



Community Nursery School  
Parent Handbook  
2021-2022

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“Nothing Without Joy”

\*\*COVID Addendum can be found at the beginning of this handbook on pages 5 - 9

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## COVID Health and Safety Requirements - Handbook Addendum

*\*as required by the MA Department of Early Education and Care for Reopening - Fall 2020*

### At Home

Families should do a self-screening at home which includes checking for the following symptoms: fever, cough, shortness of breath, gastrointestinal symptoms, new loss of taste/smell, muscle aches, or any other symptoms that feel like a cold. Anyone with a fever of 100.0F or above, or any other signs of illness, should not attend school that day.

### At School

A daily visual entry screening will be required of each member of the CNS community who is in physical attendance at school each day. This includes staff members and children.

The screening will ask if the child or any household member has had any of the following symptoms in the last 24 hours:

- Fever (temperature of 100.0F or above), felt feverish, or had chills
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Difficulty breathing
- Gastrointestinal symptoms (diarrhea, nausea, vomiting)
- Fatigue (Fatigue alone will not exclude a child from participation.)
- Headache (must be in combination with other symptoms)
- New loss of smell/taste
- New muscle aches

Please be advised that the school will also ask if children, families, or staff members have had close contact with a person known to be infected with the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), which may affect school attendance.

If it is deemed that a child is not well enough to attend school, the parent will be required to take the child home and contact their pediatrician.

## Cleaning Protocols

- CNS will be cleaned on a daily basis by professional cleaners. In addition to daily cleaning tasks (vacuuming, mopping, etc), our cleaners will fully clean and disinfect all bathrooms and high touchpoint areas such as sinks, countertops, door handles, light switches, etc, with an EPA registered disinfectant for use against COVID-19.
- Teachers will also clean, sanitize and disinfect specific areas, tabletops, and toys at various times during the day, as needed, with an EPA registered and child-safe sanitizer/disinfectant spray for use against COVID-19.
- Areas outside of the classrooms will be sanitized and disinfected by an on site administrator.
- All staff will receive training on cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting along with safe use and handling of all cleaning products. All products used for cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting will be kept out of reach of children and stored safely on high shelves or in a locked closet.
- It is our protocol to keep windows open so fresh air can circulate, as permitted. Increased air circulation will be prioritized throughout each classroom.

CNS will continue to follow the requirements and recommendations made by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC), the Commonwealth of MA, and the Lexington Board of Health, as related to the mitigation of the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

## Hand Washing

Hand washing, with soap and water, occurs throughout the day for children and staff. This includes, but is not limited to:

- At arrival
- Before and after snack
- At bathroom times
- After outdoor play

There may be other situations that arise during the day which also necessitate hand washing. Teachers will prompt children to wash hands during those times as well. We know that the partnerships we have with families will be most effective in helping promote consistent and good hand washing techniques in and out of school.

## Physical Distancing

At CNS, we recognize that our approach to physical distancing must also account for each child's stage of development. We also recognize the contribution that physical distancing has made in the mitigation of the COVID-19 virus. In order to promote physical distancing in an organic way, indoor and outdoor classroom environments will be set up to allow for children to have adequate space while still engaging in a play based experience at school. This will include the use of natural barriers (i.e. classroom furniture; outdoor items) to create purposeful environments.

Consistent cohorts of children and teachers will help create an organic environment for this as both become more familiar with the routines and practices of the group.

## Mask Wearing

Masks must be worn indoors throughout the day by all staff members, parents and children. Families should provide their children with a sufficient supply of clean masks and face coverings for their child, to allow replacing the covering as needed. We understand that each child will respond to mask-wearing in their own way, and will work with families to support this routine in a nurturing manner.

There will be appropriate times during the day when masks will not be worn. This includes: when eating or drinking and during periods of mask breaks (these may be individualized as needed and when outdoors. Our focus will be on building positive relationships and this will be prioritized in our approach around the personal protective equipment (PPE) which will be necessary for a safe experience at school for all.

## Reporting of Illness

For the case of all suspected illnesses, including COVID-19, CNS will refer to the Board of Public Health for guidance. If a child becomes sick while at school, they will be asked to be picked up immediately by a parent or guardian. While waiting to be picked up, children will be kept outside of the group's classroom in a separate space that is comfortable and supervised by an onsite administrator. Families will be asked to consult with a pediatrician while the school determines next steps in conjunction with the Board of Health.

In the event of a positive case of COVID-19 in our community, we will follow direct guidance from the Lexington Board of Health. While maintaining privacy for each member of our community, our goal is to remain transparent and provide updates to our community in order to keep everyone healthy and safe. The local Board of Health will be the primary source for reporting and tracing COVID-19 positive cases and exposures. Questions about closure, quarantine, and reports of positive cases or exposures will always be directed to the Lexington Board of Health first.

## Additional Information

Per the MA Department of Early Education and Care: All children who attend Community Nursery School are required to have a current, unexpired, physical on file before entering school. For each child enrolled, programs must maintain on file a physician's, nurse practitioner's, or physician's assistant's certification that the child has been successfully immunized in accordance with the current DPH's recommended schedules. For each child with a chronic medical condition that has been diagnosed by a licensed Health Care Practitioner, programs must maintain an individual health care plan (IHCP). The plan shall describe the chronic condition, its symptoms, any medical treatment that may be necessary while the child is in care, the potential side effects of that treatment, and the potential consequences to the child's health if the treatment is not administered.

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## IL. VISION

We believe that early childhood is a special and unique time when, with collaborative relationships and an inspiring environment, every child should have the opportunity to explore their sense of wonder, spirit of inquiry and joy of learning that will stay with them for the rest of their lives.

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## MISSION

- CNS is a safe and nurturing cooperative community, where families, teachers and children collaborate as part of our play-based approach, providing opportunities for each child to joyfully grow and explore.
- Our philosophy, informed by the practices of the schools of Reggio Emilia, and is child-centered; where each individual child is valued for their curiosity, potential and understanding of the world.
- Our environment fosters a child's innate curiosity and sense of wonder through connections made with the natural world and each other.
- Our community bridges home and school through observation, open communication, documentation of student learning, and collaboration.
- When children leave CNS they take with them confidence and trust in their surroundings and a long-lasting network of meaningful relationships with people of all ages.



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## CORE VALUES

Above everything else we value:

- our child-centered approach;
- our strong sense of community;
- the power of collaboration; and
- the joy that underpins everything that we do.

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## II. SCHOOL BACKGROUND

### A. HISTORY

Since 1945, the needs of our children and the desire to work together have brought families to Community Nursery School. The school began with a small group of families in 1943, with a goal to provide a valuable nursery school experience in the years between infancy and public school.

By 1945, CNS was more than a working idea – it included a building on its own two acres of land in Lexington. At that time it became incorporated as a nonprofit cooperative institution. Families pooled their energies, interests, and talents, to bring together children and adults for shared growing experiences. Soon there were added classrooms, an office, and a professional director to oversee the daily operations.

Over the years, CNS has expanded its offerings to include an afternoon program, a lunch program, and a summer session. In 2004, we learned about the schools in Reggio Emilia, Italy. This inspiration has helped us to be more reflective and intentional in our work.

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### B. PHILOSOPHY AND BELIEFS

Seventy-six years ago, Community Nursery School was established as a cooperative nursery school. We have a rich history of believing in the value of parents and teachers as partners. Research continues to show that when parents are active participants in their children's education, children benefit tremendously. We believe that parents and educators benefit as well.

At CNS:

- We believe that parents are the primary educators of their children.

- We believe that each child, parent and educator comes to CNS with a unique way of seeing the world, making connections, and constructing knowledge.
- We believe that it is our job to pay close attention to these unique qualities and use our observations and understanding to guide us in our work.
- We believe that everyone's voice is important, that everyone has something of value to contribute - and everyone deserves respect.
- We believe that the more we can learn about each member's perspective, the richer and stronger our community becomes. This applies to children and adults alike.
- Parents and teachers are dedicated to working together, always with the joyous learning of their children as their focus.
- We believe that children thrive in an engaging, supportive and flexible environment.
- We believe that educators must be committed to their continued learning in order to provide meaningful opportunities for children and families.

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## CHILDREN AT CNS

Children gain a great deal from sharing their morning at school in an environment where parents play an important role in the daily life at school.

- Children are helped to feel safe and comfortable as they make the transition to this new world away from home.
- Children learn about making connections with materials and with each other as they work and play together.
- Children learn about different cultures, interests, professions and family structures within the context of life at school.
- Children notice that the grown-ups in their world are working together for their benefit.
- Children make choices and explore many different types of materials in a safe, flexible and engaging environment.
- Children have a balance of activities that support their right to a variety and range of experiences over the course of the morning.
- Children share their questions and theories in an environment of respect and encouragement.

- Children have a chance to build upon previous experiences as they construct knowledge.
- Children learn to become important members of a group and community, alongside their friends, parents and teachers.

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## PARENTS AT CNS

At CNS, parents play an important part of daily life. When parents are in the classroom on a regular basis they gain a window into their child's experience away from home.

- Parents experience first-hand what their child's day is like at school.
- Parents learn about the choices and connections that their child makes at school.
- Parents see the world through their child's eyes – and have an opportunity to share their joys, their struggles and their sense of wonder.
- Parents match names and faces of their child's classmates.
- Parents learn about the teachers' styles of teaching and learning.
- Parents share an experience with the teachers, building a common language for communication about their child.
- Parents help to build a bridge between home and school.
- Parents gain a sense of belonging and become important members of the CNS community.
- Parents take part in decision-making at CNS for the benefit of their children.
- Parents gain a sense of ownership and belonging as valuable community members.
- When parents collaborate and share in community building experiences they are modeling important values of cooperation, sharing, and respect for the children.

It is important to understand that there is no one way to be a member of Community Nursery School. At CNS there are families with stay-at-home mothers, stay-at-home-fathers, single parent families, and families where both parents work outside of the home. The basic requirements are having enough flexibility in a parent's schedule to spend approximately one morning with us a month and to be willing to become an active member of the community.

There is a wide range of job options outside of the classroom and we work hard to connect people to jobs with which they are comfortable. When parents make this commitment, they are making a tremendous contribution to the school and they will also derive a great deal of pride and satisfaction in doing so. Those who choose to become members of our community will join

together (children, parents and educators) in this reciprocal teaching and learning partnership. We will all stretch our minds, growing as unique individuals and together as a community.

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## TEACHERS AT CNS

Our teachers have chosen to work at CNS because they are committed to working together with children and their parents in an environment that supports all members of the community – as individuals and as a group.

- Teachers consider children to be unique individuals who are competent and curious and deserving of respect.
- Teachers learn a great deal by listening to and observing children.
- Teachers learn from each other by exchanging their thoughts and ideas, observations and theories.
- Teachers use these shared observations to inform them as they proceed in their work.
- Teachers learn from the parents about their joys and concerns, hopes and dreams for their children.
- Teachers are committed to providing a safe, flexible and engaging learning environment for children.
- Teachers value collaboration and communication between all members of the CNS community.
- Teachers feel a sense of responsibility for sharing their learning and their curiosity with all members of the CNS community.

