

PARENT HANDBOOK

HARBORLIGHT



M O N T E S S O R I S C H O O L

— *Experience Excellence* —

Harborlight Montessori School

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MISSION

Harborlight Montessori guides the growth and development of the whole child from infancy through young adolescence in an environment that:

Fosters a love of learning



Maximizes individual potential



Promotes academic excellence



Inspires creativity



Celebrates diversity



Encourages mutual respect



Nurtures compassion and humanitarianism



Advocates stewardship of the environment



Graduates responsible, productive citizens of the world

Parent Handbook

Welcome to the Harborlight Montessori School. The Harborlight Parent Handbook has been created for your family as a guide to the policies and practices at the Harborlight Montessori School. Harborlight reserves the right to deviate from all written policies and procedures when it is in the best interest of the child and the School.

In order to maximize your child's experiences at Harborlight, the administration and faculty advise you to attend our parent meetings to explore beyond the Parent Handbook and learn about the Montessori philosophy, curriculum, and the method of education. We look forward to an exciting year of learning with you and your child!

HOURS OF OPERATION

School opens at 7:30 A.M.

HALF DAY PROGRAMS

8:45 A.M. to 11:45 A.M.

ACADEMIC DAY PROGRAMS

Infant/Toddler & Preschool Programs 8:45 A.M. to 3:15 P.M.

Elementary 8:15 A.M. - 2:45 P.M.

Middle School 8:15 A.M. - 3:15 P.M.

CHILD CARE PROGRAMS

A Block: I/T & EC- 7:30 A.M. to 8:45 A.M.; EL & MS- 7:30 A.M.-8:15 A.M.

B Block: I/T & EC- 3:15 P.M.-4:30 P.M.; EL- 2:45 P.M.-4:30 P.M.; MS- 3:15 P.M.-4:30P.M.

C Block: All Programs 4:30 P.M.-5:30 P.M.

MAIN OFFICE HOURS

7:30 A.M. to 5:30 P.M.

BUSINESS OFFICE HOURS

9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.

School closes at 5:30 P.M.

PROGRAMS

INFANT:	6 months through 18 months of age 2, 3, or 5 Full Days
TODDLER:	18 months to 3 years 2, 3, or 5 Half, Academic or Full Days
EARLY CHILDHOOD:	3 years to 5 years 5 Half, Academic or Full Days *Kindergarten children attend 5 Academic Days
ELEMENTARY/M.S.:	6 years through 14 years 5 Academic or Full Days

MESSAGES AND PHONE CALLS

Calls to teachers may be made at noon or before and after school hours. Teachers are not available to speak on the telephone during class time. The Harborlight secretary will take a message for teachers to return your call, or you may leave a message on the teacher's voice mail. Harborlight also has a 24 hour answering machine.

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ABOUT HARBORLIGHT

History

Since 1973, Harborlight Montessori School has provided unparalleled educational, academic, and social experiences for children. Expanding and developing over the years, Harborlight Montessori School has become a model Montessori school for children from infancy through young adolescence. Susan Egan, R.N., M.Ed., Head of School, co-founded Harborlight Montessori School in order to provide the best possible education for her own children and to contribute to the community. Susan founded a school that would provide exceptional educational experiences for children. The tradition of excellence established at Harborlight Montessori School continues to provide a warm and exciting environment; employ exemplary teachers; and offer an established, comprehensive, and creative curriculum. The faculty at Harborlight Montessori School takes great pride in the achievements of both current students and alumni.

Administration

Harborlight is organized as a private, non-profit corporation that is governed by a board of trustees. The board of trustees is responsible for the strategic direction of Harborlight. Its only employee is the head of school. The board does not oversee operations, i.e. classroom discipline, program, staffing, curriculum, pedagogy, etc. The trustees' tasks are to develop the Strategic Plan for future generations of students to come and to provide financial oversight.

The head of school is the chief executive officer and reports to the board of trustees. The head employs all staff and faculty. The head of school attends all board meetings as a non-voting member and is a voting member of all board committees. Her tasks are defined by the Annual Board Agenda. The head of school and the administrative team develop and implement Harborlight's Annual Operations Agenda. (*See Organizational Chart for more details*)

Organization

Harborlight Montessori School is a private, non-profit, independent, co-educational day school in Beverly, Massachusetts serving children from the age of six months to fourteen years (through grade eight). Currently enrolling approximately 300 students, Harborlight provides a rich academic environment founded in the philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori with a strong concentration in cultural studies, art, drama and music, world cultures and languages, and the development of a social conscience. Small class size under the guidance of a talented, creative, and experienced faculty gives Harborlight the unique capability to provide individualized instruction at all developmental levels.

A model Montessori School, Harborlight is the laboratory school for the National Center for Montessori Education-New England, a graduate Montessori Teacher Education Institute. With a commitment to excellence in education, Harborlight is fully accredited by the Montessori School Accreditation Commission, licensed by the Department of Early Education and Care, and approved by the Massachusetts Department of Education.

Licenses & Memberships

Accreditation- Association of Independent Schools of New England

Accreditation- American Montessori Society

Accreditation- National Association for the Education of Young Children

(Accredited IT and ECE Programs)

Accreditation- Montessori Council for Teacher Education

(Accredited IT & ECE Teacher Education Programs)

Accreditation- Montessori School Accreditation Commission (Accredited Infant through Grade 8)

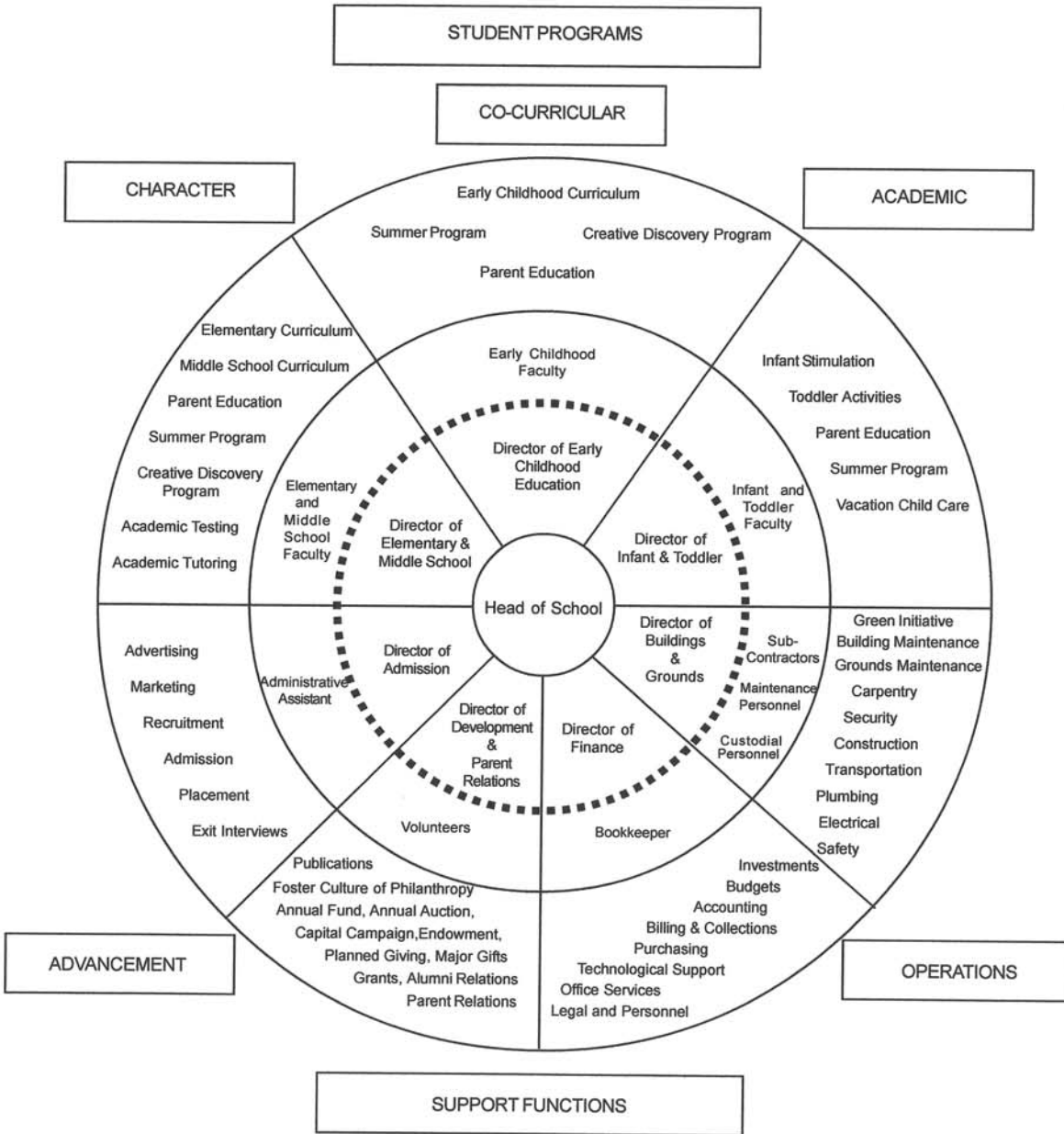
Licensure- Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (IT and ECE Levels)

Membership- Montessori Schools of Massachusetts

Membership- North American Montessori Teacher Association

Organizational Chart

TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES



Core Values

Recognizing Montessori's commitment to education as an agent of social change, the Harborlight Montessori School's core values are rooted in the founding principles of Harborlight, apply to each member of Harborlight's community, and are central to Harborlight's mission and purpose. These core values guide the progressive development of Harborlight's future in firmly establishing Harborlight's culture and climate.

Harborlight Montessori School is committed to the pursuit of excellence in a safe, nurturing environment that actively promotes:

- Respect
- Integrity
- Individuality
- Responsibility
- Compassion
- Optimism
- Confidence
- Courage
- Service
- Kindness

Community Code of Conduct

"Children learn more from what you are than what you teach." W.E.B. DuBois

Harborlight Montessori School strives to promote and sustain a school culture and climate that instills and imparts dignity and a sense of shared responsibility for the well-being of each other and that of our larger community. In keeping with this philosophy, all Harborlight community members will consistently conduct themselves in a manner that affirms and abides by these beliefs and principles of moral character.

Commitment- We will uphold Harborlight's philosophy and guiding principles. We will be dedicated to our teaching, learning, parenting, and volunteering roles, and be responsible and accountable for our actions.

Cooperation- We will work to include others and put forth our best effort to help others do the same. We will work together to create harmony and a supportive atmosphere.

Communication- We will be clear, respectful, positive, and direct in all our communications. We will be open, responsive, and polite to others.

Concern- We will be compassionate in our actions with others. We will embrace challenges and differences with understanding and appreciation.

Diversity Statement

Harborlight Montessori School actively seeks qualified students, faculty, and staff to reflect the diverse backgrounds of our community. Harborlight strives to provide an enriching curriculum and educational experience for all students, recognizing that global teaching and learning helps form

strong, positive self-concepts and develops respect for human differences. Harborlight's curriculum and philosophy encourage understanding and respect for these differences while affirming the fundamental similarities of humankind. Our cooperative community protects and encourages the exploration of new concepts. It also honors and nurtures the curiosity of each child in the educational pursuit of understanding equity and social justice.

All members of the Harborlight community are valued for their contributions, talents, and opinions. The philosophy, curriculum, and administration of our programs aim to create an inclusive learning environment with respect to economic background, gender, race, national and ethnic origin, cultural heritage, religion, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, and political beliefs. Harborlight integrates diversity and character education into each learning opportunity to empower students to actively approach each new experience with courtesy and acceptance.

Community Service

Harborlight promotes social awareness and responsibility to community and society. Through community service, Harborlight cultivates the student's community involvement by integrating service projects within the curriculum. Each student learns and develops his/her sense of social responsibility through active participation in thoughtfully organized service that is conducted in his/her classes and meets the needs of the immediate and greater communities. Harborlight embraces service projects as they develop cognitive attributes and help develop character and leadership skills. Through the process of applying their skills and knowledge to authentic and practical objectives, the students develop a deeper understanding of the needs of the community and reflect on the positive impact of their work.

Continuous Improvement

The Harborlight community accepts the responsibility to contribute to continuous academic improvement through professional development and collaboration with members of the professional education community, for the purpose of designing, delivering, and renewing effective programs toward successful preparation of all students for future learning.

Harborlight faculty members recognize their responsibility to provide an atmosphere that engenders courtesy, respect, and genuine regard for others. In order to maximize the quality and effectiveness of students' learning experiences, all interactions among faculty, students, and parents are expected to be collegial and conducted in a manner that reflects high personal and professional standards.

Harborlight faculty continuously engages students in meaningful learning experiences that are designed to promote personal development and enhance academic ability. Teaching is a complex, intellectually challenging activity in which inspiration is constructed through professional collaboration and life-long learning is highly valued.

Culture of Giving

Harborlight is grateful to those parents who have invested their time, energy, and financial support in the past to the School. These generous contributions have made it possible for Harborlight to develop and enhance programs and classroom experiences for children since 1973 and to create optimal opportunities for future generations of students.

Tuition only covers the operating costs of running an independent school. Harborlight relies on a “culture of giving” to be able to sustain and develop itself within the community and to be able to offer the best possible educational experience for its constituency. Forward and positive development takes time and money. Keeping abreast of the latest in education and technology doesn’t happen over night. It takes the sustained efforts of the entire school community to help actualize its goals and achieve its mission.

I. The Annual Fund: Each fall the Annual Fund campaign kicks off and officially ends on June 30th, the close of Harborlight’s fiscal year. Gifts to this unrestricted fund are used to augment Harborlight’s operating budget in order to cover unexpected and/or unbudgeted items that Harborlight needs. In the past, capital items such as playground apparatus, renovations, and classroom furniture along with the addition of special extra-curricular activities and offerings have all been supported by the Annual Fund. Donors may choose a fund (listed below) or choose the unrestricted fund category which allows donations to be used according to need.

