



**A Handbook for the Cooperative Nursery School
at the Unitarian Society of Germantown**

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INTRODUCTION: THE CNS MISSION STATEMENT

Children at the Cooperative Nursery School create and engage in a rich developmentally appropriate curriculum and child-centered environment. Our school seeks to establish an involved community of diverse families who work together to provide the best early learning experience for each child. Through play and work, children develop a mastery and ownership of their learning by actively participating and collaborating within this inclusive community. Children are supported and nurtured as their curiosity and interactions lead to discovery, problem solving skills, and independence. Through communication, respect, love and empathy, children learn that they are valued members of the community and can practice values of equity and justice toward others. *(SEPTEMBER 2019)*

DIVERSITY STATEMENT

We affirm that bias exists everywhere and that marginalized communities suffer disproportionately. At the Cooperative Nursery School, we strive to create an anti-biased culture where we are welcoming, inclusive and a safe environment for our families, students and teachers. We encourage awareness and celebration of our unique characteristics like race, ethnicity, body shape, LGBTQIA identity, socioeconomic, religious, family configuration, or neurodivergence. We have intentionally embedded organizational structures that engage us in these efforts: an anti-bias education curriculum and the DEI Committee. Within these embedded structures, we foster the development of confident self-identity, celebrate cultural variety, examine bias & negative judgements, and develop conflict-resolution skills and enact accountability when hurt is identified. *(MAY 2021)*

A COOPERATIVE NURSERY SCHOOL

The Cooperative Nursery School is a non-profit, parent owned and operated preschool. It strives to maintain a racially, culturally, and economically integrated student population. Educationally, the school functions under a full-time Director/Lead Teacher, a second full-time Lead Teacher, and two Assistant Teachers. The school's operations are supported by the Administrative Coordinator.

Cooperative is the operative word in the name of our nursery school. Parents are responsible for every aspect of the operation of the school.

- We make up the Board of Directors ("Board"), which hires the teachers, sets tuition, and makes the policy of the school.
- We coordinate the publicity, the fundraising, and work with the nursery school staff to support the recruitment and registration of students.
- We manage the budget and pay the bills. We work side by side with the teachers every day, supervising and playing with students, facilitating projects, and sharing our talents and skills.
- We clean the facilities, maintain the outdoor space, and prepare the snacks.

When, as parents, we choose this school, we not only take responsibility for our children's preschool education, we participate in it. Each of us is an integral part of the school. Our thoughts and talents are sought, appreciated, and ultimately woven into the functioning of the school. We all have a right to see

that the school lives up to our expectations, and in turn, we each have a responsibility to bring as much of ourselves to the job of cooperating as necessary to ensure the success of the school.

THE BENEFITS OF A COOPERATIVE NURSERY SCHOOL

When the Cooperative Nursery School first opened in 1967, the benefits of being cooperative were pointed out as three-fold: for the parent, for the child, and for the community. Parents would learn and put into practice ways of enjoying their preschool child. Children would have regular association with adults other than their parents and a new sense of camaraderie focused outside the home. In this way, children would be introduced to a school environment with their parents. Together the family would begin the child's educational experience. Cooperative parents would have a strong sense of responsibility and group cooperation, which would carry over into every aspect of community life. The nursery school was conceived as a meeting place where all segments of the community can work together and get to know each other better. Though there have been many changes in the nursery school - and in our society - during the past 50 plus years, these benefits hold still true.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF OUR COOPERATIVE NURSERY SCHOOL

As cooperating parents, we are each expected and obligated to do our fair share. This responsibility is part of choosing the Cooperative Nursery School. Every family is expected to co-op on a monthly basis, and to support and act as assistants to the teachers. This responsibility must be fulfilled by a parent or family member. The typical family co-ops approximately twice a month. In addition to co-opping during school hours, each family must choose a job: serving on the board, holding a parent job position, or completing weekend cleaning duties (see General Requirements for more details). All families are required to participate in the Fall and Spring Work Days, as well as fundraising events throughout the year.

SCHOOL ORGANIZATION

The Board of Directors oversees the operation of the nursery school. The Board meets one evening per month. All parents are welcome and encouraged to attend board meetings. As a co-oping parent, you are invited and welcome to share ideas and opinions about issues concerning our school.

ELECTED POSITIONS

- **Board Chairperson:** The Board Chairperson schedules and conducts monthly board meeting and oversees all Board operations.
- **Parent Chairperson:** The Parent Chairperson coordinates all parent meetings and workshops, works with parent representatives in assisting jobholders and addressing concerns of school families.
- **Secretary:** The Secretary takes minutes at all meetings, posts them in the binder kept in the Parent Resource Center, and maintains the list serv.
- **Banking Treasurer:** The Banking Treasurer oversees school finances, manages school funds, makes financial forecasts, purchases insurance for the board and school, completes all tax related activities for the school, and reports the school's financial status to the Board.
- **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI) Chairperson:** The DEI Chair will recruit members to work on the committee's ongoing goals: offering anti-bias training opportunities to the CNS community (teachers, families and students); promoting celebration of cultural traditions; addressing and resolve concerns of marginalization, exclusion or harm; providing feedback about the CNS anti-bias educational curriculum; and assessing and creating organizational structures, policies and procedures that lead to a more anti-bias environment. The DEI Chair encourages collaboration and serves as a liaison with board members, staff, and parent job holders to ensure that the school's DEI objectives are being met. The DEI Chair is a voting member on the Board where the results of the committee meetings are reported, and also serves on the financial assistance committee. *(MAY 2021)*
- **Circle Representatives** (one for each circle): The Circle Representatives represent families and bring any issues or concerns to the Board, represent the Board to the families in their circles, serve as deputy fundraisers, assist the Parent Chair as necessary or requested, assist in organizing the fall potluck, and assist as needed with special events.
- **Past Parent Advisor:** The Past Parent Advisor is a past parent of the Cooperative Nursery School who has not had a child in attendance in at least two years. This person provides historical reference and guidance as a voting member of the school's board. *(JUNE 2020)*

ELECTIONS

Elections are held in two stages. In the spring, the Board Chairperson, the Parent Chairperson, the Secretary, the Banking Treasurer, and the Diversity Chairperson are elected. The Downstairs Circle Representative is elected in the spring and the Upstairs Circle Representative is elected to join the board in the fall. An election for any slots not yet filled on the Board is also held in the fall. Additionally, the Director reports to and attends all Board meetings as a non-voting member.

PARENT JOBS

There are also Parent Jobs, which are not board positions. Parents volunteer for these jobs in the spring or fall. Parent Job Holders are asked to submit monthly reports to the Board via e-mail in advance of the monthly meeting. The Admissions Coordinator and Fundraising Coordinators may need to attend several Board meetings.

- **Admissions Marketing Representative:** The Admissions Marketing Representative represents the school to prospective families, hosts an open house in the fall and play dates in late January, and organizes booths at the Mt. Airy Village Fair, Germantown Second Saturday, and other events as appropriate. The Admissions Marketing Representative also coordinates print and other media advertising.
- **Property Manager:** The Property Manager coordinates Fall and Spring Work Days, wood chip acquisition and spreading, and general repairs and improvements. She/He/They also purchase the cleaning supplies. The Property Manager is required to stay within the allotted budget, unless there is some unforeseen emergency. Timely decisions then need to be made in coordination with the Director, Board Chair and Banking Treasurer.
- **Snack Purchaser:** The Snack Purchaser buys and organizes the food for daily snack. We have an account with Weavers Way Co-op which is where most of our food is ordered/purchased. Other items may be purchased elsewhere based on the quality, availability, and price as researched by the Snack Purchaser. The important thing is to be aware of our inventory, never to run out, and work to stay within budget. There is a list of basic supplies to use for guidelines.
- **Scheduler:** The Scheduler makes and distributes the co-oping schedule based on information provided by via the Co-oping Worksheet. This is done four times a year (September, October-December, January-March, and April-June). He/She/They also schedule weekend cleanings.
- **Web Coordinator:** The Web Coordinator manages the <http://www.cooperativenurseryschool.org/> website, making update recommendations as appropriate. This person is responsible for uploading the current calendar, parent resources, staff and board profiles, contact information, legal disclosures, and other content as needed.
- **Fundraising Coordinators:** The Fundraising Coordinators plan and direct fundraising events through the school year to sustain our Scholarship Fund. The Circle Representatives work closely with the Fundraising Coordinators to assist in planning, supervising and recruiting volunteers. Examples of past fundraisers are The CNS Hop and our annual Spring Fling. New ideas and energy are forever being sought!
- **Miscellaneous Jobs:** Sometimes families take on particular projects, such as wood chip spreading or taking care of nursery school animals. The size of these undertakings determines whether it excuses a family from weekend cleanings. That determination is made by the Property Manager and the Board.

BENEFITS

In exchange for the extra work holding a board position or job entails, weekend cleaning assignments are not required. Board positions and jobs last for the course of the school year. Should a board

member or job holder fail to uphold their responsibilities and/or resign from their job, they will be required to make-up the three weekend cleaning assignments (12 hours) required of all other families.