## THE ENVIRONMENT AT CNS

At CNS, the environment plays an important role in creating an atmosphere that reflects our beliefs. We have learned from the schools of Reggio Emilia the value of considering the environment to be another teacher.

- Careful thought goes into the arrangement of the environment.
- This thought is based on observation of the way in which children move around the classroom and use materials and equipment.
- Teachers introduce “provocations” in the environment to stimulate the children’s curiosity, sense of wonder and encourage new possibilities.
- Offerings are always made to support children as they engage in ways that feel comfortable for them.

- An environment that is aesthetically pleasing reflects our respect for children and fosters their sense of wonder.
- The outdoor environment is an extension of the indoor space.

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## LL. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The overall goal of CNS is to foster social, emotional, physical, and intellectual growth in a warm and nurturing atmosphere. This is achieved by meeting the following objectives:

- Helping children feel sure of themselves and comfortable with others
- Making this confidence the base from which they explore the world around them
- Fostering learning by providing a rich and engaging classroom environment
- Making the transition from home to school a time of joy, growth and learning

To achieve these objectives, CNS provides a program balanced with activities that support the developmental needs and rights of all children served. We provide:

- Reasonable regularity in routine with sufficient flexibility to respond to the needs of individual children
- Opportunity for children to make choices among a variety of activities, to play alone, or to play with one or several peers for at least one portion of the morning
- Daily indoor and outdoor periods that include both large and small motor activities
- Opportunities to participate in a variety of creative activities such as art, music, literature, dramatic play and science
- Provision for quiet activities that allow a child some private time and space when time alone is desired or needed
- Experiences that are in harmony with the lifestyle or cultural background of the child enrolled.

Cultural diversity is reflected through the incorporation of different languages, foods, celebrations, activities, and lifestyles where appropriate. In addition, parents are welcome to share family customs or background on parent help day. Input from the families is incorporated into the daily curriculum in a manner that allows comfortable integration of multiculturalism. At CNS it is important to remember that each child has a unique and special way and rate of learning. Materials and provocations are offered to allow children to develop their curiosity, imagination and ability to concentrate. Adults encourage and support children in their play,

thus reinforcing their individuality and creativity. Their responses to children help them to move forward and grow.

## DEVELOPMENTAL CONSTRUCTIVIST EDUCATION AT CNS

What do children learn at nursery school?

Most importantly, we hope to support children as they learn:

- To be away from their parents (this may take some time)
- To work with teachers and other parents
- To work with a group of children
- To work alone
- To share and cooperate
- To follow simple rules and routines
- To complete a task or activity
- To ask questions and to find answers
- To select and make choices
- To share family experiences
- To understand what it means to be a friend and have a friend
- To feel special in the larger world beyond home
- To feel that their ideas are valued and to value the ideas of others
- To respect other children and people

These are important skills that support the healthy development of children. Before children learn to read, they need to know:

- What a book is
- That it contains words and pictures
- That these words are what is read
- That a book has a beginning and end – a back and front
- Reading and writing is done from left to right, top to bottom
- Each printed word represents a spoken word

- That books are special and must be treated carefully; books are enjoyable - we can learn a lot from them

All children will not learn all of these things in nursery school but they will learn some of them.

We help children to gain language and listening skills through lots of stories, songs, poems, rhymes, puppet play, games, movement and dramatic play.

There are many different ways that children begin to gain math skills. Children learn about math as they:

- Recognize the names of numbers
- Say numbers in order
- Match each number with the correct amount of things (1:1)
- Learn the names of shapes and colors and are able to match them
- Put things that are alike into sets or groups
- Learn that things can be put in order by size or quantity
- Learn about weight
- Learn about space (concepts such as "in, on, behind, through")
- Learn that things are constant (e.g. water in a tall dish may look different than in a flat dish but it is still the same amount)

Pre-math skills are taking place all the time in the classroom, through games, sand and water play, art, blocks, manipulatives, music, movement.

Before children begin to write, they need to:

- Know what happens when they put pencils or paint to paper
- Be able to hold a pencil or brush comfortably
- First have a lot of time to scribble, make lines, and draw shapes (this takes time to develop)
- Have time to enjoy drawing and painting
- Learn about letters and words – how they are formed and what order they go in
- Receive encouragement from adults who recognize and appreciate different learning styles
- Have lots of time to practice, explore and create

Children learn about the world around them by asking questions and finding out about:

- What things are called
- How they work
- Where they come from
- What they are made of and how they are made
- How they feel, taste, smell, look and sound
- How they grow and develop
- Children learn about themselves when they notice things about other people
- Children learn about other people when they notice things about themselves
- When children are treated with love, patience and understanding they become better able to care for and understand others
- When children are given a clear set of expectations and limits they are able to feel safe and develop their own internal controls

Sometimes children have difficulty explaining or understanding their feelings. At school there are many opportunities to express feelings through:

- Telling stories (dictation)
- Dramatic play
- Painting and drawing
- Running or jumping
- Music and movement

**LEARNING IS TAKING PLACE IN MANY DIFFERENT WAYS IN THE CLASSROOM ALL DAY LONG.**

**Books:** open up a world of imagination and knowledge. Children learn to listen, concentrate and remember.

**Playdough:** is fun to touch, squeeze and shape. It helps children to develop their hand muscles for future writing skills. Math and science concepts are learned at the playdough table.

**Collage, Drawing and Painting:** allow children to express themselves creatively in their own way. Skills are developed for cutting, taping, applying pressure, rotating paper, holding drawing utensils, etc., that will help with later writing.

**Puzzles:** help children learn about shapes, colors and how to place pieces. They help with development of hand coordination, spatial awareness, memory and concentration.



Nature and Science: help children to learn all about the world around us, ask questions, experiment and develop theories about the world.

Dramatic Play: allows children to act out feelings, fears, and joys. This helps children to label and validate their feelings.

Music: helps children to express themselves and their joy. Children learn about rhythm, memory and about instruments. Repetitive verses help with language and reading readiness.

Movement: teaches about spatial awareness, self-awareness, cooperation and joining with others. Children learn to enjoy using their bodies and finding new ways to move.

Cooking: provides an opportunity to create something to share, eat and enjoy. Following a recipe, taking turns, counting, measuring, stirring, observing changes – there are so many things to be learned through cooking!

Sand, Water & Sensory Play: helps children to learn math and science concepts. They also enjoy the tactile and visual experiences of working with different media.

Woodworking: allows children to work with real tools, to create, to acquire skills while strengthening arm and hand muscles. It teaches discipline and control.

Outdoor Large Motor Play: allows children to explore, take risks, use their muscles and grow stronger. They learn about balance, how to use their arms and legs together, climbing, jumping, and running – they learn to organize and direct their play while learning about their safety limits.

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## A. POPULATION SERVED

CNS is open to all residents of Lexington and other area towns and communities. We are proud of the diversity of our student base. Children accepted into the program are aged 2 years 9 months old to 5 years old.

CNS is a nonprofit corporation that does not discriminate in providing services to children and their families on the basis of gender, race, religion, national origin, cultural heritage, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital status. Toilet training status is not an eligibility requirement for enrollment. CNS works collaboratively with the special education department of the Lexington Public Schools to include children with special needs.

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## LLL. SCHOOL PROGRAMS

### A. MORNING PROGRAM

The CNS morning program runs from 9:00 to 12:00 noon, and includes three active classrooms and a multipurpose room that holds our studio and kitchen. The Yellow Door Room is mainly enrolled with three year olds. The Red Door Room is for the younger four and five year olds. The Blue Door Room is for the older four and five year olds. The ratio of children to adults does not exceed seven to one, with a maximum of 45 children per morning.

A program calendar highlighting closed days and hours of operation will be provided to families prior to the start of the new school year, posted in each classroom and on the CNS web site.

Most children in the Yellow Door Room attend school 2 or 3 days a week and a few attend for 5 days per week. While there may be a maximum total of twenty 3 year-olds enrolled, on any given day twelve children are present. There are two teachers in the Yellow Door Room and a parent helper each day. Children must be 2.9 years of age in September or turning 3 by December 31st.

The Red Door Room has an enrollment limit of 16. The Blue Door Room has an enrollment limit of 17. 4 and 5 day scheduling options are offered in both rooms.

The teachers and Director are caring individuals committed to developmental, cooperative education. Each classroom has two teachers. Our entire faculty is trained in early childhood education and many teachers have advanced degrees in education. Teacher retention is important to us and we are pleased to have staff members who have been with us for many years. All staff members are trained and kept current in First Aid and CPR.

All groups at CNS have a gradual transition into their classrooms at the beginning of the school year. Children come in smaller groups and stay for a shorter time during the first two weeks. Even for children who have been to school before, this is important because they must adjust to new teachers, new children, new routines and new classrooms.

As always, our primary consideration is to provide a program that is in the best interest of the children. Each classroom offers children a balance of times for individual and group exploration with materials and ideas. Children have opportunities to experiment and express themselves using myriad art, building, sensory, nature/found objects, and dramatic play materials. While there is a routine flow to the day, there is also flexibility based on a deep respect for the needs and interests of the individual children and the group. There is always a mid-morning snack, a music and movement period, and time for outdoor play in our large playground. Schedules are subject to change based on weather or individual and group needs.

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## B. LUNCH BUNCH AND AFTERNOON PROGRAMS

THE LUNCH BUNCH AND AFTERNOON PROGRAMS ARE DESIGNED FOR CHILDREN WHO ARE READY FOR A LONGER DAY.

Children bring their lunches from home. Peanut and any tree nut products are never allowed at CNS. If there is a child with other severe food allergies attending the school, certain additional foods may not be permitted at lunch bunch. This information will be distributed at the beginning of the year.

Lunch time is followed by a relaxed period for interactions with friends and materials. Lunch Bunch children must be picked up at 1PM.

The Afternoon Program offers an extension of the school day until 2PM, 2-3 days per week. Lunch Bunch and Afternoon Program information and registration are distributed to all families in the summer.

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## C. CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher conferences are held with the parents of each child in the fall and spring of the school year. Additional meetings with the Director and/or teachers may be scheduled on an as-needed basis. The school is closed during conference time so that teachers and parents can share information on the child's progress in the class. Parents receive a written report regarding their child at each conference and a copy is kept in the school files. For children who are receiving special education services and are on individual education plans (IEPs), progress reports will be written and maintained every three months in conjunction with special education therapists.

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## LV. PREPARING FOR SCHOOL

### INFORMATION AND STRATEGIES FOR CHILDREN AND PARENTS

Starting school may well be considered a milestone or a rite of passage in the life of your child and your family. For many children and parents spending all morning at nursery school will be their first major separation. One important goal for parents and staff is to work together to form a team and facilitate the separation process. There is no one way to handle separation that will be right for every child. There are many variables: the child's temperament, family placement, coping ability, and genetic make-up.

Separation is a process not an event. It is different for each individual.

Children are unique individuals who handle transitions and new situations in a variety of ways. Some will enter school enthusiastically without a backward glance. Others enter cautiously, holding onto their parent's hands or clutching their legs. There is no particular way it happens. It is helpful to understand that both children and parents will need some preparation for the exciting event of starting nursery school.