1. Teacher Enrichment Fund: The Teacher Enrichment Fund (TEF) was established in 2002 as an alternative to the holiday and year end gifts that the parents like to give their children’s teachers. Donations to this fund support faculty development in individual, group, formal, and informal educational opportunities: higher learning/advanced degrees, Montessori teacher certification, educational seminars and workshops. Gifts to this restricted fund enhance all of the teachers’ education and directly impact the student learning in the classroom. Parents recognize individual teachers at the time they make a gift to the fund and present the teachers with a special certificate of acknowledgement. This fund ends the last day of the fiscal year, June 30.

2. Physical Education Fund: The Physical Education Fund was established in 2003 to provide enhancements to Harborlight’s physical education programs and facilities. This fund will promote the development of the new master site plan for the campus physical education facilities both indoor and outdoor including: gymnasium, pool, playgrounds, sports fields and equipment, and maintenance.

3. Technology Fund: Created in 2003, the Technology Fund supports the necessary expense of integrating and updating the technology resources in Harborlight. Improvements include security, hardware, software, and faculty.

4. Library Fund: This on-going fund is for the development of Harborlight’s library. Funds are raised through two scholastic book fairs held annually in the fall and spring seasons. Book donations on an on-going basis are given through Harborlight’s Birthday Book Program where parents purchase a book for Harborlight’s library and have a donation plaque attached to acknowledge their child’s birthday. Quality book donations are also welcome at any time.

5. Financial Aid Fund: This fund creates access and opportunity for students who qualify for enrollment in the Elementary & Middle School Program. Contributions to this fund are on-going.

II. Annual Auction: Each year, the Harborlight Parent Association’s volunteers host a fund raising auction. This event generates restricted funds for a specific purpose. For the past three years, event proceeds supporting the Technology Fund have enhanced and developed Harborlight’s technology, communication and security systems.

For the past 3 decades, Harborlight has been enhanced and improved due to the community's fund raising efforts and events. Harborlight endeavors to continue to provide the highest quality educational experience for children in accordance with its mission and philosophy. Thank you to the community members who have contributed in the past. We encourage and appreciate your continued support in the upcoming years.

PHILOSOPHY

Montessori Philosophy

Montessori education exposes children to the physical and cognitive structures of a highly prepared environment that create an inner discipline and spark their innate curiosity and motivation to learn. Patterns of concentration and attention to detail, when established early, produce a confident, competent learner in later years.

Dr. Maria Montessori's experiences and discoveries resulted not only in a philosophy, but also in a methodology that included scientifically-based, interrelated, concrete learning materials that you see in Montessori classrooms today. It is through these Montessori materials that the young child experiences sensory exploration and classification of relationships among concrete objects. These relationships are ingrained in the children through repeated manipulation. Older children employ their concrete understanding of abstract concepts to further intellectual discovery and investigation of abstract concepts utilizing our comprehensive curriculum.

The nature of this curriculum allows the children to work individually and in small groups, and progress at their own pace in a non-competitive environment. The teacher prepares the environment, directs activity, and presents stimulating lessons to the children. Within this rich environment, each child takes initiative and is driven to academic accomplishment.

The Montessori educational program offers individual instruction, which establishes a powerful relationship between the child, the teacher, and the learning materials. Recognizing each individual child's innate potential, natural curiosity, and readiness, the Montessori teacher trusts her keen observation skills to take advantage of the precise moment to offer a new lesson.

Within the dynamic Montessori curriculum, lessons emphasize creative problem solving, critical thinking and creativity. Through Montessori education the child builds character, gains a sense of social and global responsibility, and develops inner discipline.

The Montessori Difference

Traditional Education	Montessori Education
Children are grouped chronologically, one age per class.	Non-graded (two or three year age span)
There is a pervasive emphasis on grades, merits, and social conformity.	The emphasis is on building skills and self discovery. Self-humanization is the root motivation.
The class is seated at desks for most of the time for group lessons.	Students work at tables, on floor: freedom of movement. The children are in direct contact with environment and learning materials – i.e.

Traditional Education	Montessori Education
	natural, sensory, and cultural experiences.
Relatively frequent interruptions: bells, and adult interventions.	Relatively few interruptions. Long blocks of time permit invaluable concentration.
The class, as a group, studies one subject at a time with class schedules that limit the child's involvement.	Children pursue their own self-paced curriculum, individually or in small groups, in various parts of the learning environment.
Postponement of cognitive development until first grade.	Critical cognitive skills developed before age six.
Teachers correct students' errors.	Children learn from their peers and self-correcting materials. The teacher's role is a guide.

PROGRAMS AND CURRICULA

Infant & Toddler Program

Infant and Toddler Objective

The Harborlight Montessori Infant and Toddler Program cultivates the children's natural tools for learning, so that they may approach future learning situations with facility and confidence.

Developing the Whole Child

During these crucial years, young children are provided a balance of physical, cognitive, social, and emotional stimulation in order to reach their optimum level of development. Understanding, caring, self-discipline, self-awareness, and care of self are incorporated into a creative curriculum and incorporated into daily routines.

Nurturing Secure Relationships

Parent involvement is essential to each child's successful transition, continued happiness, and well-being at Harborlight. Beginning with a slow and sensitive orientation, the parents and the children gain trust and security in the environment. Parents stay in the classroom with their children until the teacher feels they are ready to separate.

The relationship between the children, the teachers, and the prepared environment is interrelated and interdependent. The teacher's relationship with children is one of assurance, which is established and sustained through individual attention and sensitive interactions. With guidance, the children are allowed to follow their own interests and readiness in choosing activities.

Appealing to the Young Child's Natural Curiosity

Harborlight's home-like atmosphere, toddler-size furniture, and appealing materials are attractive to the children's senses. Young children explore independently and develop a sense of security and competence that enhances their sense of self and independence. The materials used in the environments are based on the children's unique propensity for learning. Children experience the excitement of learning by choice and readiness. Acquiring information in this way is a natural and delightful activity for young children who employ all of their senses to investigate their interesting surroundings.

Infant & Toddler Routines (6 Months - 18 Months)

Individual Attention

The teacher's responsibility is to develop a stable and consistent relationship with the children. Trust is established by the teacher meeting the physical needs of each child in a consistent and uninterrupted way. Trust is maintained by following a sequence for routines of care that lead to predictability.

The teachers provide support and information for the parents. Children are observed and information about the children's routines is shared with the parents on a daily basis and throughout the year. Maintaining cooperative relationships with each child's family through open and friendly

communication provides an opportunity to coordinate the child's school and home care.

Feeding

All foods come from home in a small lunchbox with an ice pack. Items needing refrigeration are stored in the refrigerator. Other items are stored in the child's food bin. Parents supply enough food to satisfy the child's appetite plus a bit more to allow for spilling, etc., which occurs during self-feeding. Parents may bring in extra food items (cereals, vegetables & fruits, formula & milk) to store and use as needed.

Please label all items clearly.

Infants are fed individually, on demand, and according to the natural rhythm of the child. Nursing mothers are encouraged to visit at anytime to feed their infants. Infants are lap fed and then introduced to a weaning table when able to support themselves in a sitting position. Mobile infants are fed at a table and chair that is low to the floor for easy access. Toddlers experience family-style mealtime. Toddlers eat a small snack in the early morning and lunch late morning/noon.

Separation

The separation process for infants and toddlers is an integral aspect of the curriculum. The young child establishing comfort with both the teacher and environment before the parent leaves the child in care is of vital importance to this process.

Parents of infants (6-17 months) spend as much time as necessary to accomplish the following goals: 1) The parent is able to watch and become comfortable with the care of the children. 2) The infant has an opportunity to become familiar with the sights, sounds, and smells of the environment. 3) The teacher is able to watch how the mother cares for her infant so that care can be consistent. The teacher learns the different cues of the infant and how best to meet his/her needs.

Parents of toddlers (18-36 months) stay with their children on the first day of class and leave (with their children) after an hour while the children are happy and content. In successive days individual parents may try to start separating according to the children's readiness and sense of trust and independence.

Sleeping

Predictable and consistent routines allow children to develop and maintain healthy sleep patterns. Infants sleep on low beds; toddlers sleep and rest on nap mats. Parents supply the nap linens: a crib sized, fitted sheet, small blanket and any small animal or doll for snuggling. Nap linens are sent home weekly for laundering or more frequently if necessary.

Infant Playtime

During independent play time, the teacher prepares activities that are appropriate and safe in an environment that allows the children to develop motor skills, language, and problem solving styles based on their readiness. Freedom of movement and exploration enhances free choice and self esteem for the developing infant.

Typical Infant Schedule

7:30 A.M.	Child Care -- supervised play time (A Block)
8:45 A.M.	Arrival of children; snack, washing and diapering*
9:00 A.M.	Gross motor activity or walk in carriages
9:30 A.M.	Nap or infant playtime

10:30 A.M.	Snack, washing, and diapering*
11:00 A.M.	Story-time, music and finger play
12:00 P.M.	Lunch, washing and diapering*
12:30 P.M.	Gross motor activity on deck or walk in carriages
1:30 P.M.	Nap or infant playtime
2:30 P.M.	Snack, washing and diapering*
3:15 P.M.	Academic Day Dismissal; infant playtime
3:30 P.M.	Story-time, music, and finger play
4:00 P.M.	Infant playtime; washing and diapering*
4:30 P.M.	B Block Dismissal; infant playtime; snack/dinner; washing and diapering*
5:30 P.M.	C Block Dismissal

**Note: The schedule is individualized for each child everyday; toileting and diapering are also on an as-needed basis.*

Toddler Playtime

As a guide, the teacher observes, analyzes, and prepares the learning environment based on the characteristic needs of the child (18 - 36 months old). The toddlers' primary needs include: the presence of a nurturing adult to provide care, a safe environment that encourages freedom to move about and explore, interesting objects to observe and manipulate, and the independence to choose activities. The Montessori toddler classroom is welcoming and aesthetically pleasing. The child friendly environment, materials, and furniture all play an important role in developing self-help skills that aid independence. The adult relationship with the children is one that guides and nurtures their natural growth and development.

Toddler environments are prepared with consideration of the child's natural tendencies for the following:

1. To explore their surroundings;
2. The development of language;
3. The ability of their mind to create images, symbols, and concepts;
4. Their awareness of self as a separate human being; and
5. The transition stage is natural and developmentally appropriate for toddlers.

Toddler activities include:

1. Practical life activities;
2. Sensorial awareness activities;
3. Movement;
4. Language expression including art and music;
5. Materials that aid independence;
6. Greater refinement of the hand;
7. Movement of things within the environment;
8. Development of the stereognostic (touch) sense; and
9. Development of the vestibular (integration of movement) sense.

Typical Toddler Schedule

7:30-8:45 A.M.	Child Care--unstructured and supervised play time (A Block)
8:45 A.M.	Morning classes begin--independent and structured activities
9:30 A.M.	Group time--stories, songs, finger play, etc.

10:00 A.M.	Snack time
10:30 A.M.	Toileting and diapering*
11:00 A.M.	Outdoor play
11:30 A.M.	Lunch for Full Day Program
11:45 A.M.	Morning Dismissal for Half Day Program children
12:00 P.M.	Lunch clean-up, toileting and diapering*
12:30 P.M.	Nap
2:30 P.M.	Toileting and diapering; quiet group activities
3:15 P.M.	Academic Day Dismissal
3:30 P.M.	Snack
4:00 P.M.	Outdoor play
4:30 P.M.	B Block Dismissal
4:30-5:30 P.M.	C Block--Stories, clay, and painting, unstructured & supervised play time.

**Note: The schedule is individualized for each child everyday; toileting and diapering are also on an as-needed basis.*

Special Infant & Toddler Programs

Music Program

The music program offers infants and toddlers the opportunity to sing, dance, play simple musical instruments, and learn chants and rhymes. The curriculum, which is based on a multi-sensory approach, is structured to emphasize both the acquisition of basic skills and an appreciation of music and movement.

Art Program

Art experiences for infants and toddlers consist of exploring with developmentally appropriate mediums (chalk, watercolor, tempera, dough, clay, collage, etc.) The purpose is to expose the children to sensory experiences through art by hand and with tools. Authentic art experiences emphasize the process, value, and originality, allowing children to preserve ownership of their work.

Toilet Learning

The Montessori approach to toileting is unique-- it observes and follows the children's interest and readiness. Often toileting is accomplished early, at age 18 to 30 months, not due to pressure from adults, but rather because the child is more open to the experience at that time. Typically, by 18 months children begin to gain physical control of their bladder and bowel.

Around the age of 12 months, children often become quite interested in the bathroom. They want to explore, play with the water in the toilet, and may persistently follow their parents when they go into the bathroom. These are early signs of interest in toileting. By the age of 15 months, children often become fascinated with the process of dressing and undressing and may undress themselves when it is least expected. This is also an indication that they are preparing for toilet learning. Between 13 and 15 months, many children will want to sit on the toilet or potty chair in imitation of their parents and siblings, even though they may not yet have learned to control their bladder or bowel. At this point, parents can easily begin to introduce young children to the entire toileting routine: pulling down their pants; sitting on the toilet correctly; wiping their bottoms; pulling their pants up; flushing; and washing their hands. Most children will easily master this routine, just as they learn so many other practical-life skills in the Montessori classroom. Parents may also allow children to experiment with flushing the

toilet and explain body functions to them. Adults can respond to their questions with clear honest answers appropriate to their level of understanding. “Everybody has bowel movements. It’s normal. It’s our body’s way of getting rid of that part of our food that it doesn’t need.”

Around 18 months, children enter a sensitive period in which they can most easily gain control of their now much more developed and integrated nervous system. At this stage most children have both the physical ability and the interest to control bladder and bowel. If they are given the opportunity to spend as much time as possible in underpants, rather than diapers, they gain a greater awareness of these bodily functions. The absorbency of disposable diapers prevents toddlers from sensing when they are wet. During this sensitive period, if the children are in underpants, they will quickly learn to sense when the bladder is full and they need to go to the bathroom. When children have developed the neuromuscular ability to control their bodies, have interest in using the potty-chair or toilet, they are well underway in mastering the specific steps involved in using the toilet.

This sensitive period for toilet learning ends at about 30 months. As the child gets older, toileting becomes more difficult and becomes more of an issue between children and their parents. It is best to give children at this age more independence, provide underpants, and ideally eliminate diapers. The children can then gain this skill and independence for themselves. Parents play a secondary and supportive role.