EMERGENT CURRICULUM AND THE EXPERIENCES OF LEARNING

The curriculum at the Cooperative Nursery School is based upon the understanding that children learn via meaningful engagement with their social and physical environments. At CNS, in accordance with the National Association of Education for Young Children, we embrace the belief that play is the appropriate vehicle through which children develop cognitively, physically, socially and emotionally. In keeping with our educational philosophy, CNS creates a learning environment in which children can pursue their own interests, allowing their play to evolve and their interests to emerge.

By respecting and supporting children's inherent desire to learn, we in turn nurture their self-confidence as learners and their efficacy as competent members of a community. In all aspects of the curriculum, we invite learners to develop the skills and understandings that are essential to kindergarten readiness in an authentic manner that honors the ways that young children learn best. We believe that "If it hasn't been in the hand or body, it can't be in the brain," (Bev Bos) and we therefore endeavor to provide many opportunities for hands-on, community centered learning (JUNE

2019)

CORNERSTONES OF EMERGENT CURRICULUM

- While framed by the teacher, it is child initiated, allowing for collaborations between children and teachers giving everyone a voice.
- The teacher takes on the role of facilitator and, using observations, brings to children the opportunity to discover more, dig deeper, and construct further knowledge.
- Curriculum is not pre-set, but is a process of inviting and sustained learning. It is dynamic, neither stagnant nor repetitive.

The Emergent Curriculum model has been essential to our creation of such an environment. The Emergent Curriculum is closely connected in practice with the Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education. At the heart of the Reggio Model are children who are creative and capable, and a culture that is family and community centered. At CNS, we integrate these two complementary educational approaches in order to create a vibrant school where children's sense of wonder is enhanced, curiosity is stimulated, feelings are respected, opportunities for expression are encouraged, and where community is valued.

CORNERSTONES OF THE REGGIO EMILIA APPROACH

- **The image of the child:** All children have preparedness, potential, curiosity; they have interest in relationships, in constructing their own learning, and in negotiating with everything the social and physical environment brings to them. Children develop via their interactions with peers, adults, things in the world, and symbols.

- **The many languages of children:** Children’s use of many media in various explorations is not a separate part of the curriculum but an integral part of the development of symbolic expression. Music, movement, paint, clay, drawing, experiments, dance literature, building, nature, cooking, games, and dramatic play are integral to the children’s learning processes.
- **The teacher as researcher:** Teachers, in partnership with other teachers and staff, engage in continuous discussion and interpretation of their work and the work of the children. These exchanges provide on-going reflection on practice and a catalyst for curriculum development. Teachers see themselves as researchers preparing documentation of their work with children whom they also consider as researchers.
- **The power of documentation:** Transcriptions of children’s remarks and discussions, photographs of their activity, and representations of their thinking and learning are carefully studied. They help determine the direction in which the work and experiences with the children will go.
- **The parent as partner:** Parent participation is considered essential and takes many forms. Parents play an active part in their child’s learning experiences and help ensure the welfare of all children in the school. The ideas and skills that the families bring to the school and, even more important, the exchange of ideas between parents and teachers, are highly valued. Families are viewed as an intrinsic element of collegiality and as the integration of different wisdoms.
- **The space as the third teacher:** The design and use of the space, and the presentation of the materials encourage engagement, communication and exploration.

DEVELOPMENTAL DIFFERENCES

As professionals in the development and education of young children, the teachers create curriculum that supports your child’s development cognitively, socially, emotionally, and physically. Development is a variable process, and children progress in different developmental domains at different rates. We will observe and document your child’s learning and consider it through the lens of developmental milestones. We will share our observations with you. Should concerns arise, we will communicate them to you in a timely manner. Together we will formulate an action plan that will include identifying educational and behavioral strategies to support and further your child’s development. Such a plan may include recommendations for assessment or consultation with a pediatrician, early childhood specialists, or other professionals. The teachers and Director will advocate for your child while keeping the needs of all CNS students balanced. We strive to meet the needs of all the children enrolled yet realize that not every school is the right fit for every child. In the event that the determination is made that CNS is not the best school for a particular child, this information will be respectfully communicated and CNS personnel will, to the best of our ability, assist parents in finding a more appropriate placement. If you ever have any questions or concerns about your child’s development, please share your concerns with your child’s teachers. We want to partner with you to mutually support your child’s development.

Due to the limited size of the school, we may not be able to host all requested support staff simultaneously. Similarly, due to the limited size of the teaching staff, we may not be able to attend all requested meetings. Teachers will provide input, and the director will make the final determination as to whether we can accommodate those requests.

ANTI-BIAS CURRICULUM

Our children are learning about the world from what is all around them and CNS is committed to show them fair and just responses in their relationships with parents, teachers, and peers as well as the community at large. In keeping with our DEI mission, we base our anti-bias curriculum from the work of Louise Derman-Sparks, Julie Olsen Edwards in the text, *Anti-Bias Education for Young Children and Ourselves, Second Edition (2020)*. Lessons are designed for our children guided by the following goals.

GOAL 1 – IDENTITY: Includes both personal and group identity; for many children a bicultural identity. It means fostering confidence, not superiority.

GOAL 2 – DIVERSITY: This goal includes developing the disposition as well as the knowledge to understand and appreciate similarities and differences among people to ask and learn about differences; to comfortably negotiate and adapt to differences respectfully and effectively.

GOAL 3 – JUSTICE: Thinking seriously about bias means developing the cognitive skills to identify unfair and untrue images (stereotypes), comments (teasing, name calling), and behaviors (discrimination) directed at one's own or another's identity - gender, race, ethnicity, disability, class, age, weight, or other characteristics - and the emotional empathy to know that bias hurts.

GOAL 4 – ACTIVISM: Confronting bias means helping each child learn and practice a variety of ways to speak up when (a) another child acts biased to self, (b) another child acts biased to others, and (c) when adults act biased. Critical thinking and empathy are necessary components for standing up against bias for self and others. (*JUNE 2021*)

THE COOPERATIVE NURSERY SCHOOL PROGRAM

DAILY SCHEDULE

This is the schedule for a typical day: (subject to change; see Health & Safety Plan)

8:15: School is open

- Teachers have arrived, are set-up and ready to meet with co-oping parents and greet children
- Nursery school program begins with self-selected play activities indoors and out

8:20: Co-ops arrive, put-on their co-oping aprons, and get ready to attend to tasks by 8:30am

9:00: Complete transition time and say, “good-bye” to your child(ren)

9:05: Lunch bunch co-oper arrives and is ready to work by 9:15am

9:15-9:30 Greeting Circle

9:30 - 10:15: Free Choice: snack/self-selected activities available/play indoors and out

10:15 - 10:45 Circle Time: Small group instructional time

10:45 - 11:30: Inquiry

11:30-12:00: Outdoor play

12:00: Morning session ends, pick-up time

12:05: Lunch Bunch begins

12:30 - 1:00: quiet play on the rug

1:00: Lunch Bunch pick-up

1:00 - 1:30: Rest/Quiet Play: With calm music in the background, students rest or play on individual mats with small manipulatives, books, or journals.

1:30 - 3:00: Free choice play, indoors and outdoors

3:00: Afternoon session ends/Afternoon pick-up

INQUIRY TIME

Understanding that children learn best through play, with time for independent exploration and opportunities to follow their own interests, daily inquiry time is an integral part of our practice of emergent curriculum. This time of day is called Inquiry because we believe that young children learn best by making observations, asking their own questions, and having time to pursue those questions with their hands and minds in their own unique ways. To inquire is to come to know, to develop understandings, to be constantly in the state of digging deeper. Inquiry is based on the notion that the pursuit of one's questions is more important than the answers found, and that following these questions collaboratively in a community of learners opens more opportunities than going the road

alone. As students become more familiar with the experiences of inquiry, different opportunities for revisiting and reflecting on previous work and questions become part of the curriculum.

- Inquiry time creates opportunities for hands on, self-directed learning experiences.
- The learning experiences will take many forms, including art, elemental exploration, building, literature, and scientific exploration.
- It will respond to the needs of the learners by offering rich opportunities to develop independence while allowing each child to move at his or her own pace, with as much support or freedom as they need.
- Daily observations of our students are essential to the development and sustainment of curriculum during inquiry time. Observations are at the heart of assessment of learning during the preschool years.
- The interests sparked during inquiry time can be as quick as a flash of fireworks or be sustained for many months. We let student interest and questions guide the flow of our work together.
- It encompasses all essential areas of pre-kindergarten curriculum in an authentic manner, striking a balance between kindergarten readiness and learning through play.

Where you fit into inquiry...

When you are at school and working alongside students at this time, consider yourself a co-learner and co-conspirator.