### PARENTS CAN HELP PREPARE CHILDREN

#### Before School Begins

Visiting the school and spending time on the playground will help your child to feel comfortable at school. Taking a picture of the school to put on your refrigerator can be a

positive reinforcement. Everyone can see that this is "Helen's new school." If you happen to know of another child who will be entering school with your child, it may be helpful to get them together before school starts. Seeing a familiar face on the first day of school can be reassuring. Children take cues from parents, brothers, sisters and other family members. An older sibling saying, "You're going to like it there" can help to make this new beginning easier.

If you have concerns of your own, it is important to remember not to express them in front of your child. Discuss them with friends or staff members. Attending visiting days and other school activities with your child will help familiarize your child with the school. Attending parent orientation meetings and reading school literature will help to inform parents and prepare them for answering questions that their children might ask. When parents feel comfortable, children will receive the message that school is a safe and fun place to be.

### After School Begins

Children find comfort in regularity and predictability. Establishing a nighttime routine can be helpful. Taking a few minutes the night before a school day can often eliminate conflicts in the morning. Picking out clothes ahead of time often forestalls an argument about a special sweater or shirt and sometimes prevents tears when that sweater cannot be found or is in the laundry. It may be preferable to have your child wear an unmatched outfit than to find yourself in a battle shortly before it is time to leave for school.

Allowing your child to bring a special item to school that provides a sense of security often helps to bridge the transition from home to school but it is preferable that very special toys or blankets needed for bedtime be left at home. If that is not possible, inform the teacher of the importance of the toy or blanket to help ensure that your child brings it home at the end of the school day. This "lovey" is different from other toys your child may have. Placing a picture of yourself or your family in your child's pocket can help to ease the transition to school and provide a sense of security. It can be looked at whenever the child wishes. Usually just having it in the pocket is all that is needed. A loving note in the pocket can also give your child a sense of attachment and security.

### **PARENTS CAN HELP PREPARE THEMSELVES**

Parents may find themselves with ambivalent feelings. You may want your child to go to school, but you also want him/her to stay at home. You may wonder how your child will behave. Will s/he share the toys? Will s/he play with other children? You may even have some negative memories of your early school years. It can be helpful and reassuring to talk with other parents to discuss their feelings and how they handled the process of leaving their children at school.

Communicate with the teachers any concerns you may have. Teachers also welcome information that is affecting your child's world such as visiting grandparents, a family member in the hospital or a parent away on a trip. When you are ready to leave the classroom, the teachers will help you. For example, the teacher might say to you and your child, "Let's walk to the window together to say goodbye."

Attend meetings and social events for parents held at the school. They can be interesting, informative and fun. You will meet other parents and you, like your child, will become part of the school community.

Whatever your questions or concerns may be, you will always find the director and staff available to help.

## THE STAFF WILL HELP BOTH THE CHILD AND PARENT

Our teachers handle the separation process every day. The classroom teacher can facilitate the process by devising separation procedures that will fit the need of the individual. We welcome ideas and suggestions from parents. As teachers of young children we recognize that separation is, in fact, one more aspect of the preschool socialization process. The first agenda for any child entering preschool is to form an attachment with the teachers. Forming secure attachments is basic to human nature and young children do quickly become attached to the classroom teacher. The teacher's role is to provide an accepting, trusting and nurturing atmosphere where each child can feel secure, comfortable and at ease. In such an environment, the foundation is laid for each child to develop and be motivated to learn to the best of his/her capacities.

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## THE LEAVING PROCESS

Parents may wonder whether to stay or leave and will often look to the teachers for guidelines. In most schools, there are many variables contributing to how the separation process is handled. Children have varying likes, dislikes and needs that may require different strategies. If your child tells you to leave on the first day, please plan to be where you can be reached. A child may tell you to leave right away, but then find in a short time s/he wants you. A parent often wonders what is the normal length of time that it takes for a child to feel comfortable at school. It is normal for a child to feel comfortable in a few days just as it is normal for a child to require a longer time. There is not one "normal" timetable. The length of time each child needs to settle into a new situation varies.

When parents and teachers have agreed that the time has come for the parent to leave, it is important to understand that it is necessary for the parent to say goodbye. Parents often find this difficult to do if their child is playing happily. Often they do not want to interrupt the activity, but saying goodbye to your child is extremely important. After saying goodbye it is also important to leave. Repeating the process of saying "goodbye" is confusing and may give your child a mixed message. It is helpful for parents to understand that when children say, "I don't want to go to school!" or "I don't have a friend!", they often really mean, "I don't want you to leave" or "It's hard to say goodbye."

If your child seems sad when you leave and you are concerned, call the school to inquire about his/her adjustment to the separation. It is important for parents to understand that children enjoy a private place of their own and school does become their own private world. Parents are often disappointed when children do not share what happened in their new world at school. Don't take it to heart; just know that your child will share findings of their new world when they are ready.

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## THE SEPARATION PROCESS IS ONGOING

It is not uncommon for a child who has handled the goodbye with ease to suddenly have difficulty with separation. It could be a few weeks or months later that your child will say, "Don't go!" or, "I don't want to go to school!" Try not to be concerned or worried. This is all part of the separation process; it does not take place in one day. You may expect to see this behavior or some hesitancy after the child has been absent from school, due to illness, traveling or school vacation. It is reassuring to know that this is normal for many children. There are many ways that children and parents experience the separation process. Separation is a normal part of development that children will experience throughout their childhood. It can be different for each individual parent and child and at times quite complex. Parents and staff working together can devise strategies to facilitate the separation process that will meet the individual needs and style of each child and parent. It is important to remember that separation is a process - not an event. It is different for each individual.

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#### SUGGESTIONS TO HELP AS YOU LEAVE

The most effective way to communicate with young children is to speak to them at their eye level. Saying, "I am leaving now" is a clear statement. Try to avoid saying, "I am leaving now, OKAY?" The word OKAY tells the child that you are asking his/her permission to leave. Again, it is important to follow through and leave when you tell your child that you are leaving. It is preferable to give your child some comfortable parameters as you plan to leave the classroom. Children enjoy structure and routine. It can be comforting to wave goodbye from the same place every day. It could be any specific place - the door, the window, etc. Here are some suggestions for what you might say to ease the transition: "I am going to read a book to you before I leave. Why don't you pick out the story." "Would you like me to wave goodbye to you at the door or at the window?" If your child comes up with a third choice, that is fine. "I am going to play with you at the playdough table (house corner, puzzles, easel, etc.) for some time and then I will go to work (go home and do the dishes, go grocery shopping)." It is often helpful for a child to know where you will be and what you are doing.

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#### PICKING YOUR CHILD UP AT SCHOOL

Picking a child up promptly reinforces the trusting relationship established between the child and parent and fosters a trusting relationship with teachers. Children learn that parents do come back, as they said they would. How does a child feel at the end of a school day? The child is usually physically tired and this may increase his/her anxiety level. It can be very upsetting for a young child when other parents are arriving and his/her parent has not. For this reason it is extremely important to arrive promptly at pick-up time.

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#### A. WHAT TO BRING ON YOUR FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

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## CLOTHING AT CNS

If possible, children should wear outer clothing that is as easy as possible to take off and put on. Children's clothing should be informal and sturdy. Some delicate fabrics will be hard to clean after normal activities, despite our use of washable paints and glues. In the winter, be sure to send warm clothes for outside play, as the children go out on all but the coldest days. We recommend waterproof boots worn over socks, with a pair of non-skid slippers to wear inside. Waterproof mittens or gloves attached to each other by a string run through the coat sleeves or mitten clips, are also helpful. A change of clothing (underwear, socks, tops and bottoms) is left at school in a storage bin marked with your child's name. Extra mittens and socks are helpful if your child stays for the Afternoon Program. Please label your child's clothes with first name AND last initial. The school has a lost-and-found container and any unclaimed items are donated to a charity at year's end.

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## B. WHEN TO CALL THE SCHOOL 781-862-0741

When your child is sick. Please call by 9 am to let us know that your child will be absent and to report any/all contagious diseases and infections, colds or flu, accidents and plain fatigue.

When your child will be absent or late for any reason. This includes vacation plans, family guests, religious occasions, or personal reasons. The school staff worries about children who do not come to school as expected. Also, advance knowledge of absences within a class can help a teacher's planning.

When a situation at home affects your child's feelings or attitude toward the world. This includes a death in the family, pregnancy, absence or illness of either parent, sibling conflict, loss of a pet, behavior-altering medication, or problems with security objects. Children carry feelings about these things to school, and the teachers and Director appreciate learning information that can help them provide support and understanding to the child.

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## V. IMPORTANT THING TO KNOW ABOUT SAFETY AT CNS

CNS is a nut-free school – This is due to the fact that we may have children at CNS with life-threatening allergies.

Hand washing – Children will be asked to wash their hands each day upon arrival at school and again after using the toilet and before eating snack.

Parking Lot – Children MUST hold an adult's hand at all times in the parking lot. Please walk bicycles in the parking lot.

## RESERVED

Handicap Parking Space

Auction Winner Parking Space (has "Reserved" sign) - For the current Winner of the CNS Auction for this space.

Designated with classroom color coded pickets:

Yellow Triangle Space - For the Yellow Door Room Parent Helper only

Red Square Space - For the Red Door Room Parent Helper only

Blue Circle Space - For the Blue Door Room Parent Helper only

Parking - We have a limited number of spaces in the CNS parking lot. Please do not use the circular part of our lot for parking. Only park in the lined spaces. There are a few spaces which are:

If you cannot find a parking space in the lot, please feel free to park across the street on Nickerson. In order to be respectful of our neighbors who live on Nickerson, we ask that you only park on one side of the street (follow the direction of the other cars).

If you are in the lot, please use the sidewalk for walking and hold your child's hand when in the lot (this is a must and keeps everyone safe).

Car and Booster Seats – According to state law, children must ride in a federally approved child safety seat until they are 8 years old or over 57in tall. This includes a 5 point harness car seat for children who are under the age of 5 and weigh less than 40lbs.

Punctuality – Children feel safe when they have a sense of security about consistency in the flow of their day at school. Arriving on time and being picked up on time are key components to smooth transitions between home and school.

Notes for teachers – Please email or send a handwritten note if there will be a change in pick-up plans. We will not release your child to anyone without your permission.

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## A. TRANSPORTATION NOTES

Please use seat belts/car seats/boosters at all times when transporting your children. Many parents drive their own child to and from school. If someone other than a parent is to pick a child up from school on a regular basis, that person should be listed on the child's "Transportation Release" form. If the child is to be picked up by someone other than a parent on a specific date, for example to go home with a friend, a written note must be given to the child's teacher.



Only adults are allowed to open and close the gate for safety reasons. Children are not allowed in the parking lot alone. Parents/guardians are responsible for the supervision of their children prior to arrival and after pick-up times.

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## FOR THE SAFETY OF OUR CHILDREN

NEVER LEAVE YOUR CAR WHEN IT IS IN AN ACTIVE DROP OFF/PICK UP LINE OR WHERE IT IS IN THE WAY OF OTHER CARS. PLEASE PARK IN THE PARKING AREA IF YOU NEED TO LEAVE YOUR CAR.

