contains nuts
  - This product may contain traces of nuts
  - This product is from a facility that processes nuts.
- All tables and food preparation surfaces will be cleaned before and after food consumption.
- All of our staff members are trained to administer an Epi Pen.

**Parents**
Parents must notify staff of any known or suspected allergy to nuts and provide all needed information detailed on their child’s individual Healthcare plan.

**Snacks and Treats**
Parents must not bring in any food for snacks and treats (such as for birthdays), unless they have checked the ingredients carefully. Any nut free whole foods are allowed (e.g. fruits and vegetables) as long as they have not been cut up on a surface or with utensils that have come into contact with any nuts or nut products. Also cheese and yogurts are allowed if the packaging indicates they do not contain nuts or come from facilities that process nuts. Many parents like to send dips in with fruits and vegetables; we ask that you do not send these unless we can see on their label that they are nut free.

- Any store-bought food coming into the school must be in its original packaging and display labels in order for Staff to ensure its safety.
- Since we cannot guarantee that all the ingredients used to prepare homemade food are completely nut-free, we are prohibiting homemade food for snacks and treats unless prior permission has been obtained from the Staff and the affected families. If permission is granted, homemade snacks or party food contributions must have a label detailing all ingredients present (including ingredients of the ingredients) and the kitchen environment where the food was prepared must be nut free.
- If you’re unsure about any food selection, please speak to a staff member before bringing the food item into ChildLight.
Packaging indicating a food item is not allowable for school use, must be checked for:
➢ Not suitable for nut allergy sufferers
➢ This product contains nuts
➢ This product may contain traces of nuts
➢ This product is from a facility that processes nuts.

Lunches
We understand that parents do their best to provide healthy options for their child’s lunch and this often involves homemade items. We ask that any homemade item included in a child’s lunch be nut and nut product free and prepared to the best of your ability on a nut free surface. Lunch box items containing nuts or nut products will be removed by staff and replaced with approved snack items. We will provide a completely nut free lunch table for any student with known nut allergies. Any and all food sharing between children during lunchtime is strictly prohibited.

We understand that parents also cannot guarantee that no traces of nuts will make it into the ChildLight Facility, but we request that they do their best to provide snacks and treats that are nut and nut product free and not processed in a facility that processes nuts, and that they will keep their child’s lunch items, both homemade and store bought, free of nuts and nut products and items processed in a facility that processes nuts.

Children
We ask that all children practice good hygiene by washing their hands upon entering the classroom in the morning, and before and after eating which helps to reduce the risk of secondary contamination. Likewise, children are reminded and carefully supervised to minimize the act of food sharing with their friends.

Health Plans and Emergency Response
We have individual Healthcare Plans for children with allergies and Allergy Lists are displayed. Healthcare Plans should include an allergy list, triggers, symptoms, medication (Medication will be stored, administered and documented in accordance with our Administering Medicine Policy), and emergency contact details for that child.

Please note each family is required to sign saying they have read and understand our Nut Free Policy each school year.
Keeping our Children Safe

For the sake of the children, we ask that you have your children remain within the safety of the playground and gardens during your conversations with teachers or other parents at dismissal time. The driveway has lots of traffic at dismissal times and is not a safe environment for children!

Student Success and Meeting Student Needs

The Montessori environment is unique. It cultivates an inner discipline that is the foundation for further learning and social development. While it is our belief that a Montessori environment provides a valuable social and educational experience for many children, we recognize it may not meet the needs of all children.

We want every child to experience the satisfaction and joy of a successful education. If your child is not functioning successfully in the classroom, we will make educational recommendations to your family. If it is determined that the school cannot adequately provide an environment that corresponds to a child’s needs, the child may be better served in a different setting.

Positive Discipline Methods

In a Montessori school, ground rules based on respect and safety are created through conversation with the children and teachers in the classroom environment. When a member of the Montessori classroom does not follow a ground rule we often suggest an alternative behavior or activity; the attempt is to change the child’s focus from the current, unwanted behavior to desired, positive behavior. Redirection can also be an alternative place in the classroom to work.

All behavioral concerns will be documented by the staff member witnessing the behavior and will be communicated to the parents of all children involved in the incident. If a child is exhibiting behavior that continues regardless of intervention from staff, we first determine, in consultation with the parents, the root of the behavior. If the situation is determined to be a pattern, parents and staff hold a special conference to align the approaches to take with the child at home and at school.