- In inquiry, there is no one right answer or an expected product, it is a process of exploring with children in the lead. Don't feel pressure for their creations and inventions to look like something you recognize, they will find their way into meaning and structure with enough time and in their own ways.
- Keep in mind that our students learn by seeing, doing, touching, smelling, etc. The ways that they investigate using tools may be very different from your own approach.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

(Special Programs subject to change; see COVID-19 Health & Safety Plan)

- **Music:** Each circle participates in Music Class once a week. In this coming year, music classes will occur on Wednesday mornings.
- **Birthdays:** Birthdays are always special. Parents may request to co-op on their child's birthday, or the day on which the child will celebrate her/his/their birthday. At the Cooperative Nursery School, we have decided not to celebrate birthdays with food, but instead wish to place the focus on the child and his/her/their interests and unique role in the school community. Each child will be given the opportunity when they arrive in the morning to personally decorate their own birthday candle. Your child's teacher will make time at circle to sing "Happy Birthday." We offer the opportunity for the birthday child to bring in a special book that will be read to their group at circle. Something to consider is the tradition of donating the special book to the school, both enriching our library and also leaving a tangible reminder of your child's time here for future students. This tradition includes children with summer birthdays, please see your teacher to select

a date to celebrate. Birthday party invitations and thank you notes should not be delivered using the cubbies, unless all of the children in the circle are being included.

- **Seasonal holidays:** The Cooperative Nursery School celebrates many holidays such as Halloween, Thanksgiving, Valentine’s Day, and the arrival of spring. Information will be forthcoming as each holiday approaches. In addition, we welcome families to come in during the school year to share holiday traditions that your family observes. Please communicate your ideas in advance with the teachers so that they can plan accordingly.
- **Program with Wesley Enhanced Living at Stapeley:** We have a long-established relationship with Stapeley senior living home, and visit with residents at Stapeley periodically during the school year. Our visits are eagerly anticipated by both young and old. The partnership helps enlarge the world of the children in a safe, continuous, and fun way, as well as introduce the concept of community service and intergenerational friendship.

We look forward to returning to this relationship when COVID-19 protocols are lifted. (APRIL 2021)

CORE PROGRAM

- The Nursery School is open from **8:15 am-3:00 pm**, five days a week.
- Our core program runs from **8:15 am - Noon** *(JUNE 2020)*
- We recommend that you arrive early enough to have some transitional time in school with your child before you depart. It is important that every child arrive at school ON TIME, as providing your child sufficient opportunity for self-directed play and discovery is essential. Late arrivals are disruptive and convey the message that being on time for school is not important.
- Upstairs Circle children are required to attend a minimum of three mornings. Downstairs Circle children are required to attend a minimum of four mornings. To balance enrollment, at the discretion of the board, we may give preference to applicants who agree to enroll for greater than the minimum days. All children are enrolled for a particular schedule, but this schedule may be amended, and additional time at school may be added as long as there is space in the desired period. Also, a child may be “dropped in” (see below) on a given day, again provided that there is room.

CORE PROGRAM ENHANCEMENTS

- **Lunch Bunch:** Children can stay for lunch from **Noon to 1:00 pm** for an additional fee.
- **Afternoon Program (Noon – 3 pm):** Although enrollment in the nursery school requires a schedule that includes a particular number of mornings, all children may also apply for the afternoon program (on days that they attend in the morning), which has a limited number of spaces. The afternoon program provides children with opportunities to deepen their relationships and experiences at the nursery school. *(JUNE 2020)*

DROP-INS

If daily enrollment and co-opping coverage permits, you are welcome to “drop-in” your child for times (i.e., a morning, a lunch bunch, an afternoon, or even a day) not previously scheduled. Unless it is an emergency, we request that you notify and receive approval a day in advance from a Lead Teacher so that they can plan adequately for your child’s attendance and ensure that we have adequate teacher-child ratios.

If you wish to drop your child in for a special day /holiday, fees do apply (including Halloween, Valentine’s Day, Special Friends Day, etc.). If you wish to drop your child in for a field trip, fees do apply unless you are chaperoning and/or driving. *(APRIL 2021)*

PICK-UP

- Parents must let teachers know who is authorized to pick up their child at the end of the school day. If a parent has arranged with anyone else to pick up their child, they must fill out a release form to authorize this arrangement and inform the teachers of the pick-up plan.
- Remember to check your child’s cubby at pick-up time, and ensure that the teacher knows your child is leaving.
- Please note that the school will close at 3:00 PM and children need to be picked up by that time.

TUITION AND FEES

TIMING

Your bill will be e-mailed to you the first week of every month, and payment is due in full by the 15th of the month.

- Sometime during the first week of September, you will receive your first tuition invoice; it will include charge for your child’s base tuition in September as well as the annual art supply; payment will be due in full no later than September 15
- Drop-in fees and any penalty fees will be included in the following months’ invoice (e.g. if you have a drop in on September 12th, the charge for that drop in will be present on your invoice provided in October)
- Please do not send any tuition checks before you receive your first invoice in September
- Please plan to make your first payment by September 15

HOW TO PAY

Please make checks (or money orders) payable to “The Cooperative Nursery School” or pay via PayPal (subject to 3% surcharge). You may place the tuition check in the tuition box on the shelves to the right of the entrance or send payment directly to the address provided on your invoice. Cash payments are not accepted.

TUITION AMOUNT

The monthly charges are a sum of your child's basic schedule and any drop-ins for the previous month. There are no additional fees or taxes with the exception of late fees, if applicable.

- Schedule changes need to be communicated to the Administrative Coordinator no later than the 25th of the month (NOTE: schedule reductions are accepted every month except for the months of December, March or April (whichever includes Spring Break), and June so that the nursery school can bill you accordingly and teachers have adequate time to prepare for student schedule changes. Scheduling changes must be approved by your child's teacher and the Director. Should you fall behind in tuition, you will not be allowed to make changes in your child's enrollment that increases the time your child spends in school.
- We have structured tuition payments so that it can be easy to predict in advance what the total due will be. If you have any questions about your tuition payment and how it's calculated, please contact admin@cooperativenurseryschool.com
- In the event there is an error on your tuition statement, please e-mail admin@cooperativenurseryschool.com as soon as possible so that any confusion can be immediately worked out.

TUITION FEES

- **Late payments:** Payments received beyond the fifteenth day of the month shall be assessed a \$20.00 late fee. (*JUNE 2020*)
 - Unpaid balances (including late fees) that remain thirty (30) days past the due date shall be assessed an additional \$20.00 late fee and shall begin to incur interest at a rate of 1% per month. Your child will be asked to stay at home until the unpaid balance has been paid in full or until other arrangements have been made to bring the account current.
 - If arrangements have not been made to bring the account current and an unpaid balance remains forty-five (45) days past the due date, your child will be asked to leave CNS permanently and legal action will be taken to collect any unpaid balance. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) acknowledge and agree that they shall be responsible for the cost of collection of any unpaid tuition or fees, including but not limited to attorney's fees.
- **Insufficient funds:** All NSF checks or other forms of returned payment shall be assessed a \$25.00 processing fee. If more than two payments are returned for any reason, Parent(s)/Guardian(s) shall be required to submit future payments by cashier's check or money order.

LATE PICK-UP FEES

- All parents are expected to pick-up their children on time. If you are unable to pick-up your child(ren) on time, please make arrangements with an authorized person to do so and call the school to notify staff.
- If you are running late, call the school at 215-844-5770.
- Fees will be assessed and added to your tuition statement for any pick-up that exceeds five minutes late. If more than five minutes, fee charged will be \$1 for each minute late.
- We do not offer an extended day option. Please remember that the teachers need time at the end of the day to reflect, discuss, plan, and prepare for the next day. If you are frequently late to pick-

up your child(ren), you are impacting the educational quality the teachers are able to provide all the children for whom they are responsible.

LEAVING THE COOPERATIVE NURSERY SCHOOL

The Cooperative Nursery School runs on a very tight budget, and we are truly tuition driven. We must be fully enrolled to meet our expenses! Families will be held financially responsible for the balance of the tuition at the rate that they have initially or typically scheduled their child to attend school and in accordance with their normal co-oping schedules. If you leave the school prior to the end of the school year, you will be billed for the remainder of the school year at the average tuition rate according to your child(ren)'s schedule at the time you left the nursery school, unless and until we are able to fill your spot with a new family. Please note that if you leave the school midyear or later, it is our experience that it is very difficult at such a late date to find a replacement.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The school is willing to work with any families experiencing financial problems. If you have a problem paying the tuition, it is vital to communicate with the Administrative Coordinator, who will help work with you to keep your child in school. Your circumstances will be kept confidential.

PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- 1. Attend Parent Orientation/Co-oping Workshops:** One of our state licensing requirements is that all co-ops who function as teachers' assistants receive some training in the job. This requirement is accomplished through a workshop scheduled early in the fall, as well as a refresher meeting held in late winter/early spring. It is organized and run by the Parent Chairperson, and attendance is mandatory.
- 2. Participate in the mandatory Fall and Spring Work Days:** The weekend before school starts is the Fall Work Day. A weekend in April is designated as the Spring Work Day. All families must participate for a 4-hour block of time. In two parent families, both parents are urged to come. Children are welcome, including siblings. Even when they slow down the work, children contribute to the atmosphere. The entire building and its contents must be cleaned. Overgrown grounds must be cleared. Wood chips must be spread. Anything broken must be fixed. We depend on your help to ensure a safe and engaging school environment. Let the Property Manager know if you have special skills of any kind. If no one from your family is able to participate, notify the Property Manager immediately and arrange to do an equivalent job. Equivalent jobs must be completed within 30 days of the scheduled clean-up days. There is always plenty to be done. Our labor keeps our tuition low.