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## B. FIELD TRIPS AND ENRICHMENT

At CNS field trips outside of the school are kept to a minimum. We feel that preschool children benefit most from enrichment when they feel safe and secure in their environment. Therefore, we prefer to bring our field trips to the school. Over the course of the year, there may be visits from community workers such as firefighters, police officers, librarians, and school bus drivers. Sometimes Drumlin Farm, Habitat and Aquarium educators may bring animals to the school; a music, language or movement specialist may visit. The older children may take neighborhood walks and small local trips during the year if parents have granted written permission.

Before taking a field trip, teachers notify the parents - in writing - of the plans and require signed permission slips from all parents whose children plan to participate. For any trips that involve leaving the CNS premises, teachers take a first aid kit and emergency information. In the event of an emergency, the teachers will administer first aid as deemed necessary and follow the same school procedures listed in the Health Care policy section of this handbook.

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## IV. PARENT PARTICIPATION

### A. OVERVIEW

As a cooperative nursery school, CNS depends on the active participation of parents in all aspects of its programs and operations. Each family contributes time throughout the year in a variety of ways, including (but not limited to) parent helping in the classroom, policymaking, maintenance and fundraising. To help each family understand the relationship among these roles, a brief summary is provided below. Full descriptions are provided in the following pages.

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## PARENT ORIENTATION

Each September, a Parent Orientation meeting will be held to provide all parents with appropriate training and information to help them fulfill their parent helping and volunteer roles at CNS.

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## B. PARENT HELP IN THE CLASSROOM

Depending on the number of days your child is at school, your parent help days may be as frequent as once a month. A parent help schedule will be created in September and will be posted in each classroom.

Parent helper guidelines are posted in each classroom. Parent helpers will be under the direct supervision of a teacher at all times. Parent helping keeps parents in direct touch with their children's activities, helps children feel comfortable with friends' parents, and facilitates communication with the staff. This is why nannies and babysitters do not parent help.

### Work days

Work days are generally scheduled three times a year. Each family is expected to help out at one 4-hour work day. This is the school's way of maintaining and enhancing the building and grounds while allowing parents an opportunity to develop a sense of ownership for their school.

### Social Activities and Fundraising

Social Activities and Fundraising are overseen by Board committees. Parents are required to participate in the annual Yellow Balloon Fair for one shift. They also often choose to join in social activities. A plan for the year that clearly describes expected commitments of time is presented in June. These activities are a source of fun for the entire community.

### Parent Participation Jobs

Each family holds a year-long job either as a Board member or as a member of a related committee. These are the positions that make CNS function at both the policy and operational levels.

Parent Participation responsibilities are as integral a part of the operation of the school as the income provided by tuition. CNS both values and is highly dependent upon the duties performed by each family, including parent help, parent participation jobs, work weekends, and the Yellow Balloon Fair. In this light, if a child and family are not present or available to participate in all aspects of CNS membership for any part of the year, then at the discretion of the Director and President, the family will be responsible for any necessary adjustments made and costs incurred by CNS to fulfill these parent participation responsibilities. If a parent is not fulfilling his or her parent participation responsibilities, the issue will be discussed between the parent and the President, Parent Participation Chair and/or Director. If the problem cannot be resolved in this manner, it will be brought to the attention of the Board of Directors, which has the authority to resolve the issue as deemed appropriate under the particular circumstances.

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## 1. PHILOSOPHY

CNS believes strongly in the value of regular parent participation in the classroom. The everyday presence of a mother, father or guardian is important to the sense of cooperation and community that gives CNS its warm and sustaining atmosphere. Grandparents, or other members of the extended family, are always welcome in the classroom.

Parent helpers have a special opportunity to spend time with their children in a school setting. It is a chance to observe and learn about their child's reactions to this school environment. Parents can watch their child among peers, get to know his or her classmates better, see the interaction with other adults, and observe the group grow together over the course of the year.

### Birthday Traditions

Parent(s) often choose to parent help on or around their child's birthday. Some families choose to present the school with a book in honor of the child's birthday. This CNS tradition encourages children to share their birthday with their classmates and extend the spirit of giving. Sometimes a child wants to give the class a favorite book and other times families consult the teacher's list of books desired for the library. This tradition provides an opportunity to expand the school's library to reflect greater ethnic and cultural diversity within the school's library.

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## 2. GUIDELINES FOR PARENT HELPING

Parent helping offers a natural way to celebrate the diversity of ethnic and cultural backgrounds that make up the CNS membership. Parents are welcome to share customs, craft activities, foods and songs that represent a part of their heritage. This is viewed as a wonderful opportunity for enrichment at CNS.

There are many important jobs that parents do to contribute to the overall operation of the school. But the single most popular and memorable one is parent helping. This is the parent participation piece that parents are able to do along with their children. Spending time in the classroom shows your children how much you value their school and how much you value them. It serves as a model for cooperation as parents, teachers and children all work and play together.

As an important member of the classroom you will also have an opportunity to get a feeling for what your child is experiencing every day. Parent Help day is a very special and exciting day for your child. Some children get so excited that they might have a hard time sleeping the night before. You know your child best and might like to think about how much notice to give your child. Waiting for the day to arrive can be hard, especially for younger children. Letting your child know the day before or even the morning of your parent help day may work best for these children. For others it might be helpful to mark the day on the calendar at home and then cross off each day as it approaches.

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### 3. SCHEDULE

Parents help on a regular basis, as scheduled by the administrative staff. If a parent is unable to help on the day scheduled, it is his/her responsibility to arrange a switch with another parent and inform the teacher of the change. Parents should dress comfortably and be prepared to help indoors or out, as needed.

#### WHEN TO ARRIVE

Please arrive by 8:55 a.m. This will give you a chance to settle in, put your snack away, hear about the day's plans and, when appropriate, allow the teacher to go out to the gate to start greeting the children.

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### 4. FUNCTIONS

Parents help with such things as setup, cleanup, dressing for outdoor play, or helping to supervise a small group activity. The teachers will tell parents what help is needed. Another parent helper function is to interact with the children in any enjoyable way, e.g. reading stories, sharing a special talent or interest, or bringing in a special activity. When you wish to contribute an activity for the day, be sure to plan ahead with your child's teachers. At the end of the school morning, parent helpers are responsible for cleaning the classroom according to the instructions posted in the classroom. Teachers may make specific requests on any given day. If you have questions for the teachers, please ask!

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### 5. SNACK

#### SNACKS AT COMMUNITY NURSERY SCHOOL

Please note: Specific food lists and food-preparation guidelines will be distributed in September to meet the needs of children with food allergies. We ask that parents help us to keep all children safe by observing these guidelines when selecting snacks and when sending lunch with your child.

CNS is a NUT-FREE school. Please DO NOT bring or send any peanut butter, tree nut, or nut products. This includes any foods that were manufactured in a nut facility or on shared lines/equipment with nuts.

If you choose to bring any packaged food, please read the ingredients carefully on the label. Do not bring any product containing even traces of nuts. When in doubt, please choose something else. If you are bringing food that requires preparation (i.e. fruit or veggies to cut), it must be done in the CNS kitchen using our utensils, tools and boards.

We restrict the use of microwave popcorn as a snack option due to the health concerns raised by the FDA. The chemical used to line the bag has been identified as a likely carcinogen.

#### Birthday Snacks

If you would like to bring in a special snack in celebration of your child's birthday, please remember the no nut policy. Read ingredients carefully on all packages and consider a treat that is still nutritious and low in sugar.

If you wish to have a baked good to celebrate your child's birthday, please plan to use a nut-free recipe or mix. Then make and bake the item at CNS. We will provide bowls and cooking sheets (and a lot of helpers!). Please let teachers know about your plans prior to your parent help day, so they can review the ingredients and coordinate space for the baking project.

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## 6. RESPONSIBILITIES

The most important job you have on parent help day is to spend some special time with your child. There are several other jobs that need to be done by the parent helper and most of them can be done with your child:

1. Set out the snack at snack time. Specific instructions will be given by the teachers. Children usually love to help with this job.
2. Help supervise during outdoor play. We have a big beautiful playground and it is important that all children are being watched by an adult at all times. A list of outdoor rules is attached. If you have any questions about how to handle a situation, please don't hesitate to ask a teacher.
3. Basic clean-up at the end of the morning consists of the following: Each class has a list of the clean-up jobs posted. It includes washing tables, flushing the toilets and sweeping the floor. Our custodian will do a more thorough cleaning later in the day.
4. Please empty out the recycling and compost bins in your classroom.

**OUTDOOR PLAYGROUND RULES** (Parent Helper should come outside to help supervise until pick-up time. We ask that you reinforce the rules during and beyond school hours.)

- The gates must be closed at all times
- Only adults may open doors and gates, so the adult is the first person to enter an environment; do not hold a gate open for someone unless they are immediately with you.
- Children must hold an adult's hand beyond the gate
- No running with sticks or waving sticks at people's faces (this is to prevent someone else getting poked or hurt accidentally or children falling into the stick and hurting themselves)
- No bare feet; shoes must be worn at all times by both children and adults to safeguard from sharp objects or as a precaution in the event of an evacuation
- Only bottoms/sitting on the swings – no tummies or twisting
- No "underdogs" when pushing the swings to avoid any unnecessary risk of injury

- Sand should not be thrown in the air and should stay in the sand box; same applies to wood chips
- Children have been told they must always keep an adult in view (woods area included)
- Children may only re-enter the building with a teacher or their own caretaker only
- Please encourage children to put away a toy or two at the end of the day

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## 7. WHAT TO EXPECT - FOR YOUR CHILD AND YOURSELF

As stated previously, your child will probably be very excited to have you join them at school. There are many ways that children react to having their caregiver in the classroom. Some may want to sit in your lap all morning. Or they may not want anything to do with you. Keep in mind that having you stay for the morning may feel very strange and different for your child who has just worked hard at making a separation from you to this new place. Therefore you may not necessarily be seeing an example of a typical day for your child.

If you have not spent time in a preschool before, you may feel a little uncomfortable at first. After all, the chairs are very small and it may feel like you just don't fit in! Remember that the idea is to have fun and spend time with your child. Your responsibilities take up a very small part of the morning. See what your child wants to do and join in. Play with playdough, read a book, build with blocks, listen to what the children are saying and talk with them.

You will find that everyone is treated as a unique and valued person and that no one is being judged in the classroom. That includes the parent helper. There is no right or wrong way to parent help. Every day is different and special.

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## 8. WHAT YOU WILL SEE AND HEAR - TALKING AND PLAYING WITH CHILDREN

You will find that in the classroom, teachers are constantly modeling for children positive ways of interacting. As feelings are expressed, teachers will verbalize and validate children's emotions.

Here are some examples:

"Sally is really happy today because it is her birthday."

"Billy is feeling sad right now. He didn't want his mom to leave."

"I see that you are really mad that Tommy grabbed the doll away from you."

It is important for children to feel that we understand and accept them. By acknowledging their feelings we are also giving them labels for what is going on inside them. The goal is that eventually the children will internalize an understanding of their feelings and then make the words their own.

Children are encouraged to ask questions and to work together to find answers. Problem solving activities allow children the opportunity to realize their own abilities. A wide range of materials is provided for each child to individually explore and discover in a way that personally feels comfortable.

