

CLAPBOARDTREE NURSERY SCHOOL

PARENT HANDBOOK

2011-2012

www.clapboardtree.com

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section	Page	
I.	1	History Philosophy
	2	Board of Directors Teaching Staff
II.	3	General Information: Birthdays, Class Schedules, Clothing, Discipline Policy, Outside Play, Enrichment Programs, Fundraising, Illness, Plan for Infectious Diseases, Procedures for Emergency, Dispensing Medication, Parent Involvement, Permission to Release Child, Snack, Snow, Pandemic Situation, "The School Day", Toileting and Tooth brushing .
III.	7	Communication with Your Child's Teachers: Newsletters, Parent/Teacher Conferences, Parent Communication and Concerns and Parent Phone Calls
IV.	8	School Policies Non-Discrimination Policy Tuition Policies: Payment Schedule, Refund of Tuition 2011-2012 and Termination and Suspension Policy.

I. HISTORY

Clapboardtree Nursery School (CNS) is a non-profit organization established on July 1, 1972, by parents who were interested in enriching their children's nursery school experience. CNS is a program for children that must be four by September 1st of the year in which they enter the program and may not turn six before May 1st of the year of enrollment.

CNS is proud to be a NAEYC (National Association of Education of Young Children) certified pre-school.

CNS is licensed by MA Dept of Early Education and Care.

Parents are welcome to contact EEC for information regarding the program's regulatory compliance history. The contact person is, Ann Cosgrove. Her number is 508-798-5180 x218

PHILOSOPHY

Clapboardtree Nursery School is dedicated to providing excellence in early childhood education. CNS believes in an early childhood experience rich with language, social, cognitive and motor opportunities. We strive to create a secure environment which supports the individual growth of each of our students.

Our objectives include:

- To be a safe and nurturing place for children to learn and grow.
- To respect the individual differences of its students and encourages them to grow through exploration and discovery.
- To respect cultural backgrounds of our families.
- To provide developmentally appropriate curriculum.
- To provide active learning experiences which support children at a range of developmental and cognitive levels.
- To form partnerships with the parents of our students.
- To make health and safety of our students an uncompromised priority.

The school programs offer experiences in dramatic play, art, movement, science, music, language and social activities into which its unit themes are carefully woven.

The director and staff feel strongly that parent and teachers working together can offer each child a strong foundation of positive self-esteem and trust. CNS encourages parents to share their child's education by visiting or working in the classroom, reading our weekly newsletters, or becoming story transcribers. Parents may also serve as members of the Board and on other school committees.

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is responsible for the smooth functioning and financial solvency of the school. It must provide competent personnel to fulfill the objectives and philosophy of the school. *The Board of Directors is comprised of parent volunteers consisting of the following positions: a president or 2 co-chairs; 2 Treasurers (Accounting; Tuition); 2 Registrars (Registrar; Assistant Registrar/Publicity); and 2 Special Events Coordinators (Special Event Coordinator; Assistant).*

Members of the Board of Directors are respectfully required to serve a minimum of two (2) years. Assignments are usually made in the early spring for the following year. The new board is voted into office annually at the September meeting.

Teaching Staff

We are very proud of the teaching staff at Clapboardtree. Our teachers all have college degrees, strong backgrounds in early childhood education and vast experience in preschool settings. Each lead teacher has been certified by the Massachusetts Office of Early Education and Care, formerly Office of Child Care Services. All teaching staff is trained in CPR and First Aid.

II. General Information

Birthdays

We celebrate birthdays in school with birthday certificates and singing. In the springtime, AM and PM classes have a special day for all of the children with summer birthdays to be honored and have a celebration in school.

The policy of CNS, learned from experience, is that birthday parties not emanate directly from school. Children who are invited understandably are excited, talk about the party, and often leave together. Those who are not included or cannot attend understandably feel left out and hurt. Thus we feel it best if all parties start after regular carpools have taken the children home.