3. **Co-op in the classroom:** The nature of a cooperative nursery school is that every family participates in running the school and contributing to the education and nurturing of the children. Co-oping duties are taken seriously and are essential to the function and operation of the school. Detailed description and explanation of co-op duties are provided at the Co-oping Workshop and further in this handbook.
4. **Participate in weekend cleaning, the Board of Directors, or a Parent Job:** In addition to the classroom co-oping and the Fall and Spring Work Days, each family must either participate in weekend cleaning, serve on the Board, or hold a parent job. Weekend cleaning is described in further detail below.
5. **Participate in fundraising:** We hold fundraising events each year that are critical to our providing a quality learning environment and ensuring that our school maintains economic diversity. The Fundraising Coordinator job holders will plan these events with the Circle Representatives in coordination with the teachers and Director. However, every family is required to participate. The responsibility for the organization, implementation, and success of our fundraising endeavors rests on the capable shoulders of all co-oping families! Of course, we hope that all families will contribute as much effort as they can for all of our fundraising events.
6. **Required clearances and training:** All staff and co-ops are required to obtain a PA State Police Criminal Record Check, FBI Background Check, and Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Certification Form. Clearances need to be updated each time a new child enters the school and should be no more than 24 months old.

FAILURE TO COMPLETE WEEKEND CLEANING OR MAINTENANCE OBLIGATION

If it looks like you cannot complete an obligation when it is scheduled, or a special project that you agreed to do, trade with someone else. If you cannot find another family to switch with, call the Property Manager to make alternate arrangements. Communication is essential! Families who do miss an obligation without prior arrangement will be fined \$50 and have 30 days in which to complete the missed obligation.

STUDENT WITHDRAWAL

In the event your child is withdrawn from CNS before the end of the school year, you will be responsible for your co-oping duties with consideration to your normal level unless and until we are able to fill your spot with a new family.

COMMUNICATION

EMAIL LISTSERV

The bulk of school communication takes place via email in the CNS google group. Parents are expected to enroll in the school listserv, the CNS Google Group, at the beginning of the year, and to be diligent in reading email notices pertaining to the school.

Parents are welcome to send email to the group regarding school news or local events of interest to the community, but should adhere to the standards of decorum described on the group site. If using the listserv for a posting of community interest but not pertaining directly to the school, please start subject heading with initials O.T. for “Off Topic” in parenthesis, i.e. (OT) as some parents feel overwhelmed by e-mails and wish to scan selectively.

CO-OPING SCHEDULE

The cooping schedule is sent out every three months over email by the Scheduler. Changes and swaps made to the schedule must be marked on the kitchen bulletin board as, once published, this is the master copy.

NEWSLETTER

CNS's bi-weekly newsletter, The Salamander Scoop, is posted to the listserv and a physical copy is available by the sign-in sheets. Historical copies are available in the school's office.

TEXT MESSAGES

Timely reminders and updates are also sent via text through the Remind App. Instructions to join the Remind group will be distributed at the beginning of each school year.

BULLETIN BOARDS

Pressing information and sign-up sheets will be posted on the cubbies by the front door. The daily cooping checklist is posted in the kitchen. Also, notices of general interest may be posted on the large bulletin board next to the bathrooms.

COMMUNICATION WITH TEACHERS

The teachers welcome communication about your child and his or her experience at CNS. If you wish to check in with them at drop-off or pick-up, please do so briefly, as the teachers need to be with the students. If additional time is needed, please schedule a time to talk with your child's teacher or send an email.

Formal parent/teacher conferences will be scheduled for the fall and spring. A sign-up sheet will be posted. The teachers will work with you to find a reasonable alternative if your schedule conflicts with the available times.

VOICING CONCERNS OR ISSUES

- **Tuition problems:** As soon as you foresee a problem that will affect your tuition payment, contact the Administrative Coordinator at admin@cooperativenurseryschool.org
- **Concerns about your children:** If you have a concern that is specific to your child, arrange to speak to the teachers and/or Director. If you have a more general concern about an aspect of the school, contact the Parent Chairperson or your child's Circle Representative. The children are our highest concern. Please communicate!
- **From individuals to the Board:** If you have a concern, which cannot be handled one-on-one, contact a member of the Board, who will in turn carry your concern to the Board for consideration. Remember all parents are always welcome at the board meetings.
- **From the board to individuals:** When a problem concerning an individual is brought to the attention of the Board, the Parent Chair contacts the persons involved to hear all sides of the story. The Parent Chair continues to be the contact person, unless the matter is not quickly resolved, in which case the Parent Chairperson may ask the Board Chairperson to take over.
- **Administrative concern:** If you have a concern regarding the school's administration, contact either the Parent Chair, Board Chair, or Director.

Please remember that the Cooperative Nursery School is a "Gossip Free Zone!" Issues are to be discussed privately and in confidence with the appropriate Board representative, job holder, teacher and/or the Director.

CO-OPING HOURS & SCHEDULING

(Co-oping Hours & Scheduling subject to change; see COVID-19 Health & Safety Plan)

GENERAL INFORMATION

Co-operators set up for the day's activities, prepare and serve the snack, supervise projects, monitor play indoors and out, help the teachers as they are needed, and clean the lavatories and kitchen. New co-operators are paired with experienced co-operators to help them through their first few co-oping days. A checklist of the day's duties is posted in the kitchen. Each day a Lead Co-operator is designated. The Lead is in charge of overseeing and delegating tasks and facilitating communication between the teachers and the co-operators.

HOURS

- Co-operators must arrive by 8:20 AM and have their aprons on ready to assume their co-oping duties no later than 8:30 AM and are expected to stay until all children are dismissed from the morning session and all co-oping duties are completed (approximately 12:15).
- Lunch Bunch Co-operators must arrive by 9:05 AM and have their aprons on ready to assume their co-oping duties no later than 9:15 AM. They should stay until all Lunch Bunch duties have been completed, approximately 1:15 PM.

CO-OPING LEVELS

- Co-operators can choose between three co-oping levels, light, standard, and heavy.
 - **Light co-operators** will co-op 3-4 times over a three-month schedule*
 - **Standard co-operators** 6-7 times*
 - **Heavy co-operators** 9-11 times*
- Standard tuition is based on standard co-oping, light co-operators pay an increased tuition and heavy co-operators receive a tuition reduction. After families choose their co-oping level, the exact number of days they co-op over a three-month schedule can vary based on the number of school days and the families' co-oping levels.
- Only families whose child(ren) attend school at least four mornings a week may opt for heavy co-oping.
- For families with two children attending the school, on average light co-oping requires co-oping 6 times over three months, standard requires co-oping 12 times, and heavy requires co-oping 18 times.

IMPORTANT DISCLAIMER: These levels are an *estimate*. Shifts per month may fluctuate slightly.

SCHEDULING

- There are usually at least four co-operators on any given morning, but the number of co-operators may vary depending upon enrollment.
- Schedules are made three to four times a year by the parent who holds the job of “Scheduler”.
- The Scheduler gives each family a form on which to indicate days on which they can and cannot co-op. Changes to your co-opping preferences or level must be submitted on a new form no later than 15 days before a new co-op schedule is released (new schedules typically start on the 1st of October, January, and April).
- The Scheduler does her/his/their best to accommodate preferences, however this is not always possible. If you have flexibility in your schedule, we ask that both experienced and new co-operators make themselves available on the days our enrollment is highest which has traditionally been Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday.
- The co-op Scheduler will assign you co-op days based on the information you supply. If you need to change a co-op day once the schedule has been made, it is up to you to arrange it with another parent.
- It is always your responsibility to be at school on time on your assigned day, or to find someone who will take your place. This is expected of you regardless of the circumstances. In an emergency (e.g., emergency medical situations), you may call the Parent Chair as a last resort, who will attempt to arrange a substitute for you.
- If you decide to co-op on a day when your child does not attend the school, you must get prior approval and pay a drop-in fee if you wish for your child to accompany you.
- Parents of children who Lunch Bunch will be given priority as Lunch Bunch co-operators. However, if you are scheduled to Lunch Bunch co-op on a day when your child is not normally scheduled to stay for lunch, there is no additional tuition charge.
- Please let the Scheduler know if your work schedule is rigid, so your requested preference receives priority.
- Once the schedule is distributed, the scheduler does not make changes. If a family cannot co-op as scheduled, that family must switch with another family and note it on the Co-opping Schedule in the kitchen.

SIBLING HELPERS

NOTE: Sibling helpers are to stay home until the Health & Safety Plan allows for larger numbers of people in classroom settings. (June 2021)

Co-opping parents may bring younger or older sisters and brothers as long as they do not interfere with co-opping, and as long as they are not sick. Parents are responsible for the siblings while they are at school. If a sibling requires constant undivided attention, such that you will be unable to fully participate in co-opping, you will need to make other arrangements for her or him. Frequently co-opping families with toddlers are able to arrange swaps. Please communicate with other families for support or ask Parent Chair for advice.