Teachers will not model what they expect for a final product. Rather, emphasis is placed on the process of the learning experience. When a child is drawing a picture, rather than say, "what are you drawing?" (which would imply that we have an expectation for it to be something), you will hear teachers appreciating the colors, the lines and mood that a work of art expresses. "I like the way those lines come together and look at those bright colors!" Another thing you may hear teachers say whenever a child is creating something is, "Can you tell me about it?"

Children are treated with respect and appreciation. Words of encouragement help to build self-esteem and allow children to take risks in safe surroundings.

### General Guidelines for Working with Children

- Relax and enjoy yourself. These feelings are contagious. Your warmth and interest are invaluable to the children.
- Put yourself physically on the children's level. Squat or sit down as needed. This will help you to gain and hold their attention.
- Listen to what a child is telling you. Help the child verbalize feelings. Your understanding and interest are vital, while interpretations or explanations are often ignored.
- Never discuss any child with a teacher when that child or other children are present. This includes your own child. Teachers will find time to discuss your concerns outside of school hours.
- If possible, allow children to solve their own conflicts. They will learn self-reliance as well as cooperation.
- Refer disputes to a teacher. This is especially necessary when your own child is involved or you feel uncomfortable with the situation.
- Offer help only when a child asks for it, or when you see frustration becoming unmanageable. Try to lead the child to a solution by suggesting alternatives. Ask, "What would happen if you tried ...?" rather than using the "This is how to do it" approach.
- Be firm in maintaining a safe environment, but be honest in recognizing feelings. It is the action we must prohibit, but the feeling is really present, and often justified.
- A positive and loving attitude will do most of your work for you. Assume that the children want to cooperate and communicate.
- Respect children's privacy and creativity. With things they have made, the important part is often the doing. Responses such as "You really enjoyed squashing that play

dough" or "Do you want to tell me about your painting?" are more appropriate than "What is it?"

- Parents are always welcome to visit in their child's classroom. They are also welcome to observe in the other classrooms when appropriate.

***In the event of injury, do not move any child. Call a teacher.***

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9. CONFIDENTIALITY

When you are parent helping, you will be treated as a professional in the classroom. As professionals, we are bound by the code of ethics to maintain confidentiality. What happens in the classroom is not to be shared outside of the classroom. Teachers will convey anything of importance directly with a child's parents and with appropriate context.

**IF YOUR CHILD IS SICK ON PARENT HELP DAY:** Please keep your child home. We ask that you try to switch parent help days with someone else. Be sure to notify the teacher of any changes.

**OUR HOPE FOR PARENTS:** As you take time out from your busy lives to spend the morning with your child, we hope that you will have a chance to focus on the here and now, see the world through children's eyes and take a little bit of that world away with you.

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C. WORK DAYS

Our cooperative nursery school celebrates parents as active participants in their children's school experience. Helping to maintain the building and grounds contributes to that opportunity. Therefore, parents help with much of the CNS maintenance including repairs to the buildings and grounds.

The Work Day Coordinator and the Physical Plant Chairperson organize the work. Much of the major maintenance is done on the work days listed on the school calendar. On these scheduled Saturdays, indoor and outdoor work is done. In addition to yard clean-up, indoor cleaning and painting, sometimes there are special projects that provide wonderful new learning experiences for the children. Examples have included our stump garden, the woodland trail, the large table under the tents, mud kitchen, waterworks and the garden. Parents take great pride and joy in making these contributions. One member from each family attends a four-hour work day and may be asked to pitch in at other times as necessary.

CNS and its Board of Directors shall not be responsible for any injuries sustained to any person during participation in parent work days. In the event of an injury, CNS recommends that the participant look to his/her personal health or accident insurance policy.

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D. FUNDRAISING & DEVELOPMENT



Fundraising events are held each year. Specific events are planned by the designated Chairpersons and the Board and have varied from year to year. The Yellow Balloon Fair, held in May each year, is a CNS tradition. Contributions of time and energy from families form the backbone of the fair. It is truly a celebration of the cooperative nature of CNS, and the rewards come as much in the joy children and parents have making it happen, as in the funds raised.

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## E. PARENT PARTICIPATION JOBS

In addition to parent helping, participating in work days, and contributing to the school fundraising efforts, one parent from each family holds a year-long job. Questionnaires mailed in the spring help to match parents with jobs for the following school year according to their interests or skills. The Parent Participation Chairperson will assign a position to parents who do not indicate any preferences.

New and returning parents fill Board positions. The process by which the Board is determined is as follows. The Nominating Committee proposes a slate of Officers and Board members. The incoming Board is voted in by the membership at the Annual Meeting, in accordance with the school's Bylaws. The Director sits as an ex-officio, non-voting member of the Board.

The Board is responsible for all policy decisions of CNS. Board meetings are held at 7:30pm monthly during the school year and in the summer as needed. Regular meetings are always open to all CNS parents and staff. If you have an issue to discuss with the Board, contact the Director, or the President of the Board to learn how to proceed with the particular issue. Each month the minutes of the Board meetings will be emailed to the community and available on the CNS web site.

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## VLL. SCHOOL POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

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### A. ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

Below is the organizational structure of CNS:

- CNS Board of Directors
  - Director
  - Community Coordinator and Business Manager
  - Teachers

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### B. ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS AND DESIGNATION OF ADMINISTRATOR

The Director, the Business Manager, Community Coordinator and a 13-16 member Board of Directors share the administrative functions of CNS. The responsibilities of the Director include hiring, budget preparation, working closely with Board members, supervising staff members,

conducting staff meetings and orientations, and overseeing the program as it relates to the CNS philosophy. Working closely with the Enrollment Chair in the admissions process, the Director is conjointly responsible for the individual informational sessions for prospective families. In the event that the Director is temporarily unavailable, the Community Coordinator, Business Manager or a Teacher would assume temporary responsibility for the Director's duties.

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## C. ADMISSIONS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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### 1. GENERAL ADMISSIONS POLICY

Enrollment at CNS is open to any child aged two years nine months (by September 30th) through five years regardless of race, religion, national origin, cultural heritage, political beliefs, marital status of parent(s), or disability. Preference in selection is given to siblings and families returning to the school. The number of new openings is then determined. This varies greatly from year to year.

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### 2. ADMISSIONS PROCEDURE - ACADEMIC YEAR

Visits - The purpose of the application process is to establish whether CNS is the right school for a child and his/her family. Parents have an opportunity to see the school by scheduling an appointment for an individual information session. The information session lasts no more than an hour, taking place during a regular school morning. Parents meet with the Director who carefully explains the school program as well as participating families' obligations to the school. Parents are encouraged to ask questions and share their expectations/goals for their children. A tour of the school includes visiting all classrooms during a time when school is in session.

Formal application - Applications are made available following the individual information session. A non-refundable application fee is returned with the completed application. Applications should be received by January 15th and all decisions will be made no later than January 31st.

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## D. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

In 1992 CNS established a limited scholarship fund to provide tuition assistance for families wishing to attend CNS. The Fund is administered by the Director and Finance Team, and is kept in strictest confidence.

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## E. HEALTH CARE POLICY

This policy shall be provided to each staff member all of whom will be trained in infection control procedures. A copy will also be posted by the office telephone that will be used for making emergency calls. This policy is mandated by the state and has been approved by the CNS Board in consultation with Lexington Pediatric Associates.

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### 1. EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Police	911	
Ambulance/Rescue	911	
Poison Control Center	(800) 222-1222	
Lexington Pediatrics	(781) 862-4110 or 0859	
	57 Bedford St, Lexington,MA	
Department of Early Education and Care	(978) 681-9684 (x307, licenser Karen Gale)	
Child Abuse Hotline	(800) 792-5200	
Department of Children & Families	(781) 641-8500	
State Lead Program	(617) 522-3700 x179	
Hospitals:		
Lahey Clinic	(781) 273-5100	41 Mall Rd. Burlington
Emerson Hospital	(978) 369-1400	133 Old Rd. Concord
Children's Hospital	(617) 355-6611	300 Longwood Ave Boston
CNS, 2325 Mass Ave, Lexington	781-862-0741	

Listed by the office telephone are the names, addresses and numbers of all physicians used by CNS children. Lexington Pediatric Associates will be called in any emergency when a child's regular or substitute physician is unavailable.

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### 2. PROCEDURES FOR ILLNESS OR EMERGENCY

A child's physician will specify which hospital a child should be taken to in an emergency. In an extreme emergency and if the parents are unavailable, the child will be taken to the nearest hospital. A child's emergency consents are taken to the hospital as well.

The procedures to be followed in case of emergency are:

1. Call Fire Department at 911 and request an ambulance.
2. Call child's doctor. Ask where child should be taken. Tell ambulance driver. If child's doctor is unavailable, call Lexington Pediatric Associates.
3. Call child's parent(s). Describe accident or illness. Tell where child has been taken. If parent is unavailable, call alternate person from parent's file.
4. If first aid can be safely used without causing further harm to the child, a qualified staff member or parent will provide appropriate care until medical help is available.

When a child is ill or injured and it is not an emergency, the following procedures will be observed:

1. A mildly ill child will be cared for in the office or main waiting area, where a mat will be available, until the parent or alternate person can take the child home.
2. If a child is injured and the injury can be safely treated by a qualified staff member or parent, and medical care by the physician is not considered necessary by staff members qualified in first aid, then the child will be given the appropriate aid at school and the parent(s) will be notified upon their arrival of the nature and treatment of the child's injury.

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### 3. PROCEDURES FOR USING AND MAINTAINING FIRST AID EQUIPMENT

First aid equipment shall be purchased and used by the staff. The location of such kits shall be posted, according to advice given to the staff by a representative physician of the school's health care consultant, Lexington Pediatric Associates. Guidelines of the Red Cross First Aid manual shall also be followed.

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### 4. EVACUATION PROCEDURE IN THE EVENT OF EMERGENCY

In the event of a natural disaster, fire, loss of power, heat or water, the Director, along with the support of the teachers and Board President, shall assess the safety conditions for the children. They shall notify the parent membership of any necessary information, or a decision to change the schedule or close school early.

If there is need to take shelter in the building, we will congregate in the Studio. The procedures to be followed in the event of fire or other emergency requiring a quick exit from the building are as follows, and are posted outside the Director's office and at each exit from the building:

- When the alarm is sounded, teachers and parent helpers quickly and calmly gather children together and usher them out the exit door of each room. A designated staff member will ensure that any child requiring extra assistance or support receives it.

- One teacher and parent helper from each room walks the children to a designated outdoor area, carrying the attendance sheet.
- Remaining teachers will check all areas - studio, bathrooms and cubbies - before joining the classes, closing doors behind them.

On file in the office and in each classroom for each child, is signed documentation by parents with at least two phone numbers to call in the event of an emergency. Whenever an evacuation takes place, teachers carry this information along with their personal cellular phones upon exiting the school. If a parent cannot be reached, emergency contact numbers will be called. Children shall not be released from CNS without permission from parents, guardians, or emergency contacts.

In case of a Natural Disaster: The Lexington Fire Department will assign CNS to a shelter based on the nature of the emergency and advise the Director regarding transportation as deemed appropriate.

In Case of Loss of Power or Heat: Teachers would assist children in putting on outerwear to stay warm. Parents and emergency contacts would be contacted in the event that an early closing is deemed necessary by the Director and teachers.