We ask that all invitations be mailed directly to each child's house and not left in the children's cubbies.

Class Schedules

AM Classes:

The 3 hours class consists of 12 students meeting Monday through Thursday from 8:30 am to 11:30 am and is staffed by a lead teacher and an assistant teacher.

The extended class consists of 18 students meeting Monday through Thursday from 8:40 am to 12:30 pm and is staffed by two lead teachers.

The afternoon class consists of 12 students meeting Monday through Thursday from 11:45 pm to 2:45 pm and is staffed by a lead teacher and an assistant teacher.

Clothing

Children spend an active day at Clapboardtree. They will be involved in a variety of activities including art projects and outdoors play. Each of these activities may result in a spot or two on clothing. Since we do not want children to be overly concerned with the stain potential of a project, we ask that you send them in comfortable play clothing.

Discipline Policy

Classroom order is maintained at Clapboardtree through a calm manner of the teacher, who is fair, organized and consistent. When a child is showing inappropriate behavior, the teacher will remind him/her of the classroom rules. If the behavior continues, the teacher will redirect the child to another area in the classroom where he/she will be introduced to different activities. If the behavior becomes dangerous and/or disruptive, the parents will be contacted.

Corporal punishment will not be used, including spanking. 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, and no child will be punished for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet.

Children will never be confined to a swing or other piece of equipment for an extended period of time in lieu of supervision.

Time outs will not exceed one minute for each year of the child's age and will take place within an educator's view.

Outside Play

We believe that outdoor play is an important part of the school day. Thus, unless the weather is sufficiently inclement, we will be going outside on a daily basis. Please dress your child appropriately. In the winter, please remember boots and snow pants. Please label all outdoor clothing and footwear.

Enrichment Programs

We offer a variety of enrichment programs at Clapboardtree. These programs are meant to enhance your child's preschool experience. In addition to monthly visits from our own CNS Literacy Specialist, Kris Blue and Westwood Librarian Trudy Walsh, the program has also included Music and Creative Movement with Miss Elaine, Science with Miss Jessica from Mass Audobon,, Stranger Safety with local police officers, Dental Hygienist Lorraine from Dental Associates, Blue Moon Puppets and "Nature Jay" from Hale Reservation.

There is also a four-day enrichment program called Sprouts held in the spring following the close of school for the new students who will be entering CNS in the fall.

Special Events (formerly known as Fundraising)

Acknowledging that an excellent preschool program is costly, additional benefits are derived from our fundraising efforts. As a result of these efforts, our children have enjoyed a variety of programs, special events, and supplementary equipment. The special events/fundraising revenue is used primarily to deliver services to children in the classroom beyond that which is provided on a day-to-day basis.

Our main special event/fundraiser for the year is the annual Pumpkin Fest. This children's fair and raffle is held in October and is chaired by two board members. We depend on active parent participation on the various Pumpkin Fest subcommittees and on the day of the Pumpkin Fest to make the event a success. **This year the Pumpkin Fest will be held on Saturday, October 15, 2011.**

Illness

In consideration for the other children in the class, please keep your child at home at the first sign of cold, fever, cough or stomach ailment. Please call the school if your child will be absent.

PLAN FOR MANAGING INFECTIOUS DISEASE

Staff will take extra special precautions when children who are ill are diagnosed at the Center and when children who are mildly ill remain at the Center.