Extreme Behavior and Dis-enrollment of Children

ChildLight Montessori School reserves the right to dismiss a child from the school when it is deemed by the teachers and the Head of School that to do so will be in the best interest of the child and the school community. Causes for dis-enrollment can include emotional or physical behavior that negatively affects other children in the classroom.
If a child is exhibiting extreme behaviors which physically and/or emotionally endanger self or others, or causes their peers to feel unsafe, the child may either be sent home immediately or removed from the classroom for the remainder of the day under the supervision of a staff member. The Head of School may also ask that the child stay home from school the following day for further reflection.

When the child is not adjusting to our environment and there is a serious question of whether the child can function happily and safely at school, the staff may set a limited probationary period in an attempt to resolve the situation and to meet the child’s needs. At the end of that period, staff and parents meet again to decide what further action is to be taken. It may be determined that a child must seek professional therapeutic assistance in order to continue at ChildLight Montessori School. If the parents decline this assistance, or negative/threatening behavior continues, ChildLight Montessori School reserves the right to release the family from the enrollment agreement.

ChildLight Montessori School will not allow students to harm each other physically or emotionally. The following procedure will be followed for extreme behavior:

1) The child's behavior will be observed, recorded, dated and initialed by the staff member involved and reported to the Head of School. An incident report will be written and families of all students involved will be notified.

2) Staff will meet with the parents to discuss the behavior and develop a plan to meet the needs of the child involved and to support the student in their growth. This may include ChildLight Montessori School requiring the family to obtain outside professional assistance for the child.

3) The staff will observe and record the behaviors of the child in question, noting any changes. A meeting may be requested with the family to address the concerns and modify the behavior plan as necessary.

4) If support from the family is not forthcoming and/or the problems are of such severity that the climate of the classroom and safety of the other children is in jeopardy, the Head of School and the Board of Directors may ask the parents to dis-enroll their child. Parents will be given a date by which the student will be removed from the classroom and parents will need to obtain alternate care for their child.

If a family is asked to leave the school, the student will be considered withdrawn after the last date of attendance. Tuition will be prorated for time attended, and the school shall retain the deposit and fees.

If a family chooses to un-enroll their child, for whatever reason, they will still be financially responsible for the first month’s tuition payment, if it is before school has started, or the prorated tuition costs for the time the child has attended ChildLight Montessori School. All tuition deposits are non-refundable.
Notice Regarding School Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Policies

Pest Control
Because pesticides pose risks, the school uses an alternative approach to merely applying pesticides. Control of insects, rodents, and weeds at our school focuses on making the school buildings and grounds an unfavorable place for pests to live and breed. Through maintenance and cleaning, we will reduce or eliminate available food and water sources and hiding places for the pests. We will also routinely monitor the school area to detect pest problems and prevent the pests from becoming established. Some techniques we will use include pest monitoring, sanitation, pest exclusion, proper food storage, pest removal, good turf and plant care, and--as a last resort--pesticides. This holistic approach is often called Integrated Pest Management (IPM).

Pesticide Use
Sometimes pesticide use may be necessary to control a pest problem. When that happens, the school will use the lowest risk approach available. If higher risk pesticides must be used, notices will be posted at application sites and advance notice will be sent home with students.

Your Right to Know
Parents, legal guardians, and school staff will be notified about certain pesticide applications made at the school. Notification will be given at least five days before planned pesticide applications during the regular school year. In addition, for pesticides applied anytime during the year, notices will also be posted in the school and on school grounds two working days before until 48 hours after the application. Notification need not be given for pesticide applications recognized by law to pose little or no risk of exposure to children or staff.

The school also keeps records of pest monitoring, pesticide applications and information about the pesticides used. You may review these records, a copy of the School’s Integrated Pest Management Policy and the Pesticides in Schools regulation (CMR 01-026 Chapter 27) by contacting our IPM coordinator at 207-384-0153 or montessorichildlight@gmail.com

If you have any questions, please contact the Head of School in the school office. For further information about pests, pesticides and your right to know, call the Board of Pesticides Control at 207-287-2731 or visit the Maine School IPM web site at www.thinkfirstspraylast.org/schoolipm.