Evacuation Drills: Each class has a designated meeting spot to which they go on the playground whenever there is a fire drill. When the alarm sounds, one teacher quickly and calmly directs the children to exit. A designated staff member will ensure that any child requiring extra assistance or support receives it. The teacher takes a clipboard containing attendance and emergency contact forms and personal cell phones while leading the children outside. The second teacher makes sure that all children are out by checking bathrooms and all play areas before turning out lights and closing all doors to the classroom. Teachers and children wait for confirmation from the Director that it is safe to return to the building. A drill shall be held every month, at differing times of day, using differing exits, and shall be documented.

Lockdown Procedure: In case of an emergency that requires us to shelter the children inside the school, the children and teachers will hear a loud fog horn siren which indicates the emergency. Children and teachers will move quickly and calmly to the internal bathroom spaces, using those adjacent to the classroom and the two hallway adult bathrooms. The Director and School Staff will double check all spaces and ensure that all children are accounted for. Cell phones will be used to contact parents.

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## 5. PLAN FOR INJURY PREVENTION

- The school requires all staff to be currently certified in a Red Cross Basic First Aid Course (or other equivalent training as approved by the health care consultant). At least one staff member, present during school hours, will maintain current CPR certification.
- Each classroom will contain a complete first aid kit, checked regularly for supplies.
- An individual incident report will be maintained for any injury requiring first aid that is sustained during school hours. Parents will be informed of any such injury and the steps taken to attend to the child on the day of the incident. A school-wide log

will be maintained for all injuries occurring during school hours, and will be periodically reviewed.

- The environment will be monitored daily for hazardous materials, which will be repaired or removed if potentially dangerous. All toxic materials, sharp objects, matches and other hazardous substances will be kept in a secure place.
- CNS is a smoke-free environment at all times.

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## 6. PLAN FOR MANAGEMENT OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE

A child with a communicable disease should be kept at home until your doctor assures you that all risk of contagion has passed. Periods of confinement for specific diseases are as follows:

Strep Infection: until 48 hours after beginning a course of antibiotics.

Chicken Pox: one week from onset of rash.

Mumps: until all swelling is gone, usually one week.

German Measles (Rubella): three days from onset of rash.

German measles pose a great health risk during the first and second trimesters of pregnancy. Since doctors differ in their handling of this situation, we recommend that after being informed by the school of an outbreak of German measles, pregnant mothers consult their doctors immediately. We are prepared to help by changing carpool arrangements, checking individual health records, and, in general, making this problem as manageable as possible.

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## 7. PLAN FOR INFECTION CONTROL AND MONITORING

**\*\*PLEASE SEE COVID GUIDELINES AT BEGINNING OF THIS MANUAL\*\***

### Keeping the Child at Home

A child should be kept at home and the school notified if he/she has any of the following symptoms: fever, vomiting, diarrhea, severe nasal congestion, or a cough. Please keep your child at home if he/she is sick during the night. If your child acts in a manner that could possibly be a prelude to illness (great fatigue or fussy behavior), keep the child home one or two days to see what develops. If the child does not seem normal after this time, always consult a physician.

### WHEN TO KEEP YOUR CHILD AT HOME

- A child who has vomited or had diarrhea during the night, or who has a temperature of 100 degrees or higher does not belong in school.
- Following the diagnosis of strep throat or conjunctivitis, a child must have been treated with antibiotics for a full 48 hours before returning to school.
- A child with chicken pox may return to school when all eruptions have ceased and all spots are crusted over.
- A child with the following cold or flu symptoms does not belong at school:
  - A constantly running nose, especially if the mucus is yellow/green
  - A cough which interferes with the child's activity
  - A fever of 100 degrees or higher
  - Extreme lethargy, due to illness or resulting from medication
  - Upset stomach causing pain, nausea, or diarrhea
  - Inability to participate fully in daily school activities

We appreciate your erring on the side of caution and keeping children home when the first symptom appears. Please remember that it is the parent's job to use good judgment based on the facts in deciding whether to send your child to school. This is not a decision for the child to make. A child who is not feeling well will not benefit from a morning at school and may in fact be more susceptible to other illnesses. Also, staying home for an extra day on the tail end of an illness ensures that no one else will be infected.

The teachers are very cautious about avoiding the spread of infection in the classrooms, and your extra care is critical. We value your partnership in helping to keep CNS a healthy environment for our children.

#### Disinfecting and Sanitizing Procedures at School

All staff members, parent helpers and children shall wash their hands with antibacterial liquid soap and running water using friction before eating or handling food, after toileting, after coming in contact with body fluids or discharges, after handling animals or their equipment, and after cleaning. Hands shall be dried using disposable paper towels.

Facilities used for hand washing after diapering or toileting shall be separate from those facilities used for food preparation and service. Disposable gloves are provided for the clean up of blood and spills of bodily fluids. Used gloves shall be doubled and disposed of in a

sealed receptacle or directly into the dumpster outdoors. Bloody clothing shall be sealed in a plastic bag, labeled with the child's name and returned to the parent at the end of the day.

On a daily basis the following shall be cleaned with soap and water and disinfectant: toilets, sinks and faucets, water table and water play equipment, play tables, and mops used for cleaning. On a daily basis resting mats shall be washed. The disinfectant solution shall be made of either a self-made solution (based on state guidelines) of 1/4-cup liquid bleach to each gallon of water, which shall be prepared daily in a labeled bottle with a sealed cap, or a commercial disinfectant, which indicates that it kills bacteria, viruses and parasites. All disinfectants shall be stored in a secure place out of the reach of children.

### Notifying Parents

The Director shall notify CNS parents whenever a case of a communicable disease or condition has been diagnosed, unless there are issues of confidentiality. The Director shall include a description of symptoms to watch out for and any other information regarding incubation periods, communication with pediatrician, suggested methods of treatment, and duration of illness/condition.

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## 8. PLAN FOR DISPENSING MEDICATION

The school shall not administer prescription medication to a child without the written order of a physician (which may include the label on the medication) that indicates the medication is for the specific child.

No medication, whether prescription or non-prescription, shall be administered to a child without written parental authorization. This includes all topical non-prescription lotions, including sunscreens. The signed statement from the parents should include the specific topical non-prescription lotions/ointments/medications to be administered (including the brand name of sunscreen) along with the specific areas to cover and the time of day it is to be administered. This statement shall be valid for no more than one year from the date it is signed. CNS staff members shall not administer any such medication contrary to the directions on the original container unless so authorized by a written note from the child's pediatrician.

For non-prescription medications, a signed parental authorization will accompany the physician's written order and will be valid for no more than one year from the date at which it was signed. An attempt will be made to contact the parent before the medication is administered, unless the child needs the medication urgently, and calling the parent will delay appropriate care. Except for topical non-prescription medications, the parents shall be notified in writing each time medication is administered to a child.

The school shall keep a written record of the administration of medication that includes the time and date of each administration, the name of the staff member administering the medication, and the name of the child. The log is kept in the Director's office along with any unused medication.

The school shall keep all medicine labeled with a child's name, the name of the drug, and the directions for its administration, and shall dispose of or return to the child's parent any unused medication.



Each year, the Director will evaluate the ability of staff authorized to administer medication as specified in EEC regulations. There will always be one staff member authorized to administer prescription medications.

In addition, parents, with the written permission of their child's health care practitioner, will be allowed to train staff in the implementation of their child's individual health care plan.

Sunscreen – When deemed necessary, please plan to apply long-lasting sunscreen on your child before school in the morning. In warm sunny weather it is a good idea to send a hat as well.

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9. PLAN FOR MEETING SPECIFIC HEALTH CARE NEEDS OF EACH CHILDREN

Each child's file will contain a record of any specific allergies to food, chemicals or other materials. Teachers are responsible to note each child's allergies.

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10. HEALTHCARE PRECAUTIONS

It is not always possible to know when someone is infected with infections spread by blood contact, therefore all blood and blood containing body fluids should be regarded as possibly contagious.

Disposable gloves should be used whenever contact with blood or blood containing fluid is likely, particularly if the caregiver's hands have open cuts or abrasions. All blood spills and blood-contaminated surfaces should be disinfected with a strong bleach solution of one part bleach in ten parts water. Disposable items contaminated with blood or body fluid should be placed in plastic bags in covered containers and disposed of in the dumpster outside appropriately.

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11. FIRE PROTECTION

The school is equipped with smoke detectors and an alarm system. The evacuation procedures described earlier will be followed in the event of a fire. Fire drills are conducted routinely throughout the year with the children.

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12. REFERRAL SERVICES

In the event a member of the staff feels that a child would benefit from additional social, mental health, educational or medical services, the following procedure is required:

1. Discuss concerns with Director.

2. Make a plan for observing and recording the child's behavior, and for reviewing the child's record prior to making a referral.
3. Meet with parent(s) to inform them of the concern and discuss the possibility of evaluation.
4. If parent(s) and staff agree that further action is required, the parent will make the initial referral phone call. The Director will obtain the informed consent of the child's parent in writing before any social, mental health or medical evaluation or services are provided. Informed consent means that the parent will be informed in writing of the nature and duration of the evaluations or services as well as of when, where, and by whom the services will be provided. A copy of the signed and dated authorization will be part of the referral and kept in the child's record. If the parent makes arrangements directly with a therapist without involving the school but the service is to be provided at school, CNS will verify that the parent has authorized this to occur and the authorization will be included in the child's record.
5. Referrals shall be in writing and shall include reason for recommendation, brief summary of observations leading to referral, and efforts made to accommodate child's needs at school. These referrals shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following resources:

Child Abuse Hot Line	(800) 792-5200
Dept. of Children & Families, Arlington:	(781) 641-8500
Waltham:	(781) 894-4865
Lexington Public Schools Special Education Dept.,	(781) 860-5823, Liz Billings-Fouhy, Liaison
Arlington	(781) 641-5419
Bedford	(781) 275-1700 x62
Belmont	(781) 484-0774
Burlington	(781) 270-1808
Concord	(978) 318-1510, x140
Lincoln	(781) 259-9400
Waltham	(781) 891-5388
Winchester	(781) 7217015
Early Intervention Program	(781) 729-3094

Lexington Pediatrics

(781) 862-4110

Children's Hospital Special Care Center

(617) 672-2100

6. Staff shall follow up on all referrals, maintaining written records of all related communications.
7. A record of any referral and its results will be maintained in the child's file.

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13. CHILD ABUSE

Staff members are required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the Department of Children and Families (DCF). The state mandated procedure consists of an oral communication with DCF, followed within 48 hours by submission of a written report. Staff members must follow all guidelines promulgated by the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families.

If the school learns of a case alleging abuse or neglect of a child while the child is in the care of CNS, the Director is required to notify the Department of Children and Families as well as the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC). CNS would cooperate fully with DCF in the investigation if such an allegation were to arise. CNS will also ensure that an allegedly abusive or neglectful staff member does not work directly with children until the Department of Children and Families investigation is completed and for any further time as required.

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14. OTHER STATE AND LOCAL REGULATIONS

State law requires that, barring medical or religious exemption, before admission to school, all children must have a yearly physical examination and be immunized against diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, polio, mumps, measles, chickenpox, and rubella. Tests for lead paint poisoning are also required. CNS is required to have each child's immunizations on file.