Children who exhibit symptoms of the following types of infectious diseases, such as gastro-intestinal, respiratory and skin or direct contact infections, may be excluded from the Center if it is determined that any of the following exist:

- the illness prevents the child from participating in the program activities or from resting comfortably;

- the illness results in greater care need that the child care staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children;

- the child has any of the following conditions: fever, unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficult breathing, or other signs of serious illness;

- diarrhea;

- vomiting two or more times in the previous 24 hours at home or once at the center;

- mouth sores, unless the physician states that the child is non-infectious;

- rash with a fever or behavior change until the physician has determined that the illness is not a communicable disease;

- purulent conjunctivitis (defined as pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow discharge, often with matted eyelids) until examined by a physician and approved for re-admission, with or without treatment;

- tuberculosis, until the child is non-infectious;

- impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment has started or all the sores are covered;

- head lice, free of all nits or scabies and free of all mites;

- strep infection, until 24 hours after treatment and the child has been without fever for 24 hours;

- many types of hepatitis are caused by viruses. The symptoms are so alike that blood tests are needed to tell them apart. In the U.S. the most common

types of hepatitis are A, B, and C. Types B and C are spread through blood and other body fluids. Type A, is spread through contaminated food and water or stool (feces). Fact sheets are available from the state Department of Public health. www.state.ma.us/dph

chicken pox, until last blister has healed over.

A child who has been excluded from child care may return after being evaluated by a physician, physician's assistant or nurse practitioner, and it has been determined that he/she is considered to pose no serious health risk to him or her or to the other children. Nevertheless, the day care center may make the final decision concerning the inclusion or exclusion of the child.

If a child has already been admitted to the Center and shows signs of illness (for example: a fever equal to or greater than 100.5 degrees by the oral or auxiliary route, a rash, reduced activity level, diarrhea, etc.), he/she will be offered their mat, cot, or other comfortable spot in which to lie down. If the child manifests any of the symptoms requiring exclusion (as listed above) or it is determined that it is in the best interests of the child that he/she be taken home, his/her parent will be contacted immediately and asked to pick the child up as soon as possible.

When a communicable disease has been introduced into the Center, parents will be notified immediately, and in writing by the Program Director. Whenever possible, information regarding the communicable disease shall be made available to parents. Program Directors shall consult the Child Care Health Manual for such information. DPH must be contacted when there is a reportable communicable disease in your program.

The program requires, on admission, a physician's certificate that each child has been successfully immunized in accordance with the Department of Public Health's recommended schedule. No child shall be required, under 102 CMR 7.00 to have any such immunization if his parent(s) object, in writing, on the grounds that it conflicts with their religious beliefs or if the child's physician submits documentation that such a procedure is contradicted. This must be maintained in the child's file. No child will be admitted into the program without the required documentation for immunizations. **(Childhood Lead screening must be done on all children; it is not considered an immunization).** The program will maintain a list of the children who have documented exemptions from immunizations and these children will be excluded from attending when a vaccine preventable disease is introduced into the program. The Massachusetts Immunization Program provides free childhood vaccines. The toll free telephone number is 1-888 658-2850.

TAHealthCarePolicies20040318

Procedures for Emergency and Illness

First Aid and Transportation to the Hospital

- 1) In the case of an emergency or illness (such as seizure, fall or serious cut), the teachers in charge will begin administration of emergency first aid while the assistant teacher or second teacher takes other children to another room or area or room. Both staff members should respond in a calm and reasonable manner.
- 2) Other staff will be alerted to send for assistance, be it the Program Director, social worker, or another person in the center.
- 3) One of the supervisory staff will contact the parent to come and pick up the child or, if response time is a factor, to have parent meet the child and accompanying staff at the emergency room of the hospital utilized in emergencies.
- 4) In the event a situation arises that is life threatening an ambulance will be called immediately. The parent will be called to meet the child and staff at the hospital. The teacher or designated staff will go with the child in the ambulance. The child's file will be taken, including permission forms and pertinent insurance information if the center has it.
- 5) If the parent comes to pick up the child and needs assistance, the teacher or program director may offer to drive to the hospital or to accompany the child.
- 6) When parents cannot be reached, those listed, as emergency contacts will be called as a further attempt to reach parents. In the event a parent cannot be reached immediately, a designated staff person will continue to attempt to reach parents. If necessary, the child will be transported to the hospital by ambulance and the child's whole file will be taken, including permission forms.