Early Childhood Program

The Early Childhood Program at Harborlight is the children’s community. Each child-sized environment is carefully designed to facilitate the development of the children’s independence and responsibility for care of the self, the environment, and each other.

Motivated from within by a natural curiosity and love for learning, children between the ages of three and six years experience a dynamic curriculum in a Montessori environment that fosters independence, concentration, coordination, order, and creativity.

Early Childhood Program Objective

From this early experience, the young children are prepared for the challenges of elementary school. Harborlight early childhood education helps to develop children who are:

- Intellectually curious;
- Self-disciplined;
- Coordinated in movement;
- Refined in social graces;
- Cultured in arts and music; and
- Academically skilled.

Promoting a Cooperative Community

The early childhood classroom is a thriving social and learning community. In a multi-age, interactive setting the children learn shared responsibility, compassion, and respect for each other. Older children reinforce lessons they have learned by sharing their knowledge with younger children, while the younger children observe the work of the older children and are motivated toward these future experiences.

Enriching the Child's Natural Sense of Wonder

The early childhood classroom provides an enriching and nurturing hands-on learning experience that encourages children to move, touch, create, and discover. Beautiful, concrete, manipulative materials invite activity, convey abstract concepts, and reveal relationships to children through sensory exploration and repeated activity. Montessori materials are specifically designed to enable the children to work purposefully and productively without adult interference. A true sense of accomplishment and satisfaction comes when the child is able to solve problems for himself.

Offering an Academic Curriculum

Children between three to six years are self-confident, independent, and enthusiastic about learning. They go about their work calmly and purposefully, whether it is counting beads, cutting raw vegetables, carrying pitchers of water and pouring without spilling, or constructing sentences with the moveable alphabet. The interdisciplinary curriculum meets the needs of each child in developmental stages. As a guide to learning, the teacher acknowledges each child's initiative, pace, and readiness. Individual and small group lessons are presented with great drama. By manipulating, experimenting and discovering, children develop observation and problem solving skills. The early childhood curriculum nurtures the children's development from concrete cognition to an emerging understanding of abstract concepts, which prepares them for more complex learning experiences in the elementary program.

Early Childhood Curriculum

(3 years through Kindergarten)

For more information about the early childhood curriculum, see Harborlight's Curriculum Scope and Sequence ages 2.9 to 6 years.

Children are allowed to experience the excitement of learning by their own choice rather than by being forced. Likewise, each child is helped to perfect his or her natural tools for learning, so that the child's abilities will be maximized for future learning situations. The Montessori materials have this dual, long-range purpose in addition to their immediate purpose of giving specific information to the child.

Practical Life Exercises

For young children there is something special about the tasks that an adult considers ordinary--washing dishes, paring vegetables, polishing shoes, etc. These activities are exciting to children because they allow them to imitate adults. Imitation is one of the strongest urges during the children's early years.

In this area of the classroom, children perfect their coordination and become absorbed in an activity. They gradually lengthen their span of concentration. They also learn to pay attention to details as they follow a regular sequence of actions. They learn good working habits as they finish each task and put away the materials before beginning another activity.

Sensorial Exercises

The Sensorial Materials in the Montessori classroom help children distinguish, categorize, and relate new information to what they already know. Dr. Montessori believed that this process is the beginning of conscious knowledge. It is brought about by the intelligence working in a concentrated way with the impressions given by the senses. The sensorial exercises, by their very nature, are a remote preparation for academic learning.

Mathematics

Dr. Montessori demonstrated that if children have access to mathematical equipment in their early years, they can easily and joyfully assimilate many facts and skills of arithmetic. On the other hand, these same facts and skills may require long hours of drudgery and drill if they are introduced to them at a later age in an abstract form. Dr. Montessori designed concrete mathematical materials after she observed that combining this equipment, separating it, sharing it, counting it, and comparing it, children can demonstrate the basic operations of mathematics. Operations can be performed with a variety of materials. This variety supports the children's interest and provides opportunity for necessary repetition. With these materials children gain a concrete understanding of mathematical concepts while they commit facts and tables to memory. This approach prepares and leads the children into the future abstract study of mathematics.

Geometry

Children experience sensorial exploration of plane and solid figures. They begin to recognize the names and basic shapes of plane and solid geometry and their relationships through manipulating by size, shape, and dimension. More advanced plane geometry includes the study of triangles, polygons, rectangles, and irregular forms.

Language

Before they enter the early childhood classroom, children have an understanding of language and its usage. Work in the practical life and sensorial areas of the classroom refine the children's auditory, oral, visual, and sensory motor skills, which are integral to the reading and writing process. In order to simplify the children's first experience with letters, they are first introduced to the phonetic sounds of the alphabet. Once children begin to have success with decoding and encoding phonetic words, they are introduced to books and writing materials that further develop their skills and support an insatiable interest in reading and writing. Individual presentation of language materials allows the teacher to take advantage of the children's greatest periods of interest, individual readiness, and natural sensitivity for language development.

Physical Geography

The early childhood classroom offers children many opportunities to expand their knowledge of the world during the years when they are motivated by spontaneous interest. The large, colorful wooden puzzle maps introduce the children to the maps of continents, countries, and states. At first, the children use the maps simply as a visual-motor exercise, and then later they learn the names of the pieces and places. As the children become more familiar with maps they are introduced to the concepts of land and water formations and weather and climate. A variety of hands-on activities help to reinforce these concepts.

History

Montessori offers the children a concrete presentation of history by letting them work with time lines. Time lines are very long strips of paper that can be unrolled and stretched along the floor of the classroom. The line is marked off in segments that represent constructive periods of history. As an introduction to the idea of history, the children begin by making a time line of their own lives. A variety of materials and lessons are available for the children in the history area. Often these activities reflect the interest of the children and the historical events relative to the parts of the world they are studying.

Spanish

Beginning at age three, the children are exposed to learning the Spanish language. Weekly lessons incorporate both small-group and large-group activities. The method of language instruction follows the Total Physical Response methodology by which the teacher speaks new vocabulary accompanied by movements. The children hear the word, see the motion, and repeat the motion immediately. The children's kinesthetic response to the word heard increases long-term memory of the word. Spanish activities are also part of the classroom environment. Children practice their Spanish during class time through a number of hands-on activities that enrich their receptive and expressive Spanish vocabulary.

Cooking and Nutrition

Proper nutrition information can create and reinforce lifelong eating habits that contribute to overall well-being and health. Cooking projects emphasize early exposure to a variety of healthy snacks and meals, and foods of various cultures.

Science and Nature

Curiosity is stimulated through natural specimens, discovery projects, and experiments. Children participate in activities that foster their sense of wonder and encourage them to question, experience, experiment, and draw their own conclusions. Beautiful sets of cards and puzzles introduce the plant, animal, and fungi kingdoms. Science and nature activities foster a love and appreciation for all living things.

Cultural Awareness Program

A multicultural perspective is brought to the classroom on a daily basis through respect for individuality and diversity. Children gain an awareness of the world by exploring countries through customs, food, music, climate, language, stories, and indigenous plants and animals. Children are allowed to explore world customs and religions from an objective, educational (non-practicing) perspective. This helps raise their awareness of people of the world and helps them gain understanding, tolerance, and compassion.

Art

Art projects are natural extensions of the early childhood classroom work. Children are also offered open-ended art activities that foster and encourage the great joy that can be found in creating something of their own. The children have the freedom to explore their imaginations in a variety of media used for expression. The importance of the process is emphasized during this stage of development. Each preschool environment has an art area with different papers, drawing materials, and mediums including chalk, crayon, marker, watercolors, collage and clay. All of these projects reinforce and expand academic and artistic skills. Creativity is not curtailed by an imposed curriculum but rather complements the children's sensory explorations with each medium.

Music and Drama

The Orff Schulwerk for Early Childhood approach to music education integrates music, movement, and drama experiences. Orff Schulwerk is a pedagogy that organizes elements of music for children through speaking, singing, playing, and dancing. The children actively participate in singing and the use of unpitched percussion instruments to foster an understanding of pitch, dynamics, and further elements of music study. In addition to Orff, the music program incorporates Kindermusick, Music Garden, and Music Together theories and approaches to using music with the young child.

The children are introduced to elements of drama using poetry and nursery rhymes, games, and role plays. Each class performs in a play production annually. These plays are typically adaptations from folklore, children's literature, and musicals.

Physical Education

Children engage in two types of physical education activities during the year: pre-sports and yoga. Kindergarten children take part in gymnastics and swimming at the nearby YMCA Aquatic Center and Iron Rail Gymnasium Center. A non-competitive approach is taken in all of the physical education activities.

Outdoor Play

Children go outside to play daily as weather permits. Half-day children have one 30-minute recess. Children staying until 3:00 P.M. or 5:30 P.M. may have one or two additional recess times depending on the weather.

Typical Early Childhood Schedule

7:30-8:45 A.M.	Child Care--unstructured and supervised play time (A Block)
8:45 A.M.	Morning classes begin
9:00 A.M.	Group time--calendar, curriculum presentations, new activities presented, creative movement, songs, finger play, discussion
9:30 A.M.	Individual and small group lessons--individual work period and snack
10:00 A.M.	Outdoor recess*
10:30 A.M.	Individual and small group lessons continue
11:30 A.M.	Closing circle, story time
11:45 A.M.	Morning Dismissal for Half Day Program children
12:00 P.M.	Lunch--children in Academic Day and Full Day Programs
12:30 P.M.	Nap or rest
1:00 P.M.	Afternoon classes begin--Quiet activity period**
1:30 P.M.	Individual and small group activities
2:30 P.M.	Group time--stories, songs, group discussions, curriculum presentations
3:15 P.M.	Academic Day Dismissal
3:15 P.M.	Group snack for children in Full Day Program
3:30 P.M.	Outdoor recess or free play
4:15 P.M.	Art Projects
4:30 P.M.	B Block Child Care Dismissal
5:00-5:30 P.M.	Child Care--unstructured play time, games, construction toys, puzzles, etc. (C Block)

*Rotating outdoor recess schedule

**Kindergarten children participate in the gym and swim program at the YMCA two afternoons/week

Elementary & Middle School Program (1st through 8th Grade)

During the elementary and middle school years at Harborlight, students between the ages of six and fourteen discover and develop their unique talents and capabilities. Each individual learner builds upon his/her educational foundation, pursuing academic goals as learning becomes its own reward.

Elementary & Middle School Objective

Harborlight produces compassionate, considerate, and active classmates, citizens, and future leaders.

Harborlight graduates maintain and foster:

- a life-long enthusiasm for learning;
- a confidence in their ability to succeed; and
- independence in their work, thoughts, and decisions.

Guiding Academic Achievement

Elementary-age students have limitless intellectual curiosity and are capable of great effort, concentration, and academic achievement. The Harborlight elementary and middle school curriculum is designed to utilize and strengthen the students' natural interests and energies. The students and teachers work together to create an environment that educates, inspires, and satisfies the desire to explore complex concepts.

Elementary and middle school classrooms are designed to complement both the intellectual and social strengths and needs. The elementary students desire to explore, find connections, and answer questions makes independent research and projects a critical part of learning. Capitalizing on the strength of the reasoning mind, concrete materials lead the students to understanding and mastery of abstract ideas. Inspiring and enlightening lessons are given to engage the intellectual imagination.

Independent and small group work is essential in the elementary classroom. Montessori students seek challenges, ask and answer questions, and solve problems. The students' early childhood exposure to academics, decision making, self-discipline, and social relationships, builds a foundation for self-directed learning, reasoning, abstract thinking, and developing leadership and interpersonal skills.

Establishing a Scholastic Atmosphere

Responsibility and independence are the principal attributes of elementary students. Challenged to be responsible for the social and physical components of the classroom, students create a welcoming and accepting atmosphere while developing considerate and cooperative relationships. Encouraged to take initiative, students exhibit ingenuity, diligence, and self-expression in all aspects of their studies. Moving towards cognitive and personal organization, the students prioritize, plan, and manage their time in both their daily work and with long-term, independent projects.

Education as an "Aid to Life"

Harborlight education moves beyond the limitations of the classroom to prepare students to become responsible, independent, and resourceful adults. This comprehensive and interdisciplinary curriculum compels the students to extend their knowledge by using libraries, visiting museums, attending lectures, conducting interviews, and exploring nature. Utilizing the knowledge learned in the classroom and community, the students embrace the possibility of applying academic lessons in authentic situations. Lower elementary classrooms participate in bi-monthly lessons at the Beverly

Public Library and frequently collaborate with wildlife sanctuary and preserves. Upper elementary and middle school programs incorporate traveling, outdoor education centers, internships, and community service.

Elementary & Middle School Curriculum (1st through 8th grade)

For more information about the elementary & middle school curriculum, see Harborlight's Curriculum Scope and Sequence grades 1-8.

Harborlight Montessori School offers individualized and small-group instruction. The elementary program offers students a variety of approaches to learning, using dynamic materials that clearly demonstrate abstract principles.

Language

Students develop comprehensive skills in the areas of reading, writing, and grammar through the multi-modal language program, which includes: reading comprehension, literature review, spelling, writing mechanics, composition, journaling, research and creative writing projects, editing, and peer review. Authentic study of literature and composition is evident in the students' work in other areas of the curriculum.

Spanish

Learning this language at the elementary level also incorporates much of the Total Physical Response methodology. The students attend Spanish classes, accomplish classroom work in the Spanish area, and complete reading and writing assignments. As students experience areas of the Montessori curriculum, the Spanish instructor offers parallel lessons within the Spanish curriculum. Upper elementary and middle school students prepare research projects, drama skits, and oral presentations as an extension of their study of the Spanish language, culture, and geography.

Mathematics

Students develop sound arithmetic skills and are led to make their own abstractions through manipulation of concrete and symbolic materials. As in other parts of the Montessori curriculum, experience with a material comes first, followed by the spoken language or naming and then by the symbolic representation or written symbol. After the material, its appropriate verbal language, and its symbolic representation are each studied, they are then associated with one another. In Montessori mathematics, this sequence is referred to as quantity, symbol, and association. The materials lead students toward memorization of facts and the understanding of abstract concepts. Upper elementary and middle school math increases proficiency in arithmetic concepts. Skill building lessons and activities including advanced algebra prepare children for textbook-based mathematics, logic and algebraic concepts, probability and statistics, and further study of mathematics.

