

McCormick Montessori Inclusion Policy

Policy Statement

McCormick Montessori is a child care program established for children of Swedish Covenant Hospital (SCH) employees and for children of members of the community. McCormick Montessori is committed to providing developmentally appropriate early learning and experiences that support the full access and participation of each and every child. We believe that each child is unique and we work in partnership with families and other professionals involved with the child to provide the support every child needs to reach their full potential.

Admission

Children of all abilities are accepted into McCormick Montessori. A waiting list is maintained and admission is determined based on the date of application. Priority is given to children of SCH employees.

Inclusive Environment

Early childhood educators at McCormick Montessori use developmentally appropriate practices and consider the unique needs of all children when planning activities. Staff will make every attempt to make any adaptations or modifications necessary to meet the needs of the children. Schedules, routines and activities are flexible and early childhood educators will work with therapists, and other professionals to integrate individual accommodations, modifications and strategies into classroom routines and activities. Any adaptations will be reviewed with families and other professionals supporting the child.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality applies to all verbal and written information about applicants and currently enrolled and previously enrolled children and their families. All staff are briefed on the need for confidentiality and are expected to fulfill their obligation to protect the privacy of the information. Written records are stored in a secure location with access limited to the director and the child's teacher. No information will be released about a child and/or the parent/legal guardian during enrollment or transition to another receiving program or school without first receiving the written permission of the parent/guardian. This release of information excludes reporting suspected child abuse and neglect as required by Illinois law or responding to a court-ordered subpoena.

Family Centered Practices

McCormick Montessori acknowledges and respects the priorities each family has for their child. Families are encouraged and supported to collaborate with staff to ensure that each child has an opportunity for optimum success. McCormick Montessori communicates with each family daily and has regular meetings to discuss the child's successes and challenges.

Professional Development and Support for Staff

Professional Development and Support for Staff Training are provided to ensure that all staff are comfortable, confident and competent to meet the developmental and educational needs of all children. All staff receive an orientation on inclusion policies and attend training focused on effective inclusion and/or other disability topics whenever possible. The educational program director provides additional support and resources as appropriate.

Collaboration with Other Professionals

Many children with disabilities or other special needs are supported by developmental and educational professionals such as therapists, teachers and others. McCormick Montessori welcomes those professionals and works with them to assure the child's success. The service provider is encouraged to provide services to the child in the context of the early childhood classroom environment. The child's teacher and the service provider work collaboratively to determine the best strategies to support the child in the group setting. McCormick Montessori supports the teacher's participation in Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) and Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings. McCormick Montessori has a partnership with Illinois Action for Children and a mental health consultant has been assigned to our center to offer support and guidance to children, parents and teachers.