Emergency Plans

In case of a fire, natural disaster, or situation necessitating evacuation of the building, children will walk with their teachers to the Westwood High School. Parents will be notified to pick up children at the High School. Announcements may be made on local radio or by phone chain to be initiated by the CNS director, classroom teacher, or person(s) designated by the director or classroom teacher.

One of the teachers will take the attendance books, all the medications, the first aid kit, and the emergency folder that contains all emergency contacts for the children and the staff as well as a copy of the School's Health Care Policy.

In case of power outage, loss of heat or loss of water the school will be closed and parents will be called.

Plan for Administration of Medication

Prescription Medication

- A. Prescription medication must be brought to school in its original container and include the child's name, the name of the medication. The dosage. The number of times per and the number of days the medication is to be administered. This prescription label will be accepted as the written authorization of the physician.
- B. The Center will not administer any medication contrary to the directions on the label unless so authorized by written order of the child's physician.
- C. The parent must fill out he Authorization For Medication Form before the medication can be administered.
- D. Staff will give the prescription and non-prescription medications back to the parents at the end of the school year.

Non-Prescription Medication

- A. Non-prescription medication will be given only with written consent of the child's physician. The Center will accept a signed statement from the physician listing the medication(s), the dosage and criteria for its administration. This statement will be valid for one year from the date it was signed.
- B. Along with the written consent of the physician, the Center will also need written parental authorization. The parent must fill out the Authorization for Medication form, which allows the Center to administer the non-prescription medication in accordance with the written order of the physician. The statement will be valid for one year from the date it was signed.
- C. The Center will make every attempt to contact the parent prior to the child receiving the non-prescription medication unless the child needs medication urgently or when contacting the parent will delay appropriate care unreasonably.

Topical Ointments and Sprays

- A. Topical ointments and sprays such as petroleum jelly, sunscreen, and bug spray, etc. will be administered to the child with written parental permission. The signed statement from the parent will be valid for one year and include a list of topical non-prescription medication.
- B. When topical ointments and sprays are applied to wounds, rashes, or broken skin, the Center will follow its written procedure for non-prescription medication which includes the written order of the physician, which is valid for a year, and the Authorization for Medication form signed by parent.

All Medications

1. The parent at home must administer the first dosage, in case of an allergic reaction.
2. All medications must be given to the teacher directly by the parent.

3. All medications will be stored in the cabinet in front of the classroom, out of reach of the children. All medications that are considered controlled substances must be locked and kept out of reach of children.
4. The Lead Teacher will be responsible for the administration of medication. In her absence the Program Director will be responsible.
5. All Staff has gone on the EEC website and completed the online Medical Administration tutorial. Staff is evaluated annually on the procedures to administer medication.
6. The Center will maintain a written record of the administration of any medication (excluding topical ointments and sprays applied to normal skin) which will include the child's name, the time and date of each administration, the dosage, and the name of the staff person administering the medication. The completed record will become part of the child's file.

TAHealth Care Policies 20040318. Visit OCCS at www.qualitychildcare.org

Plan for Meeting Individual Children's Specific Health Needs

During intake, parents will be asked to record any known allergies on the face sheet. The face sheet will be updated yearly.

All allergies or other important medical information will be posted in each classroom and by the director's desk. Allergies list will be updated as necessary-new children enroll, unknown allergies become known.

All staff and substitutes will be informed by the Program Director so that children can be protected from exposure to foods, chemicals, pets or other materials to which they are allergic.

The names of children with allergies that may be life threatening (ie-bee stings) will be posted in conspicuous locations with specific instructions if an occurrence were to happen. The Program Director will be responsible for making sure that staff receives appropriate training to handle emergency allergic reactions.

Visit OCCS at www.qualitychildcare.org

Parent Involvement

Parents are warmly encouraged to visit and participate in our program. Each teaching team has a calendar where you can schedule a date and time to visit the program. If you have a special talent to share, that is wonderful, but it certainly is not a prerequisite to joining us.