Geometry

In lower elementary classrooms, geometry lessons are firmly rooted in the sensorial experimentation with concrete materials. Manipulation of both solid and plane geometric figures induce a creative activity that involves students in the construction of two and three-dimensional forms, artistic drawings, and a study of patterns and relationships. The manipulation, experimentation and understanding of these concrete concepts provide the foundation upon which abstract study of geometry using theorems, proofs, and formulas in the upper elementary and middle school is formed.

Social World

The social world curriculum is integrated and interrelated with the cultural subjects through the presentation of The Montessori Great Lessons: The History of Language, The History of Numbers, The Creation Stories, The Coming of Life, and The Story of Humans. These lessons, presented to the students through dramatic and visual representation, offer an understanding of the universe and the continuum of humanity relative to anthropology, sociology, and political science. Topics of study include Ancient Civilizations, World History, U.S. History, Comparative Government, Comparative Religion, Modern World History, and Human Rights.

Science

Science concepts and content are integrated and interrelated with the cultural subjects through the presentation of The Montessori Great Lessons relative to the study of the Earth, its progress, and production of animal and plant species. The science curriculum is based on a hands-on, creative, experiential, and experimental approach. Students develop an appreciation for nature and a vision of the whole universe. Life Science, Earth Science, and Physical Science lessons correspond to the students' developing processing skills. The curriculum establishes an understanding of the scientific method by employing the students' natural instinct to question, observe, infer, and problem-solve. The science curriculum culminates with the presentation of science projects at the Annual Science Fair, which is open to the entire Harborlight community.

Art & Pottery Studio

The teacher guides the students in the development of artistic skills and impressions that enables them to develop and sustain an appreciation of the process and lifelong involvement in the arts. Students express themselves creatively through various media and open-ended activities. Art experiences and lessons reinforce and expand academic and artistic skills. The Montessori approach to art at the elementary level includes the foundations of drawing, perception, form, and space utilizing a multi-media approach including, charcoal, pastels, clay, pottery, watercolors, and acrylics. Essential elements of art theory and history are also included within this comprehensive study.

Open art studio affords students the opportunity to extend their classroom lessons into the area of visual arts. During this time, students may create geometric drawings, geographical maps, mathematical graphing, illustrations, or three-dimensional forms illustrating history, botany, zoology, geology, architecture, and physics lessons.

Music

Music instruction integrates six related elements: singing, audition, music theory and ear training, eurhythmics, production of music, and music appreciation. Students work with traditional instruments including the xylophone, glockenspiel, and recorder coupled with movement and drama to cultivate an understanding of music fundamentals.

Private and semi-private lessons in Suzuki violin, piano, guitar, woodwinds, saxophone, and voice are available by contracting and reserving lesson time with specialized instructors.

Drama

The drama program introduces students to theatre through drama games, storytelling, character and role playing, and stage presence. The students participate in drama classes as they prepare for their annual play or musical production. Weekly lessons incorporate elements of music, singing, and choreography. Theatre productions help develop creative self-expression and self-confidence.

The middle school drama program varies its theatrical productions and experiences each year. Typically, these experiences include a Shakespearean adaptation for the stage, musical productions, and variety/talent shows.

Physical Education

The philosophy of the program is to incorporate both non-competitive and competitive experiences with an emphasis on sportsmanship, cooperative games, and self-improvement that encourage a lifelong appreciation and involvement in physical fitness. Students participate in an adventure/ropes-course project, tennis lessons, swimming, indoor/outdoor sports, and snowshoeing (lower elementary) or cross country skiing (upper elementary). Middle school students participate in various sporting programs during their cycles including skating, kayaking, tennis, hiking, mountain biking, downhill skiing, and snowboarding.

Computer and Library Science

Computer technology in the classroom is an aid to educational experiences. Weekly computer science and technology classes guide students in learning keyboarding skills, the use of the Internet, software usage, and the production of computer rendered class work. With these skills, the students have more independence in their usage and success in their outcomes. This course also offers student lessons in library science with the goal of building their knowledge base of library systems toward greater competence in research methods, study skills, and reading proficiency.

Character Education

Values are identified and reinforced in everyday interactions which build character. The Character Education Program embraces the six core ethical values: trustworthiness, caring, respect, responsibility, fairness, and citizenship. When these values, along with integrity, excellence, perseverance, and courage, are used as guidelines in problem solving, conflict resolution and decision-making, the students develop character and become a positive influence in society. There are ample opportunities for students to learn and practice these lessons in the classroom with everyday situations. In addition, the students study values, read literature that incorporates these values, and participate in projects that focus on character development and service learning.

Community Service

This component of the elementary curriculum is essential to working together in a Montessori classroom and within the greater civic community. The positive effect of service-learning converges on four areas: **Academic or cognitive domains**— what students learn as a result of their participation; **Civic domains**—connection to society and community; **Personal/social domains**—personal and interpersonal development in areas such as respect for diversity, self-confidence; **Career exploration skills**—knowledge of career pathways. Harborlight embraces strategies to develop cognitive attributes and help develop character and leadership skills. The following is an abbreviated list of community service activities:

- Math-A-Thon for St. Jude's Children's Hospital
- Earth Day clean-up
- Save the Children
- Pennies for Peace & Central Asia Institute
- Visiting Essex Park Nursing & Rehabilitation Center
- World relief efforts for natural disasters

- Food drive for Beverly Bootstraps
- Cooking at Crombie Street Shelter
- Toy drive for HAWC

Homework

Homework is a natural extension of schoolwork. Elementary students select work to complete at home Monday through Thursday (older students will also have weekend assignments). Students are responsible for making good choices about work that would compliment their schoolwork daily; such assignments may include reading, spelling, creative writing, mathematics, and special projects. Depending on the age and grade level of the student, the amount of time spent on homework can vary. Lower elementary students spend anywhere from 15 to 30 minutes daily, upper elementary homework ranges from 30 minutes to an hour, and middle school homework through the week ranges from 1 ½ to 2 hours.

Homework encourages good study habits and reinforces skills learned in the classroom through necessary review and repetition. Parents assist their children by providing a quiet place to work and uninterrupted time for building concentration.

Master Schedule

The program director prepares a master schedule of classes for all of the classrooms. This schedule includes classroom work times as well as special subjects (Spanish, music, physical education, etc.) Please refer to the annual master schedule calendar for details about weekly lessons and scheduling.

GENERAL POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Admission, Enrollment, and Placement

The admissions process at Harborlight Montessori School is designed to acquaint parents with the Montessori philosophy and the superior learning opportunities uniquely available at Harborlight.

Initial Visits

Before submitting an application, parents are invited and encouraged to visit Harborlight. This is an opportunity for them to view a professionally prepared video about Montessori education, tour the campus, and observe the classrooms in session. Harborlight holds annual open school dates between October and March. There are also weekly program tours by appointment. To schedule a tour, parents contact the main office. Children do not attend the initial school visit so that full attention can be given to parents' questions.

Application

In addition to the application is a required, non-refundable application fee and support documents. For the Infant and Toddler and Early Childhood Program applicants, parents submit a Development History form. For Elementary and Middle School Program applicants, parents submit an Independent School Teacher Evaluation form and copies of all student records including grade reports, standardized testing, and other cognitive or development assessments. Applications are not considered active until all support documents have been received and the child has had a successful screening visit.

Once parents have submitted an application for their child, a second visit is scheduled. At this time parents bring their child for an informal visit in a classroom. Parents accompany infants and toddlers; preschool and elementary children visit the classroom unaccompanied by parents.

Enrollment

The director of admission notifies the parents of their child's admission status. Qualified siblings of children already enrolled in Harborlight, children of faculty and staff, and children previously enrolled in a Montessori school are given preference in admission. Students placed on the waiting list are eligible to enroll as space becomes available.

Qualified applicants are notified of admission decisions by mail and are given two weeks to return the enrollment contract and non-refundable deposit to Harborlight to secure placement. The student is considered enrolled when the enrollment contract is signed and duly accepted by the director of admission and director of finance.

Placement

The admission office accepts written parent requests for classroom placements at all levels. Parents are strongly encouraged to visit all of the classrooms before submitting a written request to the director of admission. Harborlight strongly believes in the strength and integrity of each and every classroom and places students in classrooms based on balance of gender, age and academic level. Preference in classroom assignments is given to siblings.

Re-Enrollment

Harborlight families are offered the opportunity to re-enroll for the next academic year in January. The admission and business offices mail a letter, tuition information, and a contract to the parents. The student is considered enrolled when the enrollment contract and non-refundable deposit are accepted by the director of admission and director of finance before March 1. Harborlight offers acceptance to qualified applicants after March 1 and therefore cannot guarantee the acceptance of late re-enrollment contracts. Enrollment is not available to families who have not met their financial obligations for the current year.

Secondary School Placement

The process of researching and applying to secondary schools (independent day /boarding and public) begins in the spring of the seventh grade year. Students work directly with the placement team which consists of the student's faculty advisor, program director, director of admission, and the student's parents. The team devises a plan for researching secondary schools, creates a timeline for campus tours, initial visits, entrance examinations, completion and submission of applications, interviews, and selection. The team supports and guides the student throughout the process.

Termination of Enrollment

Harborlight reserves the right to terminate the child's enrollment for reasons including but not limited to: non-payment of tuition, parental request for termination/withdrawal, and failure on the part of the student or his/her parent(s) to abide by Harborlight's Code of Conduct and the policies outlined in the Parent Handbook.

Congruent with Harborlight's mission and in support of the child reaching his/her full potential, Harborlight reserves the right to terminate enrollment when it is incapable of providing the most appropriate learning environment, or is unable to staff or support the social, emotional, or academic needs of the child.

Financial Information

For complete financial information and policies, please refer to the Enrollment Contract or the financial information and policies information, which is mailed to every parent and is also available in the main office. Parents are responsible for payment of tuition notwithstanding absence for any reason including, but not limited to, illness, injury, vacation, or suspension.

Non-Refundable Enrollment Deposit and Tuition

A non-refundable enrollment deposit of 10% of the total tuition and fees is due upon return of the enrollment contract on or before March 1 and will be held and applied toward the last tuition installment. For new students accepted after March 1, the full deposit is due, with the tuition contract, within two weeks of acceptance or on the first day of school, whichever comes first. Enrollment, as specified within the enrollment contract, may be cancelled in writing prior to August 1 resulting in forfeiture of the 10% non-refundable deposit. If the enrollment contract is cancelled after August 1, the parents or guardians financially responsible for the student forfeit the non-refundable enrollment deposit as well as an additional 10% of the total tuition and fees for the academic year.

The enrollment deposit may only be applied toward the student's tuition for the academic year and is non-refundable and non-transferable for any reason.

Tuition Payment Plans

Parents or guardians financially responsible for the student may choose one of three tuition payment plans:

- 1) Annual Payment- 100% tuition and fees, less the enrollment deposit (10%), due July 1. (3% tuition discount is applied to this payment plan);
- 2) Semi-Annual Payment- 50% tuition and fees due July 1 and 50%, less the enrollment deposit (10%), due December 1. (1% tuition discount is applied to this payment plan); or
- 3) Monthly Payment- 8 equal payments due by the first of each month beginning July 1 and ending February 1.

Tuition Accounts in Arrears

Harborlight maintains a strict policy that the total tuition and fees are paid in full by March 1. Families whose accounts are not paid in full will not be offered successive enrollment. Exceptions to this policy may only be made at the discretion of the head of school. Harborlight reserves the right to terminate student enrollment if parents/guardians fail to meet their financial responsibility to Harborlight.

Financial Aid

Recognizing the importance of a consistent, quality educational experience and the mutual relationship already established between the family and Harborlight, every effort is made to accommodate the needs of families who wish their children to experience Harborlight through the eighth grade. Student applicants are eligible for financial aid between grades K and 8.

Filing an application for financial aid with Harborlight Montessori School is completed with the assistance of School and Student Service for Financial Aid (SSS). This service (SSS) computes the parents' financial statement and assesses and recommends an appropriate tuition contribution from the family. SSS does not provide financial aid to the student. Financial aid awards are funded through an appropriation of the Harborlight Montessori School budget and demonstrate Harborlight's commitment to a diverse student population. Harborlight makes financial aid decisions in a manner that allows families to make timely, careful, and fully-informed enrollment decisions. Confidentiality of financial aid applications, records, and decisions is assured.

Harborlight determines eligibility for admission and re-enrollment without regard to a student's application for financial aid. The admission committee reviews applications for enrollment separate from the financial aid committee, which reviews information regarding financial need and aid eligibility. Harborlight executes procedures that ensure a fair, consistent, and equitable assessment of each family's ability to contribute toward educational expenses. Harborlight maintains the same standards of behavior and academic performance for recipients of financial aid as it does for non-recipients.

Financial aid applications are submitted and reviewed annually. Harborlight continues to provide support to students as long as financial need is demonstrated. Students currently enrolled at Harborlight who are not receiving financial assistance through the financial aid program may request an application if the need arises.

Calendar for Filing Financial Aid Applications

January 1	Financial Aid material is available in the admission office. Families mail application materials and appropriate fee directly to SSS.
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- February 1 Families mail a copy of the prior year's federal tax return 1040 directly to the director of finance at Harborlight.
- May 1 Families mail a copy of the current federal tax return 1040 directly to the director of finance at Harborlight.

Families re-enrolling at Harborlight Montessori School will be notified of financial aid committee decisions in March. Notification of financial aid awards for new families applying to Harborlight Montessori School are mailed along with an offer to enroll.

Following the guiding principle of the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS), the responsibility of financing a private school education rests with the student's family. It is an expectation that both parents will finance their child's education to the extent that they are able. In the event the student's parents are separated or divorced, both parents are required to submit applications for financial aid and their federal tax 1040 forms. Information from both parents is taken into consideration.