A health requirement, to be filled out by a doctor, is sent to all parents before the school year begins. Please have your child's health form returned to school before the beginning of school in September.

Documentation of a physical examination that took place within the last year is required to be in our files at all times. Please note that when you bring your child for their next physical, be sure to ask your pediatrician for updated documentation.

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F. GUIDELINES FOR BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

Philosophy - At CNS, behavior management is viewed as the positive goal of helping children to develop internal controls as they develop into valuable members of the community. Our aim is to foster in each child a feeling of positive self-worth and respect. As they grow to better understand and appreciate who they are, they gradually develop the ability and sensitivity to

accept both the similarities and differences between themselves and others. Children receive ongoing reinforcement for positive behaviors. This is how a sense of trust and respect becomes established. We believe that within a setting of acceptance and understanding, children will internalize their awareness and best be able to interact in socially acceptable ways. Moreover, the safety of every child is always of primary concern.

Validation - It is always important to accept a child's feelings. Letting children know that we understand and have words for their feelings will help them to understand their feelings and use words in the future. Oftentimes when children feel that they are understood or validated, they are better able to cope with a difficult situation. Within the framework of acceptance, it becomes easier for a child to accept the rules or limits. We might say things like, "I see that you are really mad that Cheryl took your truck, but I can't let you hit her. Let's tell Cheryl why you are mad at her," or "I am not going to let anybody hurt you, and I am not going to let you hurt anybody else. My job is to keep everybody safe at school." It is important to understand the developmental level of individual children. Appropriate expectations are set to help children experience success. When children are spoken to clearly and in as few words as possible, they are best able to receive direction and respond accordingly. Teachers recognize that young children may need frequent reminders and ample warnings before transitions.

Reinforcement - Positive reinforcement means noticing and responding to things that are good and acceptable. Teachers will constantly be heard saying things like "I like the way you put the game away after you finished playing," or "That was a good idea to put a smock on before you painted your picture," "Thank you for helping Ben tie his shoe." Teachers often document kind and caring acts.

Communication - It is important for teachers to speak to children in a calm, confident and natural tone of voice. Stating the facts and avoiding a judgmental air is critical. When teachers can keep themselves emotionally removed from a challenging situation, children will be less inclined to "fight back". Getting down on the child's level to look directly in his/her eyes is also essential. When they have a very important message, teachers may gently hold a child's shoulders, hands or arms to be sure to gain eye contact.

Sometimes a teacher may ask a child to repeat back what she just said. This will assure the teacher that the child heard her and help the child to internalize some information. Teachers will walk over to a child to speak to him/her rather than shout across the room. Sometimes a teacher may take a child by the hand or hold a child on her lap when the child needs help with his/her boundaries.

Problem solving - If appropriate and feasible, teachers attempt to include children using problem-solving techniques to resolve difficulties, establish rules, policies and procedures. This might include sitting down with the group and saying "We have a problem... What can we do to make it better?" Writing a list of suggestions taken from the children, discussing the pros and cons of each one and taking a vote is often a method used at CNS for resolving problems. We believe that when children are involved in the process, they become "owners" of the solution and the results are more meaningful and successful.

Self-esteem - Each child's self-esteem will be considered whenever behavioral limits must be established or enforced. Harsh physical punishment is never allowed. No child shall be handled roughly under any circumstances. No child shall be subjected to cruel or severe punishment, humiliation or verbal abuse. No child shall be denied food as a form of punishment, nor shall any child be punished for soiling, wetting or not using the toilet. Teachers make every effort to

anticipate and prevent negative or inappropriate behaviors. They may use redirection or distraction to help turn around potentially problematic moments.

Understanding developmental levels and individual needs may result in a teacher taking a small group outside or to the studio to release energy or to give a child some play dough to punch and pinch. If a teacher must intervene in a situation, the measures taken should always aim to help a child understand his/her behavior and to verbalize feelings. Every attempt is made not to embarrass a child or to damage his/her self-esteem. The aim is always to help and teach the child rather than to punish. If a child loses control or becomes dangerous to others, the teacher will quietly remove the child from the room and will firmly remind him/her of the importance of keeping everyone safe and that she will help him/her to regain composure and control. In such cases, the child's parent will be called and, if the teachers and director deem it necessary, they will ask the parent to pick up the child from school.

We believe that children are much better able to make a connection between their behavior and repercussions for this behavior, when the repercussions happen right away.

Intervention - If a child's behavior is of concern to the teachers and director, they will contact the child's parents and, as deemed necessary, document behaviors. Together they will work to resolve the problem and, if needed, discuss possible interventions. CNS will provide information and referrals for available services to the parents upon their request. Every effort shall be made to work cooperatively with the parents to define the child's needs and to determine the best way of meeting those needs. If it is mutually decided between the child's parents and the CNS staff that the child must withdraw from the school, the school will prepare the child for termination in a manner consistent with the child's ability to understand. We will pursue consultation and training for staff and will work with the parents to develop a behavioral intervention plan for home, if necessary.

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## G. TERMINATION

Termination shall take place if a decision has been made that CNS is unable to serve the child's needs or if the child's attendance is detrimental to the safety and welfare of other children. Prior to termination every effort shall be made to work cooperatively with the parents to define the child's needs and to determine the best way of meeting those needs. The staff shall have available to the parents written documentation of the reasons for termination. In addition, CNS shall provide for parents other sources and services that may be helpful in working towards meeting the child's needs.

Other reasons for termination may include the following:

- Parents disagreement with the CNS philosophy as described in the literature and modeled at the school
- Parents inability to meet the parent participation requirements as indicated in the enrollment agreement without making alternative arrangements with the Director or Parent Participation Chair

- Non-payment of tuition without making alternative arrangements with the Director or Treasurer

Prior to termination, parents shall be notified in writing of the concern and need to address the situation, whether the issues relate to the child or the parents. If, after attempts to resolve the situation, it is felt that CNS has not met with success, parents shall be notified in writing of the child's termination. The amount of time the family shall have before official termination will be decided by the Director, and, when appropriate, members of the Board of Directors. If it is decided that the child must withdraw from CNS for any reason, the school shall prepare the child for termination in a manner consistent with the child's ability to understand.

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## H. TRANSITION BETWEEN CLASSROOMS AND PROGRAMS

The teachers and director pay close attention to the emotional needs of the children when preparing for transition into a new classroom before school starts and at the end of the year.

At the end of the school year, teachers begin to prepare the children for upcoming changes, always keeping in mind their developmental levels of understanding and their concept of time.

In preparation for children moving from one classroom to another within CNS, there are ongoing opportunities for children to gain familiarity with the other teachers and spaces. Some examples include:

Open Choice days, outdoor all school activities, and teachers intentionally visiting another classroom to spend the morning with an incoming group of children.

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## I. NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Community Nursery School does not discriminate in enrollment, hiring or employment practices on the basis of race, religion, cultural heritage, national origin, political beliefs, marital status, sexual orientation, age, sex or disability. Each year between the opening of school and December 31, a notice stating this policy is placed in the Lexington Minuteman newspaper.

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## J. CNS POLICY PROHIBITING SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Community Nursery School is committed to maintaining an environment free of harassment based on gender or sexual orientation on school property and at school-sponsored events. Harassment by administrators, certified and support personnel, vendors at school or school sponsored events is unlawful and is strictly prohibited. Community Nursery School requires all employees, students and other individuals in the school environment to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner with respect to all employees, students, and other members of the school community. Harassment in any form or for any reason based on gender or sexual

orientation is strictly prohibited. This includes harassment of a subordinate by a supervisor, among staff, between staff and students, or among students.

### Definition

What one person may consider acceptable behavior may reasonably be viewed as sexual harassment by another person. Therefore, individuals should consider how their words and actions may be reasonably viewed by others. Sexual harassment includes sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/ or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Acceptance of or submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or education.
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by the individual is used as a basis for employment or educational decisions affecting this individual.
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or educational performance, including participation in extra-curricular activities, by creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or school environment.

Harassment includes such things as remarks, gestures or physical contact, writing placed on school property or the display or circulation of written materials or pictures derogatory to an individual's gender or sexual orientation. What constitutes sexual harassment is based upon reasonable perceptions of the complainant rather than the intent of the alleged harasser.

The legal definition of sexual harassment is broad. In addition to the above examples, other sexually oriented conduct, whether it is intended or not, that is unwelcome and has the effect of creating a work or educational environment that is hostile, offensive, intimidating or humiliating to individuals of either gender may also constitute sexual harassment. While it is not possible to list all circumstances that may constitute such harassment, examples may include references to sexual conduct, comments on an individual's body, unwelcome leers, and suggestive or insulting comments.

### Reporting sexual harassment

Please bring any concerns or complaints to the Director, Community Nursery School.

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## K. RESEARCH AND EXPERIMENTATION

Community Nursery School will not conduct any research or experimentation involving children without the written informed consent of the affected child's parents or guardian, for each occurrence. Written parental consent will be obtained when the observations of children by other than parents or staff of the school occurs. CNS will not allow physical harm of children to be carried out during research, experimentation or unusual treatment. (Research & experimentation shall not mean program evaluation or data collection for purposes of documenting services of CNS that do not identify individual children.) A parental consent form must be signed and returned to CNS before any research or experimentation involves any of the children enrolled.

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L. UNAUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES

Community Nursery School will not authorize any activities unrelated to the direct care of children or to any contacts with the parent(s) or guardians without written, informed consent of parent(s) or guardian. These activities shall mean, but not be limited to fundraising and/or publicity, including photographs and participation in the mass media. A written consent form must be signed and returned to CNS prior to use of children in any such efforts.

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M. CONCERNS AND QUESTIONS

Concerns and questions regarding educational and classroom issues should be brought to the teacher or Director. Concerns and questions regarding other issues may be brought to the President of the Board or Director. If appropriate, these concerns and questions will be brought to the Board for discussion. If a member wishes to present an issue directly to the Board, he or she may contact the President at least 10 days before the board meeting to discuss being placed on the agenda. All suggestions are appreciated and are given serious consideration.

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N. AVAILABILITY OF REGULATIONS

Community Nursery School is licensed by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (formerly Office for Children). CNS will maintain a copy of the regulations in the Director's office and make them available to any person upon request to: EEC Regional Office – 978-681-9684; 360 Merrimack Street, Bldg 9, Third Floor Lawrence, MA 01843

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O. ADDITIONAL CHARGES AND LATE FEES

Prompt pick up at the end of the day (12:00 end for morning program, 1:00 for lunch bunch, 2:00 for afternoon program, is essential because young children are ready to leave and are looking forward to seeing you or whoever is picking them up. It is particularly difficult for children to wait and watch while other children are leaving. Additionally, staff members have school matters to finish up and often have their own children to pick up.

You are responsible for contacting the school if you know you will be late. A "late fee charge" of \$25 will be applied to each instance of repeat lateness. We understand that circumstances may cause lateness from time to time. Of utmost concern to us is when lateness is persistent. A conversation with the Director may be necessary when this repeatedly happens.

Other Late Fees: There is a \$25 late fee charged for payments which are not paid on time. After 30 days, unless we have been given notification or other arrangements have been made, late payments will be assessed \$25 daily until payment is received. There is a \$20 fee for returned checks.



