



Village Nursery School

At Cornwall Presbyterian Church

Family Manual

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Overview

A1. Village Nursery School has developed policies and procedures that are essential to ensuring that all families, and children, have the same understanding and expectations about what happens regarding the preschool service provided. These policies and procedures are used to support daily practices and decision-making, and are developed to uphold the best interest, safety, and needs of children in care. In addition, the policies and procedures set out by Village Nursery School reflect the Care Licensing Regulations outlined by NYAEYC. These procedures will be reviewed annually to ensure they reflect the most current information and requirements.

A2. We believe that preschool marks a time of beginnings, making friends, and learning and growing cognitively and emotionally. Our focus here at Village Nursery School is to ensure that each child experiences a positive start, which is essential for later school success. Our goal is for children to love learning; regardless of age, every day a child has new experiences that foster their curiosity, creativity, and development. We will strive to ensure that your child feels that Village Nursery School is a safe, fun, and inviting place where these types of learning experiences can occur.

B. Program Plan

These activities are proposed in order to provide consistency and routine for children in the preschool. While routine and predictability of daily schedules is important, there will also be flexibility in order to respond to the changing needs and interests of the children in care.

The activities and programs below are carefully planned in order to provide the appropriate balance between active and sedentary periods, both individual and group work, and child initiated/adult directed learning opportunities. Here is an example of day-to-day activities offered by Village Nursery School :

Arrival/Attendance

- Children dropped off and sign in sheet completed (includes signature, date and time).
- Children will be encouraged to put away their own coat, shoes, lunch etc., in the appropriate spot (promoting the development of self- help skills)

Center Time:

- Children in care will engage in center activities that are varied to meet different developmental needs. Some activities will include: literacy centers in order to promote the development of language skills and phonemic awareness, math centers to foster the development of spatial awareness, sequencing, ordering, classifying, etc., and sensory activities that encourage and nurture exploration through the senses (touch, smell, sight, and hearing). Opportunities for both independent and group centers will be provided.
- All center activities will be developed to increase children's motivation to learn, self-efficacy, and will be provided in a purposeful and meaningful way that is both engaging and appropriately challenging.
- The environment will be set up in a way that children have the space to safely explore and designed to be visually appealing to help nurture a curiosity of the surroundings.

Outdoor Play (weather pending)

- Outdoor activities will include: walks, free play (playground), and organized games. All outdoor activities will help promote teamwork, working together, following rules, safety habits, and the development of both fine and gross motor skills.
- If it is an “indoor day” due to inclement weather, children will take part in either: yoga/ stretching, musical dance, or another indoor physical activity.

Bathroom Routine/Snack Time

- Children will go to the bathroom, wash hands, and eat their morning snack.
- Fun and engaging hand washing songs will be taught to encourage good hand washing practice.
- Step stools and toilet adaptors will be provided if necessary.

10:15-11:00 Activity: craft or theme

- During craft time, children in care will follow instructions to complete a craft. Crafts will be displayed in the daycare before being sent home. Children will be encouraged to appreciate the work of others.
- Every month we will have a theme. Some themes may include: family, healthy foods, Halloween, animals, weather, etc. These themes will nurture curiosity, intellectual growth, and language development (increased vocabulary) pertaining to a certain topic.

Circle Time/Story/Music

- Circle Time will be an opportunity for children in care to engage and talk with others in a more structured way. Turn taking as speaker and listener will be a focus, as well as sharing ideas, feelings, and understanding the thoughts and emotions of others. Effective communication and social development will be a focus here.
- During story time, children will listen to a story. Sometimes there will be a follow up activity to help deepen understanding.
- Music is an important component of learning, so it is valuable to expose children to a variety of music and sing along!

Pick Up Begins, Clean Up

- Children picked up and sign out sheet completed (includes signature, date and time).
- Children will be encouraged to put on their own coat, shoes, etc., prior to leaving (promoting the development of self- help skills).
- End of the day story and song

C. Staff

C1. Director: The Director, Melissa McHugh of Village Nursery School holds a Masters degree from Lesley University in Early Childhood Education with a further credential in creative arts in learning in early education. Her bachelors degree is in English and Theater performance. Melissa has been a teacher for twenty-five years and taught in both the New York City and Boston private school sectors prior to our tenure at Village Nursery School in 2015. She was raised in the Bronx and moved to Monroe fifteen years ago with her husband and three children. She is an advocate for children and cherishes with energy, curiosity, and uniqueness of each student in her care.

C2. The teaching staff at Village Nursery School have undergone an extensive interview and background check, hold First Aid/CPR certification and are required to take further workshops to develop professionally. All Head Teachers hold either a Masters Degree in Early Childhood education and/or teacher certification. Assistant teachers have taken credits/classes in early childhood education.