Community Partnership Program

One of the goals of the Education Reform Act of 1993 is for all young children to have the opportunity to participate in a high quality early childhood program before they enter kindergarten. To help achieve this goal, legislation established a program to increase the availability, affordability, and quality of early care and education programs for three and four year old children in Massachusetts. Families meeting the eligibility requirements may be provided tuition assistance through the program. Please contact the Harborlight admission office for more details. Student applicants are eligible between the ages of 2.9 and kindergarten. Residency requirements apply.

Academic Skills Center

The Academic Skills Center provides academic consultation, testing, and tutoring for all eligible Harborlight Montessori School students in the elementary and middle school program (grades 1-8).

Referrals

Congruent with Harborlight's mission, Harborlight supports the growth and development of the whole child. Harborlight faculty and staff support families in accessing resources in the community. The following is a guide to the referral process:

- Teachers document observations of the student.
- The program director and teacher create a plan to support student learning and implement accommodations when possible.
- The teacher schedules a meeting with the student's parents to discuss the reasons for referral and plans to access resources.
- The teacher presents the parents with the written referral form, which is signed by the program director and head of school.
- Parents are informed of IDEA 2004 and advised of the services available to them in their local community.

Determination of eligibility for services typically requires assessment of the student in areas of suspected need or disability. According to the student's needs and eligibility for services, an education program is developed and discussed with the parents. Placement decisions are determined according to the individual needs of the child. This decision is determined according to what is considered to be the most appropriate environment and/or school for the child.

If parents do not comply with the referral process, Harborlight may not be able to appropriately accommodate the child's needs and therefore may terminate enrollment. A comprehensive list of agency referrals (for children and their families) is available in the community resource notebook.

School Psychologist, Reading and Special Needs Consultant

Harborlight Montessori School retains a reading and special education consultant and school psychologist. The consultant conducts the majority of psycho-educational testing and evaluation of Harborlight children. All testing will be completed by private arrangement with the evaluator. These tests may include, but are not limited to:

- Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children, Third Edition
- Wide Range Assessment of Memory and Learning: Story Memory
- Children's Auditory Verbal Learning Test
- Developmental Test of Visual-Motor Integration
- Boston Naming Test
- Denckla's Cancellation Task
- Trailmaking Test
- Wechsler Individual Achievement Test
- Achenbach Parent Questionnaire and Teacher Report
- Roswell-Chall Diagnostic Reading Test
- Woodcock Diagnostic Reading Battery
- Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing

Tutorials

Tutoring is available in the academic skills center. Fees for tutoring will be billed monthly to the parents.

Academic Testing

Student progress is monitored throughout the year by the teachers using observation, extensive record keeping, parent teacher conferences, conference reports, and testing. Each student's progress is assessed using the following battery of standardized academic testing tools.

The ***Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS)*** is administered to preschool and lower elementary students, beginning midway through the Kindergarten year through third grade. These are a set of standardized, individually administered measures of early literacy development. They are designed to be short (one minute) fluency measures used to regularly monitor the development of pre-reading and early reading skills. ***DIBLES*** was designed to assess phonological awareness, alphabetic principle, and fluency with connected text. This test is repeated three times during the year to monitor the progress of each student.

The ***Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test*** is administered at the end of first, third, fifth, and seventh grade. The results of this test reveal the level of reading achievement of students throughout their school career. The objective information obtained from the ***GMRT***, complemented by teachers' evaluations and other sources of information, can be a basis for organizing students into appropriate instructional groups, identifying students who would benefit from more challenging reading, placing students in suitable reading groups, evaluating the effectiveness of the reading program in the classroom, and reporting student progress.

The *Stanford Achievement Test (SAT)* is given to all elementary and middle school students in the spring. It is designed to measure performance in the three types of reading (textual, recreational and functional), spelling, study skills, language (punctuation, grammar), mathematics (computation and problem solving), science, social science, and listening skills. Parents receive a copy of their child's test scores with the spring conference report. This report provides a comprehensive view of the student's test results, national percentile ranks, raw scores, and measures of grade equivalency.

Arrival & Dismissal

Promptness in a child's life is very important. We ask that children arrive no earlier than five minutes before the start of class. The time before class is vital for teachers' preparation to ensure a smooth and productive day. To ensure safety, please follow the procedures for drop-off at the main building.

Driveway Safety

Please

- Adhere to the ONE-WAY sign.
- Turn off car/cellular phones.
- Adhere to an 8-10 mile an hour speed limit.
- Stop at the stop sign and look for small children.
- Yield for children and adults crossing in the crosswalk between the two buildings.
- Do not pull around cars in the pickup lane unless directed to do so.
- Do not double-park or stand your car between the pickup lane and the angled parking.
- Do not park in the pick-up lane for any reason.
- Do not leave children of any age alone in the car.
- Hold small children by the hand when on the sidewalk, in the crosswalk and parking lot.

Arrival Procedures for the Main Building (8:45 A.M Early Childhood/ 8:15 A.M. Elementary)

1. Pull into Harborlight driveway and into the drop-off lane.
2. Early childhood parents escort their children from the car to the door of the classroom, then return to their cars promptly and exit the lot. Elementary parents allow their children to exit the car, enter the building independently and pull away after they see their children are safely inside the building.
3. Additional spaces in the parking lot (yellow paint) are specifically reserved for drop-off. The angled parking spaces are reserved for parents of infants and toddlers. Harborlight staff and parents volunteering at Harborlight park in the spaces farthest from the building.
4. If you have business to conduct at Harborlight, please use the rear lot spaces. This would include: meetings with teachers, completing paperwork in the main office, chaperoning on field trips, or volunteering in a classroom, etc.

Arrival ends at 8:20 A.M for the Elementary. Students arriving after this time enter the main door of the building and are signed-in at the office.

Dismissal Procedures for the Main Building (11:45 A.M, 1:00 P.M. and 3:15 P.M. Early Childhood/ 2:45 P.M. Elementary)

1. Pull into Harborlight driveway and into the pick-up line. Remain inside your car.
2. Following the car ahead of you, pull up towards the end of the driveway (next to Essex Street) until your child arrives.

3. If you have business to conduct at Harborlight, please use the rear lot spaces. This would include, but is not limited to, meetings with teachers, completing paperwork in the main office, chaperoning on field trips, or volunteering in a classroom.
4. The teacher will escort your child to the car.
5. At this time, the teacher will briefly tell you how your child's day was. You may make an appointment to speak with your child's teacher or phone at a more convenient time for lengthier conversations.

Elementary dismissals end promptly at 2:45P.M. Preschool and infant/toddler dismissals end at 3:15P.M. If arriving after this time, please come to the main office to have your child released.

Attendance & Tardiness

Regular attendance and punctuality are essential parts of a successful educational experience. Consistent and punctual attendance fosters learning and allows for the continuity of instruction, student preparation, the development of good work habits, and academic achievement. Elementary (grades 1-8) attendance is monitored by the program director and will be recorded on the student's conference report.

Parents are asked to notify Harborlight when a child will be absent and report all communicable diseases to the main office.

Carpools

With increasing enrollment and rising fuel costs, we are eager to see the formation of as many carpools as possible. Carpool forms are available from the main office, and should be completed and returned to Harborlight as soon as possible following the Open House & Registration. Harborlight will gladly assist in the process, however all arrangements are made by parents. Harborlight does not accept responsibility for any incidents that occur as a result of the carpool program. Information distributed for the purpose of establishing car pools is confidential and may not be used for any other purpose.

When carpooling there are a few things to keep in mind:

1. Introduce your child to the other drivers before they begin picking-up and dropping-off from school.
2. Discuss mutual expectations regarding seating, acceptable behavior, noise level, etc.
3. Follow the state law requirements for children and child restraints, booster seats, and car seats.
4. Carpool drivers must be listed in your child's file on the Child Release form.
5. Label all car seats with your child's last name when storing them at Harborlight.

Celebrations & Special Events

Holidays and birthdays are celebrated in each classroom environment according to the discretion of the classroom teachers. Programs and holiday celebrations at the Infant and Toddler House and at the elementary level may deviate from this general list. This list begins with birthday celebrations and follows in order of the academic calendar.

Birthdays

Children can enjoy having a birthday snack at school. We suggest that parents provide a special snack for their child's celebration. *(Please keep sugar to a minimum).* If you are planning a home party for your child, please do not distribute invitations in the classroom. Likewise, if your child is attending a

party after school, please do not send gifts to school with your child. Please mail invitations or put them in parents' mailboxes.

Birthday Book Program & Book Fairs

It is a tradition for children to present their class with a book for the classroom library to celebrate their birthdays. Parents who wish to participate in this tradition will have the book recognized with a bookplate with the child's name, birth date and age.

Through local publishing and distribution companies, such as Scholastic, Harborlight hosts book fairs. Volunteer parents help support the operation of the book fairs with proceeds benefiting the library. Program directors and teachers post a wish list of books they would welcome as part of their collection.

Halloween

Halloween usually involves a celebration in the classrooms. Scary and distorting masks are avoided to help dispel fears in young children. Young children do not bring or wear costumes from home. Elementary students do bring costumes to school to parade over to visit our neighbors at the nursing home. Please refer to the classroom newsletter for more information specific to each classroom.

Thanksgiving

This is a time when we all share in the creation of a traditional feast. Each class works on a particular aspect of the feast and then joins together as a community to share and celebrate. Additionally, children help collect food for local food banks.

Winter Programs

The seasonal holidays are celebrated with stories and experiences that embody the true spirit of giving and sharing. The students bring a small gift to our neighbors at the nursing home and perform a winter music program for the patients. The Elementary and Middle School Program presents a winter program featuring chorus, instruments, and solo and ensemble music presentations. Each class at the infant & toddler and early childhood levels holds a winter music program for parents and invited guests.

Grandparents' Day

Grandparents (and/or suitable *Grandfriends*) are invited to visit Harborlight for our Annual Grandparents' Day. They share a snack with their student, view a special presentation by the students, and are shown examples of the work in the classroom.

Ancient Civilization Fair (Elementary & Middle School Classes)

Elementary and middle school classes (grades 1-8) host ancient civilization fairs according to their topic of study each year. The students transform their classroom environments and bring their parents and invited guests back in time with displays of their research projects. Following the study of the fundamental needs of man, students incorporate aspects of clothing, shelter, food, government, religion, and architecture into the development of their classroom presentations.

Science Fair (Elementary & Middle School Classes)

A study of the scientific method culminates in the students' science fair projects on display and the students' presentations of their research and experiments. Individual students prepare and present their questions, challenges, and creative elements of their (not your average) science fair projects.

Mother's Day Tea (Early Childhood Classes)

Every child bakes and prepares well in advance for this annual event. The class also learns how to greet and host a visitor. The week preceding Mother's Day, the children invite their mothers or a very special guest to visit the classroom and share tea with them. After tea the child shows examples of the work in the classroom. Mothers are invited to share tea and refreshments with their children in this special celebration.

Class Trips (Upper Elementary & Middle School Classes)

Each year the upper elementary & middle school classes travel to augment their studies in science and/or history. These trips are designed to extend their learning in a hands-on approach with respect to the development of the student's independence, concentration, resourcefulness, and responsibility. These class trips are coordinated by the faculty in collaboration with the director of the elementary & middle school program. These class trips are a compulsory aspect of the academic program and are commensurate with Harborlight's mission, philosophy and student competencies at this level. Students who are unable to attend class trips must submit a medical waiver from their physician and are required to complete an independent study (approved by their faculty advisor).

Theatre Productions- Early Childhood, Elementary & Middle School Classes

Elementary & middle school classes put on theatre productions each spring demonstrating their work in drama class, set design, and wardrobe. The early childhood classes present their play to parents as part of their end of year program.

Annual Picnic

In early June, family and staff join together for a picnic at Lynch Park in Beverly. Families pack a picnic dinner and the faculty supervises arts and crafts activities.

Annual Carnival

The Elementary & Middle School Program holds an annual carnival during the last week of the academic year. Upper school students host the event in the morning for the early childhood classes and then celebrate together in the afternoon.

Awards Ceremony (Kindergarten through Grade 7)

A special awards ceremony recognizes another year completed and acknowledges the students moving on to the next level. Distinctions and awards are presented at this time. This event is open to the entire school community.

Graduation (Grade 8)

The graduation ceremony is a community event celebrated by faculty, staff, board members, elementary students (who honor the graduating class through song), alumni, parents, and invited guests. The graduation ceremony is the finale to Graduation Week and is followed by a celebration and reception.

Child Care Days

Days marked, "Child Care Only," on Harborlight's calendar are available to students enrolled in academic and full day programs at an extra per diem charge. Written reservation for these days must be submitted with payment no later than November 15. Once reserved, there are no refunds or credits

for absence regardless of the reason. Harborlight reserves the right to deny requests for additional days after the November 15 deadline.

Child Release

In the absence of written authorization, children will not be released to anyone other than a parent. In addition to the written consent on the Child Release form in the child's folder, parents need to file a Change in Dismissal form with the main office.

Close of School Announcements

Inclement weather necessitating school cancellation will be announced on WBZ Radio AM 1030, Boston. WBZ News Radio will read the list of cancellations twice per hour (5 minutes and 35 minutes past the hour) during Storm Center operation. Harborlight does not follow the Beverly School closings. If there is any question or you haven't been able to tune into announcements, you may call the School - a close of school announcement will be posted on the answering machine. Weather can differ drastically in the North Shore communities we serve; parents are encouraged to use discretion when making school attendance decisions.

In the event that the weather changes drastically during the course of a normal school day, Harborlight may close early. If this occurs, parents will be contacted by Harborlight staff.

Clothing

Young children are encouraged to wear play clothes --simple, washable, sturdy, and easy-to-manage. Younger children are required to have two complete changes of clothing, including underwear and socks. Parents pack this clothing in a plastic bag with the child's name on it and store it in the child's bin. Children who stay for nap/rest time should also bring a small blanket and junior sheet. Children who stay for lunch may also bring a toothbrush and toothpaste in a small storage bag to fit in their cubbies.

For the older children, Harborlight works to establish a comfortable and non-distracting learning environment. Older children are encouraged to make clothing choices with consideration for comfort, safety, and respect. Harborlight values diversity and self-expression and encourages parents to guide the children with discretion in making appropriate clothing choices. Parents are discouraged from allowing their children to wear clothing and footwear in disrepair, shirts with writing other than "Harborlight," short shirts or skirts, shirts or dresses with spaghetti straps, and inappropriate or excessive jewelry. Hats are worn outdoors only.