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P. CELL PHONE POLICY

Teachers, parent helpers, and administrators will refrain from using cell phones when with the children. When necessary teachers, parent helpers, or administrators will remove themselves from the classroom or playground environment in order to use a cell phone. There is an understanding that sometimes a phone call or text must be returned, but every attempt shall be made to do so outside of the children's environment.

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Q. BYLAWS OF COMMUNITY NURSERY SCHOOL (rev. 5/2019)

ARTICLE 1 - NAME

1. The name of the Corporation shall be Community Nursery School, Incorporated.

ARTICLE II - PURPOSE

1. The Corporation shall be a nonprofit, educational organization and shall conduct one or more schools in Lexington, Massachusetts, for children of preschool age.

2. Community Nursery School does not discriminate in enrollment, hiring or employment practices on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin or disability.

#### ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP

1. All parents (including legal guardians) of children enrolled in the school shall be members.
2. Other individuals who are willing to participate actively in the work of the school may be elected members by the Board of Directors.
3. The membership shall hold an annual meeting in June or at such other time as the President may prescribe. At this meeting, the Board of Directors, containing a maximum of twenty-two (22) members, shall be elected. Twenty-five (25) members of the corporation shall constitute a quorum for this election. Any member present may vote. No proxy votes are allowed.
4. Additional meetings of the membership may be held upon the call of the President, a vote by the Board of Directors, or a request in writing by ten (10) or more members. Notice of all meetings, including the annual meeting, must be sent to all members at least ten (10) days in advance of the meeting.
5. A majority of the membership must be present to constitute a quorum for either amending the Articles of Organization, dissolving the Corporation, or any non-routine business transactions such as sale of the land. In such situations a majority vote of those present is necessary. No proxy votes are allowed.

#### ARTICLE IV - BOARD OF DIRECTORS

1. The Board of Directors (henceforth "the Board") shall have charge of the affairs and property of the Corporation.
2. Directors shall serve until their successors are elected at the next annual meeting of the membership. There is no limitation of the number of years a Director may serve.
3. The Board shall recommend to the membership the number of Directors to be elected and a slate of nominees.
4. The membership at large shall annually elect to the Board a President, co-Presidents and/or Vice President; Treasurer; and Clerk.
5. The membership at large additionally shall annually elect to the Board Chairpersons of Enrollment, Development, Yellow Balloon Fair, Parent Participation, Social Committee, Logistics or Physical Plant, and Community Relations.
6. Each year there shall be a "Staff Representative" on the Board who will serve as a Director until the next annual meeting of the membership. This person is selected by the Director of the school in conjunction with the staff.
7. There shall be at least one Alumni Member at Large on the Board who will serve as directors. Each year the Director and the President of the outgoing Board will select an alumni, or member who will be an alumnus the following year, to this position. These alumni shall be made members for the duration of their terms.
8. The President shall preside at all meetings of the Board and membership, shall sit on those Standing Committees as deemed necessary, shall assist the Director in hiring when necessary, and shall perform such other duties as these Bylaws and the Board may specify.
9. The Vice President shall perform the functions of the President when the latter is absent or unable to act, shall be responsible for annual evaluation of the program, shall assist the Director in hiring when necessary, shall initiate and oversee ad hoc committee

- operations, and shall support strategic projects and work with the Development Chairperson to explore new fundraising opportunities.
10. The Treasurer shall have custody of all funds and investments of the Corporation. S/he shall be bonded in an amount fixed by the Board, and may maintain a petty cash fund in an amount and method approved by the Board. All funds shall be deposited or invested in Massachusetts in the name of the Corporation. The Treasurer, Director and any other officer, by vote of the Board, shall have the power to draw checks upon any bank account of the corporation. The Treasurer shall oversee all aspects of the school's finances, including the handling of the school's insurance. S/he shall prepare the yearly budget with the Finance Committee, shall present written status reports of revenue and expenditures to the Board, and shall work with an accountant on annual review and preparation of financial statements.
  11. The Clerk shall record and distribute the minutes of all Board meetings, maintain the bylaws and Standard Operating Procedures, and shall also create and disseminate a weekly community email and calendar of events.
  12. The Enrollment Chairperson, in conjunction with the Director, represents the school to prospective parents, and handles the application and enrollment procedures.
  13. The Development Chairperson(s) coordinates all development efforts, and oversees the Development committee, which plans and manages all CNS fundraising activities, and works closely with the Executive Committee to develop new fundraising events.
  14. The Yellow Balloon Chairperson oversees and coordinates responsibilities for the annual Yellow Balloon Fair.
  15. The Parent Participation Chairperson coordinates various aspects of parent involvement in the school as well as chairs the annual Nominating Committee comprised of the Director, President and him/herself. This committee prepares the slate of new Directors to be voted upon by the membership at the annual meeting.
  16. The Physical Plant Chairperson is responsible for the upkeep and repair of the facility, and for planning and overseeing projects resulting in capital expenditures and changes in, or improvements to, the facility.
  17. The Technology Chairperson oversees and manages our computing/technical jobs, and works closely with the Director to implement a long-term vision for the website.
  18. The Social Committee Chairperson organizes and oversees the Social Committee to create activities/events that foster community building.
  19. The Board shall employ an Executive Director of the school to administer the school consistent with policies established by the Board. CNS is licensed by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care and the policies of the school are guided by their regulations. The Director is an ex-officio, non-voting member of the Board who acts as a liaison between the staff and Board.
  20. Meetings of the Board shall be held at the call of the President or at the written request of three Directors. At least five (5) days notice of a meeting must be provided, except shorter notice is sufficient if all Directors agree. A majority of all Directors shall constitute a quorum for all purposes, and all matters except amendment of these Bylaws shall be determined by a majority vote of those present. No proxy votes shall be allowed.
  21. Vacancies of the Board of Directors may be filled by the Board, or by a special meeting of the membership called by the Board.

## ARTICLE V – AMENDMENTS

1. These Bylaws can be amended only upon a two-----thirds vote of the total number of Directors, at a meeting whose notice included the full text of the proposed amendments.

#### ARTICLE VI – DISSOLUTION

1. The membership can authorize the dissolution of the Corporation by a majority vote at any meeting attended by a majority of the members, provided written notice of the proposal to dissolve was sent to each member at least one month in advance of the meeting.
2. Upon dissolution of the corporation, all its property shall be turned over either to a successor charitable corporation or to another charitable organization, as the members may determine by resolution.

#### ARTICLE VII - INDEMNIFICATION OF DIRECTORS AND OTHERS

The Corporation shall, to the extent legally permissible, indemnify any person serving or who has served as a Director, officer, employee or other agent of the Corporation, against all liabilities and expenses, including amounts paid in satisfaction of judgments, in compromise or as fines and penalties, and counsel fees, reasonably incurred by him in connection with the defense or disposition of any action, suit, or other proceeding, in which he may be involved or with which he may be threatened, while serving or thereafter, by reason of his being or having been such a Director, officer, employee or agent, except with respect to any matter as to which he shall have been adjudicated in any proceeding not to have acted in good faith in the reasonable belief that his action was in the best interests of the Corporation, provided, however, that as to any matter disposed of by a compromise payment by such Director, officer, employee, or agent, pursuant to a consent decree or otherwise, no indemnification either for said payment or for any other expenses shall be provided unless:

1. Such Director, officer, employee or agent shall be found to have acted in the reasonable belief that his action was in the best interests of the Corporation after notice that the matter involves such indemnification by a disinterested majority of the Directors or members then in office and entitled to vote; or
2. In the absence of action by disinterested Directors or members, there has been obtained at the request of a majority of the Board of Directors then in office and entitled to vote an opinion in writing of independent legal counsel, other than counsel to the Corporation, to the effect that such Director, officer, employee or agent appears to have acted in good faith in the reasonable belief that his action was in the best interests of the Corporation.

Expenses, including counsel fees, reasonably incurred by any such Director, officer, employee or agent in connection with any such action may be paid from time to time by the Corporation in advance of the final disposition thereof upon receipt of an undertaking by such individual to repay the amounts so paid to the Corporation if it is ultimately determined that indemnification for such expenses is not authorized under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and this Article. The right of indemnification hereby provided shall not be exclusive of or affect any other rights to which any such Director, officer, employee or agent may be entitled. Nothing contained in this Article shall affect any rights to indemnification to which corporate personnel, other than such Directors, officers, employees or agents, may be entitled by contract or otherwise under law. As used in this Article, the terms "Director,"

"officer," "employee" and "agent" include their respective heirs, executors, administrators, and an "interested" Director, officer, employee or agent or member is one against whom, in such capacity, the proceedings in question or other proceedings on the same or similar ground are then pending.

This Article shall not limit the power of the Board of Directors to authorize the purchase and maintenance of insurance on behalf of any person who is or has been a Director, officer, employee or agent of the Corporation, or is or was serving at the request of the Corporation as a Director, officer, employee or agent of another organization in which it has an interest against any liability incurred by him in any such capacity, or arising out of his status as such, whether or not the Corporation would have the power to indemnify him against such liability under this Article.

## STANDING COMMITTEES

The Board positions listed under Article IV - 4, and their committees constitute the following Standing Committees of the Board. Their responsibilities and meeting frequency are noted below. However, should issues such as a conflict of interest, or a family emergency arise, other Directors, members, and/or alumnus of CNS may step in as needed at the discretion of the Director and the President of the Board.

### Executive Committee

- Director
- Treasurer
- President(s)
- Vice-President
- Any other member at the discretion of the Director

Meets as needed at the discretion of the director to plan the agenda for the monthly board meeting; also discusses the day-to-day management of the school and any issues that arise therefrom.

### Finance Committee

- Treasurer
- President
- Director

Meets as needed to consider fiscal management issues; reviews/prepares annual budget; makes recommendations to the Board concerning tuition, salary increases, fundraising activities, and other fiscal policy matters.

### Strategic Planning Committee/Building Advisory Committee

- President
- Director
- Physical Plant Chair

Other board and non-board members are strongly encouraged to participate Meets as needed for long range planning in order to provide continuity for the school.

Physical Plant

Physical Plant Chair  
Work Day Coordinator Director

Meets at beginning of year to establish maintenance and safety priorities and in the months prior to each workday; makes decisions and plans for routine maintenance and cleaning projects; presents plans and recommendations to Board for capital projects.

Nominating Committee

Parent Participation Chair  
Director  
President

Meets in spring to develop slate for new Board and to assist in assignment of parent participation jobs as needed.

Fundraising Committee

Development Chair  
Yellow Balloon Fair Chairs  
Director  
President  
Social Committee Chair

Meets bi-monthly or as needed to coordinate, plan and review fundraising activities.

Enrollment Committee

Enrollment Chair  
President  
Director

Meets as needed to comply with admissions and enrollment procedures spelled out in CNS handbook.

Hiring Committee (new Standing Committee)

President  
Director  
Vice President

Meets when staff openings arise to plan for and fulfill all aspects of hiring process, including advertising the position, interviewing and (when appropriate) setting up meetings/ with potential team members, arranging observations of candidate working with children, checking references, and determining salary offers (in consultation with Treasurer).

Social Committee (new Standing Committee)

Social Chair

## Social Committee members

Meets as needed to coordinate, plan, and review social events and activities throughout the school year that foster community building.