Permission to Release Child to Other Than Parent or Regular Caregiver

If your child is going home with a different person than he/she regularly does, we **must** have a **dated note signed by you** giving permission for your child to leave with the specifically named person. Please be sure to advise the teacher at drop-off time that you are handing in such a note. This is the only way we can allow your child to be dismissed with someone other than those people named on the car pool authorization list. Parents may update their *Authorization and Consent Form* at any time.

Snack

All Classes: Children should bring a lunchbox with a snack and a drink to school each day. Children with food sensitivities can feel just like the rest of the group since everyone will have his or her own food.

Because of food allergies, some life threatening, **CNS is a nut and peanut-free school.** Please check the labels of snacks before you send them in to be sure that they **do not** contain peanuts or nut products.

We strongly encourage nutritious snacks in reusable containers whenever possible. We will be talking about healthy foods and recycling in school and this will be a fine extension of those concepts.

Snow Policy

Clapboardtree Nursery School will close for a snow day when the Westwood Public School System has canceled school. In addition, there may be a time when Westwood Public Schools are in session and because Clapboardtree's parking lot and walkway are impassable due to snow and ice that we will decide independently to close school. We will consider adding days into our regular school calendar to reconcile any days missed for snow.

If Westwood Public Schools are delayed for 1 hour, the AM class will be delayed by ½ hour (AM 9:00; 9:10) but will end at their regular time. PM class will meet as usual. When surrounding towns cancel afternoon Kindergarten programs, your child's teacher will contact you if school is cancelled.

Pandemic Situation

In a pandemic situation, when 50% of the staff is not able to meet the ratios required by the EEC, the school will be closed and treated like a snow day.

“The School Day” – Nursery School AM and PM

*For safety reasons, all traffic dropping off or picking up children at Clapboardtree Nursery School must exit by the Clapboardtree Street driveway only. **Please do not exit from the Nahatan Street entrance.***

Arrival: AM and PM Classes: When you arrive with your children at CNS, please accompany them into school through the designated door (outside the playground gate for the AM classes and inside the playground gate for PM). Each child has his or her own cubby in the back room, where belongings and knapsacks may be kept. We require that each child carry a knapsack to hold the materials from their cubby each day.

Dismissal:

All Classes: Enter through the Clapboardtree Street entrance, and proceed in front of the Parish Hall and circle the Hall and wait at the upper playground gate for children to be escorted to your automobile.

All children will be given a yellow folder for important notices and newsletters that will be put in each child’s cubby on Thursday. This folder should be returned to the cubby on Monday of the following week.

Toileting

Please let us know if your child is still in diapers or pull-ups. If your child should wet his/her pull-up, a teacher will take the child to the bathroom where they will be given a new pull-up to change into in the stall. After the child has changed, the teacher will properly dispose of the wet pull-up. If a child has a bowel movement in their pull-up, a parent will be called to change it. In the rare event that a parent cannot be reached, appropriate provisions will be on hand to change your child.

Toilet Training status is NOT an eligibility requirement for enrollment

Tooth Brushing Policy

As of January 2010, the state requires children that stay in a program for more than four hours be required to brush their teeth. This policy will apply when a child stays for Lunch Bunch (when it is offered). The parent will send in their child’s toothbrush and paste that day along with their lunch.

III. Communication with Your Child's Teachers

Newsletters

We will communicate with you throughout the school year in a variety of ways. One of our most effective tools is our weekly newsletter. These sheets will be placed in each child's yellow folder on Thursday. The newsletters will describe activities going on within the classroom. It will also include the names of special visitors and special events. We try to keep parents up to date on theme topics that are being covered in the classroom and thus keep our bond a strong one throughout the year. The director will also send a brief email newsletter once a week with photos of the children engaged in various activities at our school. We hope that these various means of communicating with you will help you feel an integral part of your child's year at CNS.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent/Teacher conferences will be held twice (November and April) during the school year. We look forward to these planned opportunities to meet with each of you. Please know, however, that at any point throughout the year, if you have a concern, we are always willing to set up a conference at a mutually convenient time. We look at your child's preschool experience as a joint venture with us at Clapboardtree. Thus, the more we all communicate, the more we gain in our efforts to provide your child with a quality preschool experience. We want this to be a happy and worthwhile year for each child enrolled and we consider parents' input of vital importance to that end. For information on CNS referral services policies, please contact the CNS Director, Kris Blue.