Children who are dressed in a manner that is not respectful or developmentally appropriate for school activities will be asked to change into appropriate clothing or sent home.

For the older children who prefer to bring hygiene products to school, they may place them in a clearly labeled bag or container and store them in their class bathroom.

Please label all clothing and personal items and be sure to periodically check the Lost and Found for missing items. All lost and found items left after several months are donated to the Salvation Army.

Shoes

Sneakers or rubber-soled shoes are recommended. Velcro shoes or sneakers are strongly recommended until a child is able to tie shoes. Clogs, sandals (excluding sport sandals), and flip-flops are inappropriate footwear because they limit the child from participation in some aspects of physical activity. Young children spend a considerable amount of time participating in floor work. If preferred, children may keep a pair of indoor shoes or slippers with rubber soles to wear in the classroom. Winter and wet weather boots are stored on a boot rack after children change into their indoor shoes.

Conduct

One of the primary goals of Harborlight is to create a positive school climate through sensitivity, respect, open communication, and consistent standards of behavior.

Harborlight maintains the expectation that students and adults throughout the Harborlight community conduct themselves in a safe, orderly, and considerate manner at all times. This expectation of conduct and consequences applies to all community members (children, parents, students) and, when not in accordance, will result in the termination of the student.

In the beginning of every school year, the teachers and students spend a considerable amount of time discussing the classroom, playground, bus, and school-wide ground rules. The teachers work with the students to help them develop problem solving, negotiation, and conflict resolution skills. Faculty and staff continually reinforce the strategy of seeking adult assistance when students cannot reconcile differences.

Harborlight strives to provide a positive, safe, and orderly environment where students learn to be responsible for their own behavior and relate well with their peers. Incidents of misbehavior will be dealt with in a consistent manner as described in the Discipline Policy.

Serious incidents of misbehavior are *unacceptable*. These include and are not limited to: bullying, stealing, obscene language or gesture, fighting, vandalism, destruction of property, physical, verbal or written assault on another person. These incidents will be brought to the immediate attention of the program director and the head of school and students will be sent home.

Discipline Policy

“The only true discipline is inner-discipline,” said Dr. Maria Montessori. She described discipline as primarily indirect. Children learn self-control by engaging in rationally organized, calm, quiet, spontaneous work.

Harborlight’s approach to discipline with the children is to guide them towards facing and acknowledging their actions and behavior. The children are encouraged to express themselves verbally and resolve small disputes peacefully. Teachers respond to children with a non-judgmental approach that engages children in the evaluation of their actions and emotions. With the guidance of a teacher who uses a respectful, polite tone, children explore alternatives and are asked to make commitments to new courses of action. This strategy is reinforced by the teacher being involved and modeling desirable behavior. Children develop responsibility, self-worth, and accountability when the teacher promotes the children’s ability to self-correct.

These child-centered methods of discipline develop inner-discipline through natural consequences and are never as a form of punishment, but as a means of correcting misbehaviors. The children are always

treated with the utmost respect. It is the work of the teacher, the environment, and the children themselves that develops and supports inner-discipline. Proper modeling of appropriate and acceptable behaviors, encouraging purposeful work in the environment, and providing consistency in response to behaviors promote respect for all children.

In the event that a child repeatedly experiences difficulty with behavior, the teacher conferences with the child in a quiet and calm manner. Whenever necessary, the child is offered time and a safe, peaceful place to collect his/her thoughts and regain composure. If these methods are ineffective and the child's behavior is extremely inappropriate, the child is removed from the classroom. Any consistent inappropriate behavior is explained to the parents during a conference and succeeding unacceptable behaviors are documented for the parents' interest and to examine patterns of behavior. The parents are invited to observe the child in the classroom and solutions to the problem are worked out collaboratively. If necessary, Harborlight will consult with outside professionals to resolve behavior challenges effectively.

The age of the child is taken into consideration when dealing with discipline and behavior challenges. Harborlight reserves the right to terminate a child's enrollment if it is unable to staff or support the child's social and emotional needs. With regard to unacceptable behavior (see Conduct), Harborlight reserves the right to suspend or terminate enrollment.

Electronics

Students may bring personal laptops to school for academic assignments/word processing only. Use of the Internet is not permitted on personal computers. Students are not permitted to check personal email, play games, etc. on class computers. iPods, portable disk players, Game Boys or other electronic games are not allowed in school. Digital cameras may be used during recess or at the discretion of the faculty. Cell phones may not be used during school time. If a student has a cell phone, it must remain in the locker, turned off. Students may use their cell phones after school hours (before 8:15 and after 3:15), unless enrolled in the After School Program. Students are allowed to use the Harborlight phone to contact parents with permission from the faculty. Harborlight is not responsible for students' personal devices.

Extended Hours

Extended hours must be scheduled and approved in advance. Harborlight is open between 7:30 A.M.- 5:30 P.M. Within this time period, hours beyond the contracted time may be arranged through the main office on a day to day basis when space is available. All charges are due and payable when billed. The rate for extended hours is \$10.00 per hour with a \$10.00 minimum.

Field Trips

During the course of the year, children take field trips to enrich their learning experience. Field trips are chaperoned by parents and teachers. Field trips are announced in advance and children with a signed permission form on file may attend. The children are transported on the Harborlight bus for all field trips. Chaperones may not transport children, other than their own, in their personal vehicles. Chaperones are required by law to submit to a Criminal Records and Department of Social Services check prior to volunteering for field trip duties.

Food Considerations

In addition to being a **NUT-FREE SCHOOL**, we ask that you refrain from offering food containing high quantities of salt, sugar, or any artificial coloring, chemicals, or preservatives. For infants, toddlers, and preschool-aged children, parents do not send in foods that can be easily choked on, such as whole grapes, popcorn, celery, or carrots. Harborlight serves filtered water with meals and snacks.

Gifts

Gifts to the classroom are always appreciated and teachers can offer helpful suggestions with the approval of the program director. Parents are discouraged from offering faculty and staff anything other than small, inexpensive personal gifts. Faculty and staff are unable to accept monetary gifts. Parents may make a donation to the Harborlight Teacher Enrichment Fund, in lieu of a personal gift. This fund benefits the continued professional development of faculty and staff.

Harborlight is operated as a non-profit corporation. Contributions to the Annual Fund and Teacher Enrichment Fund are always welcome and are tax deductible. A tax deductible contribution acknowledgement letter will be provided for tax filing purposes.

Late Pick-Up

Harborlight closes at 5:30 P.M. There is a charge of \$10.00 per ¼ hour or any part of a ¼ hour for pick-up after 5:30P.M. Children in the Half-Day and Academic-Day Programs not picked up by their scheduled time are also subject to the same charges.

Open Door Policy

Harborlight maintains an open door policy and encourages parents to visit and observe the classroom while their child is present. Each classroom is equipped with a one-way window, which provides a non-intrusive, authentic form of observation. If a parent would prefer to observe inside the classroom, an appointment may be scheduled with the main office. In keeping with our philosophy of respect for children's concentration and work environment, we limit classroom visitors to no more than two at one time.

Orientation

The goal of the transition process is to ensure that every new child has a positive experience when making the adjustment to school. The Annual Open House and Registration is scheduled in early September, before school opens, for the children and their families. Infants, toddlers, and early childhood children are transitioned on an individual basis, best suited to their individual needs. All parents of infants and toddlers stay with their children until the teachers decide that they may leave. In general, the I/T and ECE child's first day of school is limited to a 2 hour period. The orientation process may take anywhere from one day to one week, depending on the individual child. All elementary age students begin with a full day of school.

Physical Education Uniforms

All children enrolled in programs K- grade 8 are required to wear a uniform for physical education class. Physical education uniforms and accessories can be ordered through the School. Please request an order form from the main office. Harborlight has a limited supply on hand, which can be purchased through the main office.

Recycling

As part of our effort to educate children about recycling and minimizing waste we ask that parents send food and drink with the least amount of disposable packaging possible. Parents are encouraged to send reusable containers (thermos bottles, plastic containers) in their children's lunch box and avoid individual sized containers (yogurts, juice boxes, etc.) We encourage families to join in Harborlight's environmentally friendly philosophy by recycling at home.

Harborlight hosts a paper recycling collection bin for the entire community through a partnership with Abitibi Paper Retriever. Harborlight welcomes families, friends, and neighbors to recycle paper products by depositing dry, clean paper in the Abitibi dumpster. Small electronics (cell phones, laptops, iPods, ink jet cartridges and digital cameras are also recycled through Harborlight, with collection bins in the lobby.

Rest, Sleep, or Quiet Activity

After lunch all young children have a rest period. Children under the age of 4 years nap between 45 minutes and 2 hours, depending on the age and sleep requirements of each child. Children between 4 and 5 years have a rest time and a quiet activity period. For nap and rest time, one small, personal security item may accompany the child's rest blanket.

Student Records & Reports

Amending the Child's Record

Parents have the right to add information, comments, data or any other relevant materials to their children's record. Parents have the right to request deletion or amendment of any information contained in the child's records. Such request shall be made in accordance with the procedures as described below.

If parents are of the opinion that adding information is not sufficient to explain, clarify, or correct objectionable material in their child's record, they shall have the right to have a conference with Harborlight staff to make their objections known. Harborlight shall, within one week after the conference, render a decision in writing. If the decision is in favor of the parent, Harborlight immediately takes steps as may be necessary to put the decision into effect.

Confidentiality & Distribution of Records

Information contained in a child's record shall be privileged and confidential. Harborlight does not distribute or release information in a child's record to anyone not directly related to implementing the program for the child without the written consent of the parent. Parents, upon request, have access to their child's records at reasonable times. In no event shall such access be delayed more than two business days after the initial request for the child's entire record, regardless of the physical location of its parts. Duplication and dissemination of such information is handled entirely by an administrative assistant. Harborlight maintains a permanent, written log indicating to whom information contained in a child's record have been released. Each person disseminating or releasing information contained in a child's record, is entered into the log with: name, signature, position, date, the portions of the record released, purpose of such dissemination, and the signature of the person to whom the information is disseminated or released. The log is considered to be part of the child's records. Such log shall be available only to the child's parents and school personnel responsible for record maintenance. No current records are to leave Harborlight offices and no past records may leave the past records storage area. Harborlight does not charge a fee for copies of any information contained in a child's record.

Conferences & Reports

Mandatory parent-teacher conferences take place in December, March, and June for the Infant/Toddler, Early Childhood, Elementary and Middle School Programs. A conference report is prepared for each child: one copy given to the parents and one copy for the child's records. If the spring conference is not attended, the teacher will mail the evaluation form home. Parents or teachers may request meetings at times in addition to the scheduled conferences.

Daily Reports (Infant/Toddler & Early Childhood)

Parents of infants and young toddlers may review a hand written report at the end of each day. The information recorded includes the following: mood, appetite, activities, illnesses, diaper changes, sleep/rest, etc. Parents of preschool children receive an oral report at the end of the day.

Summer Program

During the months of July and August, Harborlight holds a summer program. Parents enroll their children by returning a signed Summer Enrollment Contract and the appropriate deposit. Summer program enrollment begins in March.

Infant & Toddler Summer Program

The emphasis is on outdoor play. An exploration of the outdoor environment includes gardening, nature walks, physical activities, water, and sand play.

Early Childhood & Elementary Summer Programs

The Summer Program emphasizes an exploration of the outdoor environment, drama, physical activities and the arts. Field trips and special guests are scheduled to enrich the summer themes. Children attending kindergarten and elementary programs swim at the YMCA's Aquatic Center.

Technology- Acceptable Use

Children enrolled in the Infant & Toddler and Early Childhood Programs are not exposed to passive media including computers, television programming, and film.

At the elementary & middle school level, technology provides students with access to people and material from all over the world. This information and interaction promotes educational excellence and is consistent with the goals of Harborlight. The Internet does include some material that is not appropriate for students. Efforts are taken to protect students from such materials including content filters and faculty supervision. Students use the Internet within an educational activity, including performing research, developing projects, and disseminating information.

The following guidelines are intended to maximize the educational opportunities available while minimizing the risk of inappropriate use:

Responsibility & Accountability

At the beginning of each academic year, students sign an Acceptable Use Agreement after they have been apprised of the policies and procedures concerning technology and its usage. Students are expected to represent Harborlight and adhere to the code of conduct and their classroom constitution. Access to technology resources is a privilege. Inappropriate use of the Internet, hardware, and/or software will be handled with consequences appropriate to the offense, age of the child, and nature of the incident.

Respect

Students are expected to employ network etiquette which includes, but is not limited to: communicating in a polite and courteous manner; using appropriate language; avoiding disruptions (avoiding use that would interfere or disrupt the use of the network by others such as downloading large files); sharing resources with others in consideration of time and accessibility constraints; and respecting the technology, hardware and software, with the same consideration as other elements of the learning environment.

Privacy & Security

Access to Harborlight's Internet system is not private. Student files and records of Internet use are accessible by Harborlight technical staff and therefore are not private.

Students are expected to respect the hardware and software systems installed by Harborlight. Any unauthorized access, tampering, download, or deletion of material is unacceptable. Students are expected to protect their personal information and the information of others. Regarding personal information, the transmission of personal passwords or identifiable information is strictly prohibited. Violations of personal privacy (name, address, phone number, email address) of students, faculty, or staff are expected to be reported and subject to consequence.

Other Considerations

Students are prohibited from the misuse of technology that includes: access or transmittal of illegal material, plagiarism, gaming, accessing or posting on chat rooms and bulletin boards, use of personal email and instant messaging, copyright infringement, unauthorized activity for commercial or political gain, vandalism of property (hardware, software), and unethical or illegal violations in accordance with the law.

Transportation

Harborlight Montessori School does not provide transportation to and from school. It is the parents' responsibility to arrange for transportation to and from school. Infant/toddler and early childhood children are escorted to the door of their classroom at drop-off and picked-up in the classroom or by means of the Harborlight dismissal procedure (see arrival and dismissal). Children in kindergarten and elementary programs are transported by bus to the YMCA for gym & swim programs on a bi-weekly basis. All field trips are also by bus; upper elementary and middle school students frequently take public transportation to field trip destinations.