CNS prefers to have only 2 sibling helpers each day. To make this possible, the scheduler will ask that you indicate whether you plan to bring a sibling helper on days when you co-op. Scheduled sibling helpers will be indicated on the co-opping calendar. If you want to bring a sibling helper at the last

minute, or if you are swapping a co-oping day, please check the calendar to make sure there will not be too many siblings on that day.

CNS asks that siblings are not brought to the school during the first two weeks to allow for an undistracted adjustment period. (JUNE 2020)

WEEKEND CLEANING

The school is thoroughly cleaned every weekend during the school year. The obligation is straightforward with a list to describe what's expected; the process takes about four hours per cleaning weekend. Each family will be scheduled for three to four weekends throughout the year, except for those families with two children at the school, who will be scheduled for one additional weekend. Families with Board positions are excused from weekend cleaning duties.

Two families are assigned for each weekend, each with a separate set of tasks. During the week prior to your assigned weekend, the keys and your instructions will be put into your child's cubby. The best time to clean is any time after 12 noon on Sunday when USG has finished using the space for Spiritual Development; that way we know that the school will be clean for the beginning of school on Monday. However, if that is not possible, you can work after the close of school on Friday evening or anytime on Saturday. Cleaning cannot occur on Sunday morning as the Unitarian Society of Germantown uses the building for Spiritual Development classes.

Swapping weekends with other families is fine, as long as the work is completed, and the swap is documented on the master co-oping calendar in the kitchen. Once your work is completed, place the keys and folder in the next child's cubby. The completed checklist should be placed in the Admin mail slot on the office door.

CO-OPING RESPONSIBILITY

Because we depend on each other to keep the school running smoothly, we take it very seriously when parents do not fulfill their co-oping obligations. All of us lead busy lives. Some of us are able to give more time than others to a cooperative venture, but everyone is obligated to the considerable minimum participation outlined in the previous section.

In a co-op, we pay less money, but give more of ourselves than in an ordinary school. Penalties came into being to put a tangible consequence on not honoring the agreements we make by becoming a part of the Cooperative Nursery School.

Every family needs to understand its co-oping obligations, and to fulfill them. The rewards are tangible too. We see our children flourish. We find ourselves becoming a cooperative community.

WHAT IF I CANNOT CO-OP?

If you are aware ahead of time that you are unable to co-op on your scheduled day, look at the calendar and find days that you are available. You can either call people or make use of the listserv to post your need for a switch. If the date that you are unable to co-op is the next day or that morning, you need to get up early and call people, going down the phone list until you are able to find a replacement. It is often helpful to keep a copy of the Co-oping Schedule handy so that you can see which individuals generally co-op on the day of the week you need coverage and start by calling them.

It is your responsibility to find a replacement or switch for your co-oping shift. Please also make use of the emergency swap list, which consists of people who have the availability to potentially help out at the last minute.

LATENESS OR FAILURE TO SHOW FOR CO-OPING SHIFT

- It is imperative that you arrive on time for your co-oping shift!
- If you are late (defined by any minute after 8:30 a.m. for regular shift or after 9:15 a.m. for Lunch Bunch shift), expect a call from the school.
- A **\$20 fine** will be added to your next tuition invoice for the first offense. If you are late a second time, a fine of **\$30** will be charged. If you are late a third time, a fine of **\$40** will be charged and your family may be asked to leave the school
- If you are unable to co-op for any reason (your child is sick, you have a work requirement, etc), you are required to get a substitute.
- If you do not show for a co-oping shift, a **\$50 fee** will be added to your next tuition invoice. If you miss a second co-oping shift, a **\$75 fine** will be added to your next tuition invoice and your family may be asked to leave the school.
- All fines are expected to be paid by the invoice due date. If the fines are not paid on time, your family may be asked to leave the school.

HELPFUL CO-OPING TIPS

- Being new to co-oping can be overwhelming. Ask questions! Do not be embarrassed. You will get the hang of it very quickly.
- We encourage you to let your child(ren) know in advance of arrival that you will be co-oping and are not there just for them but to help all the children and the teachers that day. The 10-minute buffer before your shift begins will allow for a brief transition time with your child before you are scheduled to be on duty.
- Keep a copy of the current co-oping schedule easily available. If you have a co-oping conflict, look for families who tend to co-op the same days of the week and call or e-mail them directly. You can post your request on the listserv.
- If you are having trouble finding a swap, try the emergency sub list consisting of parents who have said it is okay to call them at the last minute.

CO-OPING BASICS

THE CO-OPER'S DAY

Before the children arrive:

- Sign in on the Co-op Checklist in the kitchen.
- Come prepared to spend time outdoors, no matter what the weather (siblings too)!
- Greet the children as they arrive.
- Check in with the Lead Co-oper.
- Communicate with your fellow co-ops about the day's responsibilities.

When the children arrive:

The co-ops role is basically supervisory. Help children play together, but don't make yourself the center of play. Please remember that as co-ops, we must have eyes and ears for all the children, not just our own. Check in with other co-oping parents and the teachers to see if all of the zones are adequately supervised, and ask for help if you feel that too many children are in your zone for you to safely manage alone (never more than 6 children per adult).

Morning Choice and Snack:

The Lead Co-oper should review the daily checklist and assign co-op tasks upon arrival. Snack should be prepared during morning choice time. During Greeting Circle, co-ops will clear off and clean two tables, and set out the snack offerings. Children will be invited to have their snack between 9:45-10:15. One co-oper will be the snack co-oper, and will be responsible for serving snack and assisting the students as they learn how to pass plates and eat together. Please pay special attention to any food allergies or dietary restrictions. A teacher will also be assigned to help by gathering children to come to snack and, often assisting with handwashing and modeling good snack manners.

Cleaning:

Cleaning is an important aspect of your job at school, nevertheless, cleaning never takes precedence over the needs of the children or the requests of the teachers! Please be aware of the students and their work when deciding the best way to go about fulfilling these responsibilities.

Inquiry and beyond:

The Lead Co-oper will receive instruction from the teachers about how to set up for Inquiry, using the lesson plan in the inquiry binder. Inquiry tables should be set up during our circle time, between 10:15-10:45. Co-ops and teachers will each be assigned to a station during Inquiry. When inquiry ends at 11:30, all of the children go outside for a little more play. Three teachers and two co-ops should go outside immediately to be with the children. Another teacher will stay with the other two co-ops to coordinate and assist in the cleanup of inquiry materials. When the indoor cleaning is complete, all

adults should be outside with the students. At 11:50 a.m., all of the moveable outdoor toys should be put away and the sandbox should be cleaned up and closed for the day.

Visiting adults:

CNS sometimes welcomes therapists who work with specific children. These personnel sign in at the office and wear a lanyard in order to identify themselves as approved visitors. Please note that if you see someone wearing a lanyard, they should not be considered equivalent to a co-oper or teacher in terms of supervisory ratios. Support providers have specific roles and are assigned to specific children, although we will not explicitly highlight their assignments. *(JUNE 2020)*

Pick-up/End of the Morning Program:

YOU MUST ENSURE THAT A CHILD IS BEING RELEASED TO AN AUTHORIZED PERSON. Children should be reminded, when necessary, to hold an adult's hand as they cross the parking lot. When it's over, it's over. Check the jobs charts one last time, completing any unfinished tasks. If all the jobs are done, and it is close to 12:15 PM, check if there are any "Morning Only Children" still awaiting pickup. Then check with the Lead Co-oper to see if anything else is needed. If you're the Lead, check with a teacher. If all is well, pat yourself on the back for a job well done, check your child's cubby, and head home to collapse!

Afterthought:

While you are collapsing after your co-op shift, please remember the legacy of social institutions like our school. For more than 50 years, this school has been here only because many parents and teachers have stepped up to the task of keeping it alive, functional, and often excellent. They have all asked "why not me?" instead of assuming that someone else will take care of it. There is no-one here but us to ensure that this legacy is passed on to the children, parents, and teachers of tomorrow.

ZONES TO SUPERVISE

There are six zones to be supervised, three inside zones and three outside zones. Remember, the adult to child ratio is 1:6.

Inside Zones:

- Dramatic play areas (rug, loft)
- Project and writing tables, easels, puzzles and tabletop activities
- Upstairs Circle Room

Outside Zones:

- Near playground (sandbox, boat, seesaws)
- Blacktop area (bikes, balls, soccer)
- Far playground (climbers, swings, slide)

INDOORS

Children are expected to care for their school during play; i.e. marker tops should be put back on after a marker is no longer in use, cut up paper put in the recycling boxes, etc. Learners are expected to leave an area the way they found it so that other students may also use it; your support in doing so is essential. Use your judgment. The line between a usable and an unusable mess is a fine one, if it exists at all. Dumping all the blocks in the middle of the rug, however, is not the same as building with them.