Parent Communication and Concerns

At Clapboardtree Nursery School, our intention is to exchange information as fully and freely as possible. We encourage you to ask questions, communicate concerns and provide regular feedback about our program. Questions and concerns about your child, or about the classroom, should be directed to the classroom teacher. If a solution to the concern cannot be worked out, parents are free to meet with the director to discuss the concern. The director will work to provide a reasonable solution to any issue after communicating with all concerned parties. An Executive committee of the school board will be available to hear parent concerns after all previous attempts at resolution have failed.

Phone Calls

Teachers are available to take phone calls at school 15 minutes before school starts. During the school day, the answering machine will generally be left on. If you want to leave a message for us, please know that this avenue is available. However, should you need to get through to the school in person, please call, hang up after one ring, and then call right

back again. Through this system, we will know that your call is urgent and thus a teacher will pick up the phone. If we are outside, we may not hear the phone. Please try us again in fifteen minutes. The teachers' and director's phone numbers are written on the class lists and were sent to you with the paperwork for your child to start school.. Should you need or wish to speak with them at home, please know that you are encouraged to do so.

IV. School Policies

Non-Discrimination Policy

Clapboardtree Nursery School is a non-profit school and does not discriminate in providing services to children and their families on the basis of race, religion, cultural heritage, political beliefs, national origin, disability, sexual preference, or marital status.

Tuition Policies

Payment Schedule

As a convenience to our families, Clapboardtree offers a payment schedule as indicated in the registration materials. If you need to modify this schedule, please contact the Tuition Treasurer. A \$25 fee may be assessed on late payments, and a \$25 fee will be assessed on any returned checks. All payments must be sent to CNS, 340 Clapboardtree Street, Westwood, MA 02090, or deposited in the tuition box located inside the cubby room at the school.

Refund of Tuition 2010-2011

Any registered student, who withdraws between the date of the lottery and 2 weeks prior to the commencement of school may request, in writing, a refund of their tuition payment, less the \$200 tuition deposit. The tuition deposit is non-refundable. If the vacancy is filled and after the requisite tuition is received, the refund will be granted. If the vacancy is not filled, no refund of tuition paid to date will be given.

Any registered student, who withdraws between the 2 weeks prior to school and the 1st day of school and any registered student who withdraws before or after the commencement of the school year forfeits any fees or tuition paid to date.

Clapboardtree reserves the right, in its absolute and sole discretion, to decide whether to fill any vacancy. Any withdrawal must be in writing and mailed to CNS, 340 Clapboardtree Street, Westwood, MA 02090.

Termination and Suspension Policy

When a family wishes to withdraw a child from the program, the parents must send a Letter of Intent to the Director, giving a minimum of two weeks notice. The Executive Board will review the request and the letter will be left in the child's file.

When the school needs to terminate or suspend a child from the program, these procedures will be followed:

1. Teachers will document concerns.
2. The parents must be notified by phone and in writing of the circumstances and reasons for termination.
3. The Executive Board will be notified and will be given an opportunity to vote on the matter.
4. The parents will be given ample opportunity to discuss termination with the Executive Board. The parents will receive information regarding referral for other services, if necessary.
5. Documentation of and all correspondence relating to the termination will be kept in the child's file. Copies will be made available to the parents.

We hope this Parent Handbook has been helpful to you. Please don't hesitate to call the school 781-326-5405, if you have any questions or comments. We look forward to working with you and your child.