Toys

Children are discouraged from bringing toys to the classroom. This includes electronic games. Books or other educational materials are welcome. Please be sure to clearly label personal items.

Visiting the Classroom

All visitors check-in at the main office, log their name, time and date in the visitor log, and receive visitor's passes. A guide to visiting and observing in a classroom is made available along with writing materials.

Children are very aware of their workspace and take notice of changes in the environment. Visitors find a comfortable, inconspicuous place to sit and observe. Children and teachers will continue with their regular routines and activities. Children and teachers will not engage with visitors. The less

obtrusive the visitor is, the more natural the children will be, and, therefore, the observation will be a more authentic representation of how the classroom normally functions. Visitors are discouraged from making eye contact with the children but may act naturally and respond if a child initiates an interaction. Children sometimes seek adult attention and may linger around visitors, which prevents them from observing. When children seek attention and attempt to engage visitors, it is suggested that the visitors briefly explain their purpose and suggest the children find themselves an activity. Visitors are encouraged to write down questions or comments during the observation and schedule a follow-up meeting with the teacher or program director to review their notes.

Health & Safety

The Harborlight health care consultant/school nurse is a registered nurse and will discuss any questions regarding the health of the children. The Massachusetts Health Form must be completed and signed by the child's physician and returned before the first day of school. Harborlight does not conduct health, vision or hearing screenings.

Abuse & Neglect Policy

In order to ensure the well-being of the children in our care, our staff has a continuing duty under state law to report incidents of possible neglect or abuse, including physical, sexual, and psychological abuse, to the Department of Social Services, and to cooperate in any investigation of such possible abuse or neglect in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 119, Section 51A. Faculty and staff do not have discretion in this matter, and must make such referrals when they have reasonable cause to believe that a child might have been harmed by anyone, including non-family members, and faculty and staff may be subject to criminal penalties if they fail to report possible harm. Moreover, in grievous cases, faculty and staff may refer the matter directly to the local police department or district attorney's office.

Disinfection of Materials

All materials that have been used by infants and toddlers and any item that has been mouthed by a child are disinfected after each use with the appropriate bleach and water solution. Items that need disinfecting are collected and cleaned, rinsed under running water and air-dried. Bibs, wash cloths, diaper changing linens and cloth toys are machine-washed with water, bleach, and detergent after each use. All pillows, blankets and cloth toys that come into contact with bodily fluids are washed separately. Soiled clothing and cloth diapers are double-bagged and sent home to be washed. Nap and rest linens are also sent home weekly to be washed and returned.

Emergency Preparedness

Harborlight Montessori School has an established emergency preparedness plan should an emergency situation occur affecting the facility or as part of a larger scale event. The head of school, faculty and staff are responsible for the safety of the children, and will coordinate actions and/or requirements with community public safety officials and parents/guardians. The impact of an emergency on children can have lasting effects on their well being. Caregivers and families must manage the response to the emergency as well as help children cope with their feelings, fears, and needs during and after the emergency. Respecting the children's feelings, and involving them, whenever possible, in the recovery activities can reduce stress and anxiety.

Harborlight has developed a detailed plan to assist the staff in responding to emergency situations, provide information to family members concerning emergency planning, and provide a basis for restoration of services. The information contained in this document has been obtained from various agencies and documents including: "Child Care Emergency Management Plan", MEMA/DEEC; "An Example Crisis Management Plan For Independent Schools," AISNE; "Crisis Guidelines for Independent Schools", AISNE; "Masters of Disaster", American Red Cross; "Emergency Response", National Center for Environmental Health; and general information provided by the United States Department of Homeland Security. Harborlight has adapted many of the recommendations of these

articles and agencies to meet the specific needs of Harborlight's facilities, families and children.

Harborlight's administrative team and crisis management team have developed emergency plans specific to possible hazards. Much of the success of handling a crisis is in being prepared. Although we may have little to no warning of any of these possible hazards, protocol is in place, procedures are practiced, and the crisis management team is prepared to protect and care for all of the children until they may be safely returned to their homes.

Communication with parents during an emergency is critical. As soon as possible, class parents will receive a phone call from the administrative assistant to the head of school. Class parents will then call all parents on their telephone call list to briefly explain the emergency action. There is a separate list of parents who do not want their names on a shared emergency list. Those parents will be contacted by any one of the three administrative assistants. If possible, Harborlight staff will post a message on its website and on the answering machine. Local media (radio and television) will also be advised if necessary. The information contained in these messages will include: the nature of emergency, temporary shelter locations, emergency phone numbers, and an estimated time and procedure for parents to pick-up children.

The School staff will follow the Harborlight Montessori School Emergency Management Plan as closely as possible. However, in some emergency situations, there are gray areas and unforeseen obstacles. Communication among staff, local authorities, and parents is essential to the successful prevention, management, and recovery from an emergency.

Emergency Information

Emergency Numbers

Posted and immediately visible at each telephone that dials out:

Police:	911
Fire Department:	978 922-4000
Health Care Consultant:	on site
Ambulance:	911
Beverly Hospital:	978 922-3000
Poison Control Center:	800-682-9211 800-232-2120
School phone number:	978 922-1008

The caller always gives this information: name, nature of emergency, phone number, address, and exact location of injured person (i.e.: playground).

Directions to Harborlight: 243 (main school building for Early Childhood and Elementary Programs) or 249 (Infant & Toddler House) Essex Street (Route 22) off Cabot Street from downtown Beverly and exit 18 from Route 128. The entrance to the main building is on the northeast side of the building.

The caller does not hang up until the person directs him/her to do so.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of an accident or sudden onset of illness, Harborlight will not hesitate to seek proper care for a child. The child's individual emergency instructions on file in the office are consulted immediately and the parents are called. If necessary, the child will be transported to the Beverly Hospital on Herrick Street by ambulance. The Emergency Form (consent statement that the parent signs) will accompany the child so that treatment can be given immediately in the absence of the parent. **It is imperative that the parent keeps the emergency contact information in the office up to date, including pager, and mobile phone numbers.**

If the children from Harborlight Montessori School are on a field trip or at an off-site location, the head teacher for the group brings the following:

- Emergency and Health Forms for each child;
- Telephone numbers for Police, Fire and Ambulance in the area; and
- The location and telephone numbers of the nearest hospital or emergency treatment center.

In the event of an emergency, the head teacher will:

- Administer first aid;
- Notify the person in charge at the time;
- Call (911) the police, fire and ambulance, stating location address and nature of emergency;
- Give the person accompanying the child to the hospital the Health and Emergency Forms for the child; and
- Notify the parents as soon as possible & file an Accident Report with the head of school.

First aid supplies are located in the main office, in each classroom, on the bus, and in a small kit that accompanies the children on the playground or on walks. A mobile phone accompanies the children and staff members to the playground, on walks, and on Harborlight's bus.

Evacuation of Center in Emergency

The elevator is never used in the evacuation of the building. Each classroom has a posted floor plan of Harborlight with two evacuation routes to exit the building outlined. These two routes are specifically established for use in evacuation: the primary route is in red and an alternate route in blue, in the event that the first route is impassable. The teachers are trained in the implementation of evacuation procedures prior to the opening of Harborlight and monthly during the all school fire drills. The children also practice the evacuation procedures with their class during the year. In the event of an emergency requiring an evacuation, Harborlight will coordinate necessary provisions for the transportation and continued care until parents or an authorized individual picks-up the children. Harborlight has made arrangements with suitable facilities for hosting child care operations until children are picked up or until the end of the regular operating day. The City of Beverly Emergency Service Division and/or the American Red Cross Greater Beverly Chapter may assist with emergency support as needed. In a large-scale emergency, the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency will coordinate support efforts with community and state agencies to assist where needed.

Children with disabilities, who may need additional assistance during evacuation procedures, are each accompanied by a faculty or staff member who has been assigned to the child. This person is able to provide a 1:1 ratio with that child and is able to meet his/her specific needs in regards to exiting the building safely. Infants also need assistance during an evacuation; therefore, additional faculty and staff members are assigned to assist in evacuating infants from the building. In the event that the infant room is not accessible due to fire or otherwise, an evacuation crib is located in close proximity to the

infant room (main hallway) and is easily accessible for the teachers to transport the infants out of the building. The evacuation crib has moveable wheels, is light in weight, and can be easily lifted or rolled through doorways and on almost any surface. The carriages, which are stored in close proximity, may also be used to transport children from the building.

When exiting the building each staff member has specific responsibilities. Once all of the children are safely evacuated and attendance has been taken, the teachers supervise the children until they have either safely re-entered the building or have been transported to a safe place and are no longer in need of additional assistance. The person in charge in conjunction with the Beverly Fire Department advises the teachers and the administration of the status of the building. The children are allowed back into the building only after the fire department has completed an inspection and advise it is safe to occupy.

If the fire or rescue authorities determine that the children and faculty may not re-enter the building, all persons are transported (by school bus or walking) to the appropriate temporary shelter. At this site there will be sufficient supplies of food and water if the problem is limited to 243 or 249 Essex Street. In the event that the problem (including fire, natural disaster, power-outage, and loss of heat or water) is isolated to the 249 Essex Street Building (Infant & Toddler building) children will be accommodated at the 243 Essex Street Building until they can be safely dismissed to their parents. If the problem is community-wide, trained and designated staff will be responsible for transporting the following: bottled water, non-perishable food items such as crackers and canned fruit, blankets, first-aid kit and any necessary individual medications for the children. Emergency information accompanies the child out of the building as it would on a field trip.

Upon arrival at the building for emergency accommodations, the parents are contacted and advised to pick up their children at this location in an appropriate amount of time and manner.

In the event of an emergency situation that requires an evacuation of Harborlight, one of the following plans shall be implemented.

TEMPORARY SHELTER 1 --- IMMEDIATE AREA THREAT

If the emergency is confined to the IMMEDIATE AREA of Harborlight Montessori School, e.g. fire, or hazardous materials release, and the children cannot remain on the premises, the children and staff will be re-located by foot (or HMS school bus if necessary) to: Essex Park Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, 265 Essex Street, Beverly, MA 01915, P: 978-927-3260.

Students and staff will remain at this location while parents/emergency contacts are notified and arrangements are made to either transport home or care taking for the remainder of the day. In the event that a physical examination is recommended due to the nature of the emergency, children will be transported by ambulance to receive appropriate medical treatment at: Beverly Hospital, 85 Herrick Street, Beverly, MA 01915, P: 978-922-3000.

If the emergency requires defensive shelter in place at the temporary shelter site, the students will receive first aid by appropriately trained faculty and staff members.

TEMPORARY SHELTER 2 --- MORE WIDESPREAD THREAT

In a more widespread emergency, such as flood or hazardous materials accident, requiring evacuation

away from Harborlight and the surrounding area, the children and staff will be transported by school bus to Briscoe Middle School, 20 Colon Street, Beverly, MA 01915, P: 978-921-6100 (This re-location site has been pre-determined by the City of Beverly Emergency Service Division and the American Red Cross Greater Beverly Chapter)

Students and staff will remain at this location while parents/emergency contacts are notified and arrangements are made to either transport home or care taking for the remainder of the day. In the event that a physical examination is recommended due to the nature of the emergency, children will be transported by ambulance to receive appropriate medical treatment at: Beverly Hospital, 85 Herrick Street, Beverly, MA 01915, P: 978-922-3000.

If the emergency requires defensive shelter in place at the temporary shelter site, the students will receive treatment by American Red Cross medical professionals, and/or appropriately trained faculty and staff.

TEMPORARY SHELTER 3 --- MAJOR EVACUATION

In the event of a major emergency that necessitates a large-scale evacuation involving the places of safety listed above, evacuation arrangements may be coordinated with community public safety/emergency management officials to locate places of safety that can safely accommodate the children and staff. Unless instructed otherwise, the children and staff will be transported by school bus to: Gordon College, 255 Grapevine Road, Wenham, MA 01984, P: 978-927-2300.

Students and staff will remain at this location while parents/emergency contacts are notified and arrangements are made to either transport home or care taking for the remainder of the day. In the event that a physical examination is recommended due to the nature of the emergency, children will be transported by ambulance to receive appropriate medical treatment at: Addison Gilbert Hospital, 298 Washington St., Gloucester, MA 01930, P: 978-283-4000.

If the emergency requires defensive shelter in place at the temporary shelter site, the students will receive medical examination and treatment by American Red Cross medical professionals and/or appropriately trained faculty and staff.

Nut Free School

Harborlight is a NUT-FREE SCHOOL. Parents may not pack any nut products or oils in the child's lunch or class snack.

Severe nut allergies can result in anaphylactic shock and can be induced with skin contact as well as ingestion. Management of this allergy would seem to imply simply avoiding nuts; however it is not that simple. The foods that are prohibited include, but are not limited to: whole nuts (walnuts, almonds, macadamia, pecans, peanuts, cashews, etc.), peanut butter, almond-paste, Nutella®, marzipan, nut oil (found in many store bought bakery goods), etc. Some seemingly innocuous products (such as M&M's® and granola bars) are marked "may contain peanuts" because they are manufactured on machines that also manufacture products containing nuts.

It is Harborlight's goal to maintain environments free of any nut oil, nut ingredient, or nut-food residue. Parents must screen the ingredients on food labels carefully. If a child's lunch or snack may possibly contain a hazardous nut product, it will not be served and a suitable substitute will be served in its place.

Health & Immunization Requirements

A Massachusetts School Health Record, completed by the child's physician annually, is required of all children. All significant medical and allergy information must be included on this record. In addition, all children are required to submit and update, annually, a Record of Immunization, which complies with the Department of Public Health guidelines and includes evidence of a lead screening, completed and signed by the child's physician. Immunization exemptions are granted for medical and religious reasons. Parents submit a signed statement of exemption for the child's record.