Indoor rules:

Watch to see that the inside rules are followed, remembering the inside zones listed above:

- No children (not even siblings) in the kitchen
- Approximately four children allowed in the loft at any one time; more than four children can be in the loft if the play remains quiet and calm
- No running inside
- One child in each bathroom at a time, unless it is handwashing time

OUTDOORS

Your primary objective while outside is to ensure the children's safety, keeping in mind supervision ratios and the three outside play zones. Children must never be outside without adult supervision!!!

Outdoor rules:

Watch to see that the outside rules are followed:

- No overtly aggressive play. While we allow “big body” or “rough and tumble play,” children’s emotional and physical security should always be a top priority. If it looks as if a child is behaving or speaking aggressively towards other child(ren), please stop the play and ask for teacher assistance until you are comfortable handling situations involving conflict resolution according to school protocol.
- Keep all gates closed and latched.
- No throwing sand, stones, sticks.

On the blacktop:

- No crashing into each other or the fence with riding toys.
- Riding toys should stop at the yellow line.
- All children riding must wear a helmet.
- Keep riding toys on black-top riding area.

Far playground:

- An adult spotter must be present if anyone uses a climber, tree, or a pole.
- Supervise sharing and taking turns on swings and other equipment.

- No children pushing other children on the swings.

Children who are unsuccessful following these rules should be sent inside. Never encourage or allow a child to over-extend their abilities to the point where they must depend on you, the adult, for safety. If you feel that another co-oper is not being attentive, it is important to remind her/him/them of our mutual need to keep a watchful eye on the playground activities. Common sense will help guide you if you remember that we all want the children to have fun.

The last co-oper to enter the building must check to ensure no child remains in the outside area!

GENERAL SAFETY GUIDELINES

- Ratios, Ratios, Ratios...Safety is our #1 priority, and we must have a 1:6 adult to child ratio at all times in all areas of the school. Please enlist children to go get another co-oper, or bring children to an area where the ratio is correct in one place. Do not leave an area unattended, even for a moment!
- Children should never be where an adult can't see them. Be particularly vigilant with respect to the Upstairs Circle Room, the loft, and the far playground.
- An adult must accompany children to the far playground.
- Everyone should feel safe at school, physically safe most importantly, but also safe from aggression, harsh words, intimidation, etc.
- Check to ensure that no child is left on the playground during all-school transition times to the inside
- Check that gates are latched!

BEHAVIOR

Teachers at CNS use positive behavior guidance as we convey our expectations that children will help take care of themselves, take care of each other, and take care of our school. We employ the universal rule that everyone should feel safe, and adults will step in to assist if this rule is violated. When issues arise, we help walk children through the conflict resolution process. Whenever possible, we encourage children to express their own issues and needs, conveying the concept that their voices are powerful and that they are capable of solving problems. This helps them develop social resiliency, flexibility, and independence.

If a child's behavior is disruptive or dangerous, teachers will conference with the child in order to figure out what may be going on and what can be done to meet everyone's needs. Continued concerns will be brought to the family's attention so that we can work as a team to find an effective resolution. We do not employ punishment nor shaming; we strive to help children understand that their choices lead to natural consequences, both positive and negative.

MANNERS

Just as we model positive interpersonal skills in our interactions with the children, we should expect appropriate and polite behavior from the children. If a child is disrespectful or behaves inappropriately towards you, please use the opportunity to gently correct the child. Ignoring such behavior is tantamount to approval of the behavior, and it can become harder to unlearn. If something occurs that you do not feel comfortable correcting, please ask for the assistance of a teacher.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR HANDLING STICKY SITUATIONS

While attempting to help our kids make good decisions at school, we've found it helpful to use the following mantra: Take care of yourself, take care of those around you, and take care of our school. Keeping these thoughts in mind can help children make good choices and can serve as a tool for us as we support them and guide them through this process.

CO-OPERS MAY BE ASKED TO:

- Sit with a child who needs a lap in circle time
- Help a child take a break from circle time or play time, until they are ready to rejoin the group
- Help a child find a place to play or join a group
- Play with the children! Run, twirl, skip and hop! Children are more likely to participate in active play if the teachers or parents do. Children love when adults play ball; tag; a simple version of hide-and-seek; red light/green light; What Time is it Mr. Fox; Duck, Duck, Goose; etc. with them.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

When you see students in conflict with each other here is how to help them come to resolution.

- KEEP IT SIMPLE. And by simple, we mean short, to the point, and focused.
- If it is a physical interaction, or one that appears to be headed in that direction, use your arm to make a barrier between the two students.
- Place a supportive hand on both students, as they both need to be reassured that they are safe and will be taken care of.
- Ask each child what happened, giving each a chance to speak without interruption and then accordingly ask: "Did you want _____ to _____?" Then tell them to restate that message to the other person. For example. "Did you want Harvey to shove you to the ground?" If needed, ask the other child, "Did you hear what _____ said? He said he didn't want _____. (i.e. you to shove him to the ground)"
- If a clear school rule has been broken in the interaction, clearly state the rule in relation to the school, for example "There is no hitting at school. We can't let you hit your friends because it hurts them." Depending on the situation, it may be useful to ask the children what they could do differently next time at this juncture.
- Ask each child what they need to feel ready to move on. We emphasize conflict resolution with actions of caring for one another. For example, a child can request that the other child give him/her/them a hug or high five, that they take a break from playing together, bring an ice pack or

band aid, or ask that help be given in repairing something that was broken. Ensure that both children are okay and conclude the conversation.

PLAY: WHERE YOU COME IN

The times when it is appropriate to intervene in play include times when a child is in imminent danger of harming him or herself, harming others, or harming the school.

1. **Self:** For instance, using an object at school incorrectly or not following the rules (e.g. sliding on one's belly down the slide)
What you can say: "I can't let you do this because it is unsafe/makes me feel unsafe. Our job at school is to keep you safe." Then redirect the child to other choices that respect the intentions of their play.
2. **Others:** When more physical play arises such as wrestling, rolling around on the ground, ask yourself, "Are all the participants having fun (i.e. "rough and tumble play") or are children acting out of anger or frustration?" If the play appears angry and violent, stop the play and redirect.
 - Check to make sure the environment can handle the physical play.
 - Pause the play and ask all participants, "Do you still want to be doing this?"
 - If each person wants to go forward, allow them to return, and keep an eye out for any signs of wanting to stop, or a change in the direction of the play towards something unsafe. If they do not wish to go forward, then invite them to other kinds of available play.
3. **School:** If anyone is harming the physical school structure or materials we have at school, please remind them that it is our job to take care of our school. If possible, include the child in remedying the situation.

GETTING CHILDREN TO DO WHAT YOU NEED THEM TO DO

- Be direct: tell, don't ask!
- Choose words and use a positive tone of voice that makes the demand interesting and inviting, or make it feel like a surprise. (e.g. if a child has left an area they were playing in at school without cleaning it up, you can let them know that there is something they forgot to do, and invite them to come and see what it is with you.)
- Let them know that whatever you are asking them to do is their job. When you do this, you convey both a sense of responsibility and a sense of respect.

WHEN TO NOTIFY A TEACHER

- When you need to administer first aid to a child
- When there is any sort of physical altercation
- When you notice any unusual behavior, inappropriate or unusual language
- Whenever you are unsure about what you are seeing, or how to respond
- Whenever you are having trouble redirecting a situation

POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

SCHOOL CLOSINGS

In general, we are closed if the Philadelphia Public Schools are closed. If the Philadelphia Public Schools open late, the Director will make the decision whether to open late in consultation with USG and you will be notified by the earliest time possible. If Philadelphia schools close early due to unsafe weather conditions, so do we. Even if CNS is open, we expect parents to exercise their own judgment based on weather conditions where they live as to whether their children should come to school. If something unexpected happens, or if school opening will differ from the public schools, we will send out an email and a Remind text.

EMERGENCY SHELTER IN PLACE

Should there be a dangerous situation in which we are advised by the police, emergency personnel, and/or media that we need to secure and remain in the building, parents will be contacted but may not come to the school to pick-up their children until we have been informed by police or other emergency personnel that the area is safe. We will then notify you to come and pick-up your child(ren). If, for any reason, we need to vacate the building, we have established relationships with neighboring institutions: The Unitarian Society of Germantown, Lingelbach Elementary School, and Wesley Enhanced Living at Stapeley.

SMOKING

There is no smoking or vaping allowed anywhere in the indoor or outdoor areas of the nursery school.

HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

HEALTH IMMUNIZATIONS

The school requires that children have on record either evidence of receipt of three doses each of diphtheria, tetanus, and polio vaccines and one dose of measles, mumps, rubella vaccine. However, pursuant to Pennsylvania law, a written statement of religious or philosophical deferment may be submitted in the place of vaccination records.