C5. Vacation/Holiday closures are attached and follow the Cornwall Central School, District. Village Nursery School will also coincide with inclement weather delays and closings of the district.

D. Policies & Procedures

Village Nursery School policies have been carefully considered and outlined in accordance with the Office for Children and NYAEYC. These policies will help guide Village Nursery School in devising its contract, and serve as the foundation of establishing this written “family handbook”.

D1. Behavioral guidance: Guidance and Treatment Of Children Policies have been derived from the division of Family Services. And the Office for Children. These policies will be developmentally appropriate to the age, and maturity level, of the child, and conveyed to parents in a written statement so they are well aware of the policies set forth by Village Nursery School.

“It is our goal at Village Nursery School to guide children’s behavior so that they develop self-discipline, responsibility, and positive capabilities and attitudes.”

Village Nursery School will:

- always gain children's attention in a respectful manner
- offer appropriate choices which empower children
- use proximity and touch as effective guidance and intervention
- be alert and observe children during activities to better enable early intervention, if and when needed
- model and discuss good problem-solving skills
- use positive reinforcement when good choices are made
- have natural and predictable consequences for behavior
- kindly remind children of limits and safety guidelines
- acknowledge feelings of children in care, and always be respectful of them
- re-direct behavior when necessary to avoid potential conflict
- treat each child as a unique individual
- understand that a child's behavior often reflects their level of development

Under no circumstance will any child be:

- physically abused
- degraded or disrespected by the licensee or another child
- separated from the group without adult supervision
- deprived of meals, snacks, rest, or necessary use of the washroom
- subjected to corporal punishment (such as spanking)

D2. Payment Agreement: Village Nursery School is a subsidiary of Cornwall Presbyterian Church. VNS/CPC will strive to establish and maintain a trusting business-like relationship with parents and guardians. It is our goal to ensure that our care facility has sound business practices, and financial policies, so that all persons are treated fairly and all policies are clearly understood. In order to prevent any misunderstanding or conflicts surrounding financial issues, VNS/CPC will clearly outline financial policies. This will be done by communicating these financial policies and having parents/guardians sign the contract in which these policies are clearly outlined. The contract will include:

- monthly payment policies
- late fee policies
- amount of notice required if a child is to be withdrawn from the facility
- preschool vacation and holiday time
- outline for what happens if/when a child is sick

D3. Safe release of children: It is essential for the safety of children in care that Village Nursery School has records, and written consent, pertaining to the safe release of children. The preschool will ensure the safe release of children by:

- having a written document signed by the parent which clearly outlines release of a child to someone other than the parent (name, driver's license number, and photograph will be required)
- including a record of any identified persons not permitted access to a child, and take reasonable steps to prevent that person accessing the child
- having emergency phone numbers available if the parent or guardian cannot be reached
- having sign-in and sign-out sheets

In the event that a child's parent/guardian does come to pick up his/her child, emergency contacts will be notified immediately. In addition, if the person responsible for picking up a child seems incapable of providing safe care, Village Nursery School will not permit the child to leave. It is the preschool's responsibility to ensure children are leaving with someone who is responsible, sound, and in good condition to provide proper care.

D4. Emergency plan and procedure: In the event of an un-foreseen emergency, Village Nursery School must ensure the safety of children in care by having well-developed emergency plans in place. Emergency preparedness is key for ensuring safety of children in care.

Village Nursery School will:

- have evacuation plan posted and visible to all
- have emergency exits clear
- have an up-to-date First Aid kit including all necessary and all required items
- telephone numbers for parents, or emergency contacts
- Bi-monthly fire drills are discussed and practiced
- emergency drill is practiced once every year
- first aid kit, cell phone, and contact information are on hand whenever the preschool premises are left (going on a walking trip for example)

Emergency plans will be discussed with children in care in a non-threatening or scary manner. However, the importance of these plans will be addressed.

D5. Health & Medication Procedure: At Village Nursery School, promoting health and hygiene, and preventing the spread of illness, is of utmost importance. Therefore, we will have a written set of policies pertaining to children who are ill when they arrive at the facility, or who becomes ill while in care. These policies will help serve as a framework for making decisions and understanding these decisions for both teachers and parents/guardians. It is imperative for parents/guardians to understand the procedures when a child is ill, and how the preschool will handle these situations as well. Village Nursery School will ensure the following:

- all immunizations are current
- ensure frequent and proper hand washing, especially after the Bathroom and before consumption of food or drink (step stools provided)
- diapering station will be sanitized (available on the main floor of the church)
- bathroom is cleaned and disinfected prior to drop off, mid-day, after dismissal
- children in care are taught to cover their mouths when sneezing or coughing
- the daycare (shelves, toys, etc.,) will be professionally cleaned and sanitized weekly and sanitized daily.
- a list of serious illnesses, symptoms or conditions that will serve as grounds for excluding a child from attending the preschool, and criteria that must be met before the child can resume in care
- Parents/caregivers of a child who become ill in care will be notified
- and asked to come to pick up the child immediately.
- records of any illness will be kept on file
- have a procedure in place for contacting a physician or ambulance if a parent or alternative caregiver cannot be reached
- notify the local Medical Health Officer within 24 hours if a child in care has a reportable communicable disease

D6. Pick Up Policy: Village Nursery School is committed to providing quality care for children during the designated hours. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to ensure that children are dropped off, and picked up at the designated time. It is important that these times are respected, and we appreciate your attention regarding this matter.

D7. Toileting/Potty Training: We are more than happy to assist you in the process of potty training. We will work together to ensure that our approach and vocabulary is consistent with yours. We ask that the potty training process be started at the onset of the three year old program.

D8: Active Play: Young children require movement and opportunities for physical exercise and development; in fact they thrive on it. At Village Nursery School we provide developmentally appropriate active play activities each day for a minimum of 25 minutes. Some of these active play activities include: outdoor play, skipping, Go Go Stop, Follow the Leader, nature walks, silly to calm yoga, music and dance, and playing with objects such as balls of various shapes, textures, and sizes.

E. Communication

E1. Here at Village Nursery School we believe that communication between the preschool and home environment is extremely important. We practice an open-door policy and welcome conversations. The staff at Village Nursery School asks that you pass on information, at any time, that would be relevant to your child's care. Likewise, we will communicate with parents any positives or areas of concern that the children may have faced during the day. We will strive to maintain open communication with you at all times.

E2. There could be times that you have a concern about either the program or a specific event that has occurred. In this event, Village Nursery School encourages parents/guardians to handle conflict in a constructive manner. If, at any point, you have concerns please speak directly to the director of the center. We are here to help you work through these concerns, and keep in mind that we are all here in the best interests of your child.

E3. Village Nursery School will send out a newsletter and calendar of activities at the beginning of each month. This newsletter will convey information pertaining to the month, such as significant dates and themes. Please review this newsletter each month so you are well prepared for each day.

F. Clothing Requirements

F1. It is imperative that children come to preschool prepared for the day's events. It is important that children are dressed for the weather, time of year, special occasion, etc. There will be days during the month that we may request specific attire. An example of this may be Pajama Day. Aside from special days, it is important that children are dressed adequately. Below are some examples that can be used as a general guideline:

Winter:

- Mittens
- Winter Jacket
- Long pants
- Long sleeve t-shirt
- Sweater

Summer:

- Sunscreen
- Hat
- Sandals
- Shorts
- T-Shirt
- Sneakers

F2. Village Nursery School requires an extra set of clothing be provided to the preschool in case of emergency. This will be kept in the classroom and sent home to be changed out seasonally.

G. Coronavirus Policy

We are so very excited to be able to reopen our facility following phase 1 of the pandemic.

We do not recommend children with underlying health conditions and concerns attend child care programs during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Please note the new Covid-19 Health and Wellness policy, which applies to all staff and children within the childcare facility.

It is imperative that we consider the recent global pandemic seriously and take necessary precautionary measures in order to keep staff and your child/children safe. Given the ever-changing climate with regards to Covid-19, please note that the policies and procedures around this can quickly and change. Please also note that our ability to remain open may change suddenly, and without notice, as this may be ordered by our licensing officer in response to provincial and/or state orders, or for reasons we believe it is required due to the safety of our children and staff.

We will allow one family member at a time to drop off and pick up children. If you should see another parent, we ask that you maintain your distance. If you see more than two parents, we ask that you wait outside. We will also provide a bottle of hand sanitizer near the entrance, and we will require you to use it upon entering the daycare. We also ask that children's toys remain home.

On arrival, the following procedures may take place:

- children may have their temperature checked
- parents may be asked to sign a statement form indicating that their child is symptom free
- you may be asked to leave the facility in a rather hastily manner if more than one or two other families arrive, or if a parent/guardian is waiting
- your child's backpack and lunch bag may be wiped down and sanitized

The childcare facility will take these additional, yet necessary, steps in order to have as safe and as clean of an environment as possible:

- frequent sterilization of door handles, tables, chairs, toys, and bathroom areas as many times per day as possible
- no shared items passed around in circle or story time
- toys are sanitized every day after use
- limiting the amount of toys accessible in order to make cleaning easier
- strict implementation of sickness policy