A master list of significant medical conditions and allergies is posted in every classroom. Names of children who use that room are highlighted. Faculty and staff are made aware of children's health problems. If a child's health warrants environmental adjustments, those changes will be made at the request of the parent to accommodate the child's specific needs whenever possible. Children with specific individualized health and medication needs must submit a written *Health Care Plan* signed by the child's physician and parents. If additional health care training is necessary, the parents will educate the faculty and staff responsible for the management of the plan.

Illness

Absence Due to Illness

If child is too ill to participate in all school activities (including outdoor time) he/she is to stay at home. The following list of symptoms is a guide for parents in deciding whether children may attend Harborlight.

Children may not attend school on days when these symptoms are present or have been present in the last 24 hours:

1. **Fever**
2. **Rash**
3. **Cough**
4. **Discharge from the nose or eyes**
5. **Diarrhea**
6. **Vomiting**
7. **Sore throat**
8. **Contagious disease (strep throat, chicken pox, impetigo, Fifth's disease, Coxsackie's disease, conjunctivitis)**
9. **Parasite (head lice, pinworms)**

Parents notify Harborlight of their child's absence and reason for absence. All communicable illnesses must be reported to Harborlight as soon as possible.

Care of the Sick Child

If, during the course of the day, a child manifests any symptoms requiring exclusion from participation in school activities, the parents will be notified. If the parents are unable to be reached, the child's emergency contacts are notified. Food and liquids are offered if the child's condition can tolerate them. The teacher will take the child's temperature, note any presenting symptoms and notify the program director, the health care consultant/school nurse, and the head of school, if necessary. The child will remain with a staff person in a quiet place until dismissed for the day. The child will be closely

monitored by a staff member and parents will be informed of any care given in writing or by phone. *It is imperative that Harborlight have all available forms for reaching parents during the day.*

If children continue to show any of the above symptoms they may only return to Harborlight accompanied by a physician's note stating that the child is in good health, no longer communicable, and may return to school. Harborlight reserves the right to refuse children with any of the above symptoms notwithstanding a physician's note. A list of common childhood illnesses is available in the main office.

Infectious Disease

After any communicable disease is confirmed, Harborlight notifies parents of children in the same classroom as soon as possible.

Injury Prevention

Safety checks are routinely conducted by faculty and staff members. Toxic substances or hazardous materials are safely stored in a locked closet. Other supplies, such as disinfecting solution, are kept out of children's reach. Playgrounds are routinely checked and receive periodic maintenance.

Medication

Children are administered medication by faculty and staff under the supervision of the health care consultant/school nurse. All medication must be in its original container and accompanied by appropriate written authorization from the child's parents and physician (per State of Massachusetts). Medications may only be administered when written authorization includes: name of medication, dosage (amount, frequency and duration), and storage recommendations. Medication authorizations are valid for one year and are non-transferable. Medication administered is recorded including: name of the child, date, time, dose, and the name of the person administering the medication and filed appropriately. Medicines are returned home daily. Medications requiring refrigeration are stored accordingly. All medications are kept out of the reach of children. Parents deliver all medications to the teacher or person administering the medication and do not send medications in the child's backpack or lunchbox. Please clearly label all personal medications.

Prescription Medication

Prescription medication requires written parent authorization (see above) and the medication delivered in its original labeled pharmacy container to the teacher or person administering the medication. This complete pharmacy label will suffice as the written order of the physician.

Non-Prescription Medication

Non-prescription medication requires written parent and physician authorization (see above) and the medication delivered in its original container to the teacher or person administering the medication. Non-prescription medication includes: Tylenol, Benadryl, Motrin, cough-suppressants, cough-drops, etc.

Non-Prescription Topical Treatments

Topical treatments (sunscreen, sun block, bug repellent, diaper rash ointment, etc.) require written parent authorization that includes: name of treatment, amount, frequency, and duration and the treatment delivered in its original container to the teacher.

Epi-Pens

In the case of emergency use of epinephrine (Epi-Pen) for severe allergic attacks – parents supply two (2) dosages of medication. One is kept in the main office and one is kept in the child’s classroom. Parents file written authorization (Medication and Health Action Plan forms) which includes clear and specific directions. Teachers who come in contact with children are trained in the proper use of this medication.

Emergency Medication

Emergency medication is dispensed at the discretion of the health care consultant/school nurse. In the event a child is in need of emergency non-prescription medication (fever-reducer or antihistamine) the parent will be contacted and the medication will be administered according to the child’s symptoms and the medication usage.

Nutrition**Lunch**

For children eating lunch at school, parents pack a nutritional, well-balanced meal. Label screening is encouraged. Parents are discouraged from offering foods that are high in fat, sugar, salt, artificial coloring, additives, and preservatives. Healthy lunches support the growth and development of the child and promote positive eating habits. Fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, a balance and variety of foods are recommended. Lunch suggestions are available in the main office.

Older children are encouraged to help pack their own nutritionally balanced lunches. Lunchboxes with a cold-pack and thermoses are recommended for storing lunches. Perishables requiring refrigeration may be stored in the classroom refrigerator. Children may pack items to be warmed in the microwave. Uncooked foods or frozen meals will not be prepared and served. If children forget their lunch, Harborlight will provide a nutritionally balanced meal.

Snack Program

Families take turns providing simple, nutritious snacks for their infant, toddler, or early childhood child’s class. Elementary and middle school students pack their own snacks daily. Snack lists for the month will be included in the classroom’s monthly newsletter. Foods that are wholesome, low in added sugar, and non-processed are appropriate. Snacks which expose our children to interesting and appealing food originating from the country or food group currently being studied may also be incorporated.

Parent Participation & Communication

A Framework for Family Involvement

Harborlight supports a framework for family involvement built upon comprehensive and meaningful partnerships to meet the needs of the children, parents, and community.

Communication

Communication is the foundation for effective partnerships connecting parents, children, faculty and staff, and the community. Harborlight establishes regular and clear modes of communication about important information regarding School success. Strengthening School-family partnerships is an essential investment that supports School and home activities for life-long learning, and promotes advocacy, collaboration, and community for School and student progress.

Harborlight's approach to communication assumes many forms including: oral communication-informal conversations; parent-teacher conferences; parent education meetings; and written communication- notices and newsletters, email, bulletin boards, and handbooks. Throughout the year there are regular, scheduled events and programs for parents and families. (Refer to the annual calendar for details).

Bulletin Boards

The community and School information bulletin boards are located next to the parent mailboxes. Parents may take notice of new postings each time they check their parent mailbox.

Email & Website

With written authorization, Harborlight will send news and notices to the parents' email address. Personal email addresses are not shared with any requesting party and are only used for school business. Parents are encouraged to update their email information with the main office as necessary. The Harborlight website contains information for all members of the School community. Parents are encouraged to frequently refer to the website for information and news.

Newsletters

Harborlight publishes a monthly newsletter, *The Beacon*, which features a review of special events, articles of interest, and School community news. Each classroom publishes a monthly newsletter including a summary of classroom activities, information about upcoming events, and snack schedules (I/T and ECE Programs). Parents are encouraged to build on School studies at home through books, trips to museums, and general discussion.

Parent Directory

The Parent Directory is published annually and includes the parent names, home address, and home phone number of families enrolled at Harborlight. Parents authorize for such information to be included in the directory. Harborlight is unable to transmit any personal information to any requesting party without written authorization. The information contained in the directory is confidential and only to be used for Harborlight business and family correspondence (play-dates, party invites, etc.).

Parent Input

Parents have many opportunities to make suggestions or comments during the year. Open communication with the classroom teacher during parent/ teacher conferences is an opportune time for discussing the children's classroom experiences. The annual parent survey is distributed to parents each year soliciting answers to survey questions, comments, and suggestions. At any time, a parent may drop-off a written suggestion via the office mailbox. Parents are welcome to schedule appointments with teachers, program directors, and administrative staff at any time.

Parent Mailboxes

Parent mailboxes are located in the infant and toddler building's main hallway for all infant and toddler families and in the main entrance for all early childhood and elementary families. Families of children enrolled in each building will have mailboxes in each building, respectively. The mailboxes are arranged alphabetically by the child's last name. Many important notices and letters will be mailed to families through this mailing system. Parents are encouraged to check their mailboxes daily. Parents are also welcome to communicate directly with one another by way of these mailboxes.

Phone Calls

Teachers are not available to take phone calls during school day. Parents are welcome to leave a message in the teacher's voice mailbox; the teacher will return calls during free-time later that day. The Infant & Toddler Program is equipped with a phone for incoming calls and the secretary will be more than happy to transfer your call upon request. Faculty and staff are unable to take phone calls from parents or children at home or on their mobile phones.

Parent Participation

Class Parents

Each year, the classroom teachers ask two or more parents to represent the class. The class parents support classroom activities and serve as classroom liaisons between the teachers and families regarding classroom events. A class parent job description is available in the main office.

Classroom Participation

Parents who have a talent, career, or hobby of interest to the children are encouraged to make arrangements with the classroom teachers to schedule a time to share with the children. Parents are also encouraged to share materials, items, books, and photography related to the classroom curriculum.

Harborlight appreciates all parent chaperones. Without them, the children would be unable to participate in community learning programs and activities. Prior to chaperoning an event, parents complete the necessary criteria with the main office (*includes a CORI and DSS background check*).

Observations

Parents may observe the classrooms at any time. The easiest and least disruptive way to observe the classroom is through the one-way glass that looks into each classroom. Upon request, parents may observe from within the classroom. There are also Open Classroom days, which are regularly scheduled on the annual calendar. Parents are encouraged to reserve time during the Open Classroom days to observe classes at the next level.

Parent Association

The Harborlight Parent Association (HPA) was established to help involve parents in the School community. In partnership with administration and faculty, the HPA organizes community building events, fundraising activities, and out-reach programs. The HPA's goal is to have 100% participation from all families. Volunteering is one way to participate. The HPA Officers hold meetings at Harborlight and welcome new members at all times. A monthly update on HPA activities can be found in *The Beacon*.

Volunteers

Parents are a vital part of the Harborlight organization as a whole. Volunteers offer essential support in many aspects of the Harborlight community. Parents are encouraged to speak to the director of parent relations, faculty, and/or office staff regarding parent interests and school support functions. A parent volunteer form is distributed at the annual Open House and Registration; completed forms are returned to the parent relations office.

Parent Education

Harborlight holds several parent education meetings during the school year. Professional videos of the Montessori philosophy at all levels are available for review. Program directors invite parents to many small group meetings to share information about Montessori pedagogy, child development, home activities, academics, and curriculum. The head of school invites parents and community members to small, group meetings to share information about school operations and improvements. Below is a brief list of the annual events held for Parent Education in the order they appear on the academic calendar.

Parent Orientation

Parent Orientation is an evening, adult only, event for all new and returning families. During this orientation there is an address from the head of school, introduction of the faculty and staff by the program directors, a brief overview of procedures and policies to help with first day of school transitions, and a time to discuss the principles of the program with the program directors and faculty at each level in their respective areas of Harborlight.

Pot Luck Supper & Curriculum Night

Of all parent education nights, the curriculum nights draw the largest crowds of all. Each year Harborlight holds a Pot Luck Supper & Curriculum Night at each program level: infant & toddler; early childhood; elementary & middle school. Parents, faculty and staff share a community meal together at the opening of the evening, which is another opportunity to create and foster personal connections within the Harborlight community. Following the meal, the program directors guide the parents through the Montessori philosophy, Harborlight's Curriculum Scope and Sequence, and finish with a question and answer period.

Secondary Schools

Early in the academic year, parents of middle school students are invited to an information meeting introducing the process of exploring secondary schools and the preparation of the student for the next step. The director of admission guides the parents through the process. The students are supported by the secondary school placement team, which consists of the student's faculty advisor, the director of the elementary and middle school program, the director of admission, and the student's parents.

Open Classroom

In the fall and early winter, Harborlight holds open classroom dates for parents to become acquainted with the programs at the next level. Parents of infants and toddlers are encouraged to observe the Early Childhood Program, and likewise the parents of kindergarten students are encouraged to observe the Elementary and Middle School Program. These open classroom dates are specifically scheduled at a time in the Harborlight calendar when the parents/observers will acquire the most authentic representation of the classroom function and are followed-up with program director presentations to explore philosophy and curriculum more comprehensively with parents.

Coffees

Parents are encouraged to attend the coffee series at the appropriate level to become acquainted with the programs available to students at the next level. The program directors hold these “coffees” to explore each transitional level with parents as their children prepare to move-up to the next step. “Coffees” are open to parents and include a tour of the program space; a presentation of philosophy overview, curriculum, and expectations; and conclude with a question and answer period. (*“Coffees” include: Transitioning Toddlers to the Early Childhood Program; Toilet Learning (I/T); Adjusting to New Siblings in the Home; Montessori in the Home; Harborlight Early Childhood Years; Harborlight Kindergarten; Harborlight Elementary Years (grades 1-6); and Harborlight Middle School Years (12-14).*)

Montessori Week Celebration

During Montessori Week, Harborlight hosts a variety of community and parent education events. Parents of children in the Early Childhood Program are invited to shadow their child in the classroom for the morning. This provides parents with the opportunity to learn from their children, observe the children in their classroom environment, and witness the concentration and joyfulness of the early childhood student at work.

Parents of elementary and middle school students go back to school for an evening event hosted by the students. Students present to all parents, lessons with the Montessori materials and activities from their classroom curriculum. This evening is a turning of the tables where the students become the teachers and the parents become the students.

Montessori Journey

The Montessori Journey is a shared project that brings an understanding of the Montessori Method to parents, faculty, and the greater school community. A speaker series of distinguished Montessori professionals combined with hands-on learning experiences, the Montessori Journey is a parent education program that has something for everyone. For more information about the journey, parents may refer to the annual calendar.

Montessori Teacher Education - National Center for Montessori Education- New England (NCME-NE)

NCME-NE is Harborlight’s Montessori Teacher Education Program. NCME-NE offers an annual four-day Montessori Overview as well as teacher education programs leading to American Montessori Society certification at the infant & toddler and early childhood levels. NCME-NE is affiliated with Gordon College where student-interns may also earn a masters degree in education at the same time they are working toward Montessori teacher certification.

Thank you for your patience in taking the time to read this Parent Handbook. This informative and helpful manual was prepared to assist you in becoming a member of this vibrant Harborlight community.