ALLERGIES/HEALTH ISSUES

- The Cooperative Nursery School is a nut free zone. No peanuts, tree nuts, or related products allowed at any time.
- Please contact the Parent Chair over the summer regarding any allergies or other health issues that affect your child.
 - If your child requires medication of any kind to be left at the school, the Prescription Medication Consent form must be completed prior to the start of school. For children with allergies and/or asthma, an action plan must also be filled out in conjunction with the child's doctor. It is your responsibility to create a page with your child's photo, stating their allergy(ies), the symptoms (both benign and dangerous), and course of action. These are kept posted for easy and quick reference.
 - Please keep the school notified of any changes to your child's diet or health during the course of the year.
 - If a co-oping adult has any allergies, health, or other issues that impact his/her/their ability to co-op, please notify the Parent Chair as soon as possible.

WHEN TO KEEP YOUR CHILD AT HOME

The following are some guidelines for when to keep at child home:

- **Fever:** Children must stay home until they are fever free (temp less than 100.4 F) without medications such as Tylenol, Motrin, etc. for 24 hrs.
- **Strep throat:** This is very contagious! Children can return to school once fever free and on antibiotics for 24 hours. *Note: Scarlet Fever is a rash caused by the strep virus.*
- **Colds:** Children should stay home if they are frequently coughing and sneezing, and/or are uncomfortable.
- **Conjunctivitis (commonly known as "Pink Eye"):** After a 24-hour regimen of antibiotics or a health professional's okay, the child may return to school.
- **Vomiting:** Children should stay home until 24 hours have passed without vomiting.
- **Rashes:** Children should stay home until a rash has gone away or has been treated by medical personnel and determined to be non-contagious. Many rashes are associated with viral infections and can be contagious. Some, such as chicken pox, can cause problems for children or family members with special health problems.
- **Chicken pox:** These are very contagious! While less common because of vaccine; children can have a "break-through" disease. Children can return to school once lesions have crusted over.
- **Scabies:** This is a rash, usually between fingers and toes and in groin area, caused by a microscopic bug. The Philadelphia Department of Health recommends that all nursery school children and staff receive preventative scabicide medicated lotion treatments as soon as possible to prevent the further infection of this uncomfortable nuisance infection. Children need special medicated school and must be treated for at least 24 hours before returning to school.
- **Lice:** Another nuisance, lice, periodically seem to run through most nursery schools and ours is no exception. When a child is discovered to have lice, all the children will be checked. Children with lice may return to school as soon as they are treated and their hair has been thoroughly checked to assure that there are no more lice or nits (lice eggs). Children who have been treated for lice must

continue to be checked for nits thoroughly by their parent every day for 10 days after the initial discovery and treatment. Re-treatment one week later is recommended and usually necessary!

- **COVID-19:** See Health & Safety Plan

CLOTHING, LUNCH, AND REST GUIDANCE

Please LABEL all clothing sent to school, including jackets, sweaters, snow pants, hats, mittens, boots, slippers, and spare clothes, with your child's name.

- **Rain and Winter Gear:** We play outside every day in ALL weather, so proper outdoor gear is essential. Your child will need a pair of rain boots and a rain jacket. In cold and snowy weather, all children need to have a warm winter jacket, snow pants, waterproof snow boots, a warm hat, and 2 pairs of waterproof mittens/gloves. Experience has taught us that it is easiest to buy winter gear early in the year: don't wait for the first snow to arrive!

WHILE CNS IS OPERATING AS A FOREST (100% outdoor) SCHOOL, IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT CHILDREN ARE DRESSED TO REMAIN RESILIENT TO TEMPERATURES AND PRECIPITATION. HAVING THE PROPER GEAR MAKES A HUGE DIFFERENCE IN THEIR COMFORT AND HAPPINESS!

TO HELP WITH THIS, WE HAVE THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS:

RAIN:

- Rain boots
- **Option 1 (preferred):** A one-piece high quality rainsuit, such as the Oaki Trail Suit OR **Option 2:** Rain pants and a rain jacket
 - *Please ensure the gear is truly waterproof, not water-resistant. It should fit on the larger size to enable layering underneath.*

SNOW:

- Warm socks (ideally wool)
- Snow boots (more insulated than rain boots)
- Layers on both the top and bottom:
 - A base layer, ideally polyester or wool
 - A warm layer, ideally fleece or wool
 - A waterproof layer like the rain suit (insulated snow pants or an insulated one-piece snowsuit can sometimes serve as both the warm and waterproof layer)
- At least two pairs of water-resistant mittens or gloves
- Warm hat that covers their ears
- A scarf or neck gaiter

- **Spare Clothes:** Outdoor time and messy projects are an integral part of our program, therefore it is essential that every child has seasonally appropriate spare clothes at school: 2 tops, 2 bottoms, 2 pairs of socks and 2 underwear. Your child may also keep a pair of indoor shoes (slipper or cros) at school. Don't forget to LABEL everything with your child's name.

- **Lunch:** Lunch is a wonderful time to sit down and enjoy a meal together. To ensure a peaceful lunch for everyone, please be sure to pack your child's lunch in a labeled lunch box/bag, with easy-to-open reusable containers, a drink or water bottle, and all necessary utensils.
 - Fruit should be cut/peeled so it is ready to be eaten.
 - If you are sending a warm lunch, please send it preheated in a thermos (make sure not to put the warm thermos into the fridge).
 - Please LABEL your child's lunch box clearly on the outside, along with all lunch containers, water bottles, and thermoses.
 - Be sure to send food that you know your child will eat. School lunch is not a good time to try new foods, and we do not want children to be hungry.
 - Please do not send any candy.
 - We are a nut free facility. Please do not pack any food containing nuts to school. Sunflower seed butter is a great alternative to peanut butter.

- **Rest Items:** Our space to store rest items is extremely limited. All rest items should fit inside a small cloth bag. We recommend a small blanket, a crib pillow, and ONE small stuffed animal or lovie. Please LABEL all rest items, including the bag, with your child's name.

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT PREVENTION POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The Cooperative Nursery School, hereafter referred to as CNS, is committed to maintaining an environment supportive and nurturing of children and free of all forms of sexual abuse and misconduct. CNS will not tolerate sexual abuse or misconduct by its employees, families, visitors, service providers, or any other individuals under CNS's care and supervision.

APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all applicants, employees, families, visitors, service providers, and individuals under the Cooperative Nursery School's care and supervision.

PROHIBITED CONDUCT

CNS specifically prohibits any behavior that might reasonably be construed as sexually abusive, exploitative, or otherwise sexually inappropriate. All staff, parents, observers, and visitors are required to conduct themselves in a manner that could not reasonably be construed as sexually inappropriate.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

All members of CNS are mandated reporters under the Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law. Employees and co-oping parents should report any incident or suspected incident, regardless of its perceived seriousness, to their immediate supervisor, the Director of CNS, and the Chairperson of the Board of Directors. The Director and the Board Chair will promptly investigate all reported incidents. Any employee, applicant, or co-oper who exercises her/his/their right to report an incident involving sexual misconduct will not be subject to retaliation.

INVESTIGATION AND DOCUMENTATION

All reported incidents will be promptly investigated. Any suspicion of abuse or misconduct must be reported immediately to the Director of CNS and the Chairperson of the Board of Directors. Reports involving staff will be documented in the employee's and the child's files. The Director of CNS and/or a representative of the Board of Directors will confer with the accused party. If it is determined that abuse or other misconduct is a possibility, this information will be reported to the appropriate local family services agency and the family or families of any involved children. Procedures outlined by the local family services agency will be followed.

CONSEQUENCES OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

This is a "zero tolerance" policy. CNS considers sexual misconduct of any type to be a serious disciplinary offense: any violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment and expulsion from the cooperative. As required by law, an oral report will be made immediately to the local child protective services agency or statewide child line, followed within 48 hours by the filing of a written report.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All inquiries, complaints, and investigations will be treated confidentially.

REQUIRED CLEARANCES

All staff and co-opers are required to obtain a Criminal History Check and Child Abuse Clearance from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, in addition to FBI Clearances as well as any clearances required by Pennsylvania or Federal law.

All clearances will need to be updated for each child new to CNS' first day of school. Bring any questions or concerns about potentially inappropriate behavior to a teacher and the Director.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF CNS HANDBOOK

By my signature below, I acknowledge that I was provided an electronic copy of A Handbook for the Cooperative Nursery School at the Unitarian Society of Germantown (“handbook”).

I understand that I am expected to read the entire Handbook. The Handbook contains important information about the school, and I understand that I should consult the Parent Chair regarding any questions not answered in the handbook.

Since the information, policies, and benefits described herein are subject to change at any time, I acknowledge that revisions to the Handbook may occur. All such changes will generally be communicated through official notices, and I understand that revised information may supersede, modify, or eliminate existing policies.

I understand that it is my responsibility to comply with the policies contained in this Handbook, and any revisions made to it.

Parent/Guardian 1	Parent/Guardian 2
Print name:	Print name:
Date:	Date:
Signature:	Signature:



Added to CNS Document Library: July 19, 2020

Last Update: November 22, 2021

PURPOSE OF DOCUMENT

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Education requires each school to develop a Health and Safety Plan before reopening in fall 2020. The Cooperative Nursery School is not required to have its plan approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, but is required to have it approved by our school board and posted to our website.

All decision-makers should be mindful that, as long as there are cases of COVID-19 in the greater community, there are no protocols that can completely eliminate transmission risk within our community. Our goal is to keep transmission as low as possible.

It is imperative that all students, staff, and co-ops who enter the Cooperative Nursery School (CNS) grounds and/or facility follow strict adherence to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), and City of Philadelphia guidance as described in this document.

Before each child, staff member, or co-op begins the school year at CNS, a signed COVID-19 waiver must be submitted to the Administrative Coordinator.

CNS PANDEMIC TEAM

NAME	TITLE	ROLE
Andrew Piccone	Board Chair	Lead community through decision making and response efforts
Leah Corsover	Educational Director & Lead Teacher, Pandemic Chairperson	Define, edit, and proof key strategies, policies, and procedures
Kerry Goldman	Lead Teacher	Define, edit, and proof key strategies, policies, and procedures
Jesy Keenan	Parent Representative	Liaison between Board and parent community
Marcus Nartey	Health Professional & Parent	Medical consultant
Jessica Stanforth	Administrative Coordinator	Define, edit, and proof key strategies, policies, and procedures

FOLLOWING RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES

All members of the CNS community are expected to follow pandemic guidelines at all times to slow the spread of the SARS-CoV-2 virus:

- Wear a mask that covers your nose and mouth to help protect yourself and others.
- Stay 6 feet apart from others who don't live with you.
- Get a COVID-19 vaccine when it is available to you.
- Avoid crowds and poorly ventilated indoor spaces.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water. Use hand sanitizer if soap and water aren't available.

DROPPING OFF AND PICKING UP CHILDREN

Ideally, the same parent or designated person should drop off and pick up your child every day. If possible, older people such as grandparents or those with [underlying conditions](#) which put them at risk for severe illness from COVID-19 who are unvaccinated should not drop off/pick up children.

As you approach the school via the parking lot, please be mindful that we can only process one family at a time at the gate. Please practice social distancing in the parking lot as you are waiting. **Masks must be worn at all times on CNS grounds and in the CNS parking lot when outside of your vehicle.**

When picking up your child from CNS at the end of their school day, a teacher will be available at the gate to ensure your child will gather their belongings and come to you.

SCREENING OF STAFF/CHILDREN/CO-OPERS UPON ARRIVAL

Persons who have signs of illness will not be admitted to CNS. Parents are expected to be on the alert for signs of illness in their children and must keep them home when they are sick for the good of the community. **If you are keeping your child home due to illness, please notify the school before opening time and provide symptom information.**

Before arriving at the school, a parent/guardian must complete the screening form provided by the school.

Upon arrival at the school, you will find a teacher just inside the gate. Please guide your child to the check-in spot identified just outside of the gate. Hand sanitizer will be available at the gate. The teacher will make a visual inspection of your child for signs of illness, which could include flushed cheeks, rapid or difficult breathing (without recent physical activity), fatigue, or extreme fussiness.

If your child does not pass the initial screening, he/she/they will not be admitted to CNS. In case of temperature, new loss of taste or smell, gastrointestinal symptoms, atypical rash on fingers/toes, or other symptoms as listed on Addendum A, your child may not return until a doctor's alternative diagnosis and/or negative COVID test is provided.

Co-operators entering CNS are expected to be symptom-free and without known exposure to COVID-19 when entering the school grounds. Please note that CNS is asking co-operators to leave siblings at home when co-opping; this will help CNS keep our total school population within guidelines and help reduce potential virus spread. **Upon arrival at the school, co-operators are expected to initial the form indicating no COVID symptoms and/or exposure.**

Visitors

Non-essential visitors to the school grounds will be limited, and increased social distance will be maintained.

Visitors will be required to show proof of identification and submit to a screening. Visitors must also follow all safety protocols, including mask wearing and hand sanitizing.

HYGIENE PRACTICES

Healthy Hands

All children, staff, and co-operators shall engage in hand hygiene, washing or use of hand sanitizer, at the following times:

- Arrival to the facility and after breaks
- After handling electronic devices
- Before and after handling food or drinks
- Before and after eating
- Before and after administering medication or medical attention
- After physical contact with another person
- After using the toilet or helping a child use the bathroom
- After coming in contact with bodily fluid (e.g. a sneeze, cough, urine, feces)
- After playing outdoors or in sand
- After handling garbage

If washing hands with soap and water, soap should be lathered on palms, backs of hands, between fingers, and on the wrists for at least 20 seconds before rinsing. If soap and water are not available, alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol may be used. If hands are visibly dirty, soap and water must be used as hand sanitizer would not be sufficient.

Children are to be supervised by staff while hand washing/sanitizing to ensure thoroughness and to prevent ingestion.

There are six hand washing sinks available: five indoors (three at the handwashing station and one in each of the two bathrooms) and one outdoors. Hand sanitizing pumps are available at multiple locations inside the school and outdoors. Daily co-oping tasks include checking soap and sanitizer solution levels, refilling as necessary, and wiping each down with a disinfectant.

Face Coverings

As per PA Dept of Health guidelines, everyone who enters the school grounds must wear a face covering until further notice. Masks must cover each person's mouth and nose.

CNS is following the model of the School District of Philadelphia for acceptable mask materials.

“Acceptable masks include disposable surgical masks, cloth masks purchased or made from household items, and gaiters. Clothing and household items (like scarfs, t-shirts, sweatshirts, or towels) are not acceptable in original form for use as masks.”

There are limited exceptions as specified by the order (see excerpt below). If your child falls into this category, please make sure their health report reflects such. Exceptions to mask requirements will be made if wearing a mask is not possible due to medical conditions, disability impact, or other health or safety factors. Face shields will be a viable alternative to masks for those with medical, behavioral or other conditions precluding them from wearing masks.

“Any student who cannot wear a mask or face shield due to a medical condition, including those with respiratory issues that impede breathing, a mental health condition, or disability, and students who would be unable to remove a mask without assistance are not required to wear face coverings. Individuals who are communicating or seeking to communicate with someone who is hearing impaired or who has another disability, where the ability to see the mouth is essential to communication, are not required to wear a mask; however, individuals should consider using another type of face covering such as a plastic face shield.”

Disposable masks should be replaced daily. Cloth masks should be laundered daily and replaced when their listed effectiveness expires. Students and co-ops are expected to provide their own masks. It is required that everyone bring an extra mask along as a back-up each day.

The mask may be removed while eating or drinking or napping, if a 3-foot distance is maintained. Students will be instructed when they may take “mask breaks” and remove their masks. In situations of mask removal when a 6-foot physical distance from others cannot be achieved, CNS will offer a barrier for protection.

Materials

Each child will be provided with a bin, to keep their personal belongings in each day.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

All children enrolled at CNS will be allowed to use the outdoor space freely. They will be encouraged to spread throughout the entire area to reduce group sizes. The morning program will be 100% outdoors whenever possible. Children will be divided into two groups, by age, for outdoor Circle Time.

In case of weather that prohibits students from eating outdoors, students will be divided into two groups to move indoors for snack (or to warm up in uncomfortable temperatures). These groups will be static and defined by circle assignment. CNS will be mindful to keep these groups below the limit allowed by the department of education (currently 22 humans, including grownups). In case of inclement weather where safety is a concern (lightning, high winds, extreme cold), students who attend mornings-only may be sent home.

Co-ops will be permitted to join students and staff indoors IF they are (1) vaccinated AND (2) the total number of people indoors does not exceed allowable limits.

A personal water bottle should be sent in for each child, and brought home for cleaning each day. Each student shall bring their own snack to school. Lunch food should be sent in with students who stay past noon. Water bottles and lunch boxes will be kept at/in students' bins during the school day.

EXPOSURE & QUARANTINE PROTOCOLS

A positive COVID-19 test or any known exposure to SARS-CoV-2 for anyone in your home needs to be reported to the CNS Admin or Director before the following day of school or within 24 hours, whichever is sooner.

To determine:

- if your child should be kept home from school
- if you should find a sub for your co-oping shift
- when your child can return to school after COVID-19 exposure or illness, or travel
- when you can co-op after COVID-19 exposure or illness, or travel

See CNS Health & Safety Plan, 2021-22 - Addendum A, School Exclusion Scenarios AND the CNS Handbook

The potential exists for the virus to spread through the CNS community via anyone entering the grounds/facility. Our shift to an outdoor model with indoor cohorts and use of face coverings should minimize the risk of transmission, but **communication and vigilance are necessary to keep our community healthy.**

Details Regarding a Closure

Any school in any community might need to implement short-term closure procedures regardless of community spread **if an infected person has been in a school building.** If this happens, CDC recommends the following procedures regardless of the level of community spread:

Coordinate with local health officials. Once learning of a COVID-19 case in someone who has been in the school, immediately notify local health officials. These officials will help administrators determine a course of action for their childcare programs or schools.

Dismiss students and most staff for 2-5 days. This initial short-term dismissal allows time for the local health officials to gain a better understanding of the COVID-19 situation impacting the school. This allows the local health officials to help the school determine appropriate next steps, including whether an extended dismissal duration is needed to stop or slow further spread of COVID-19.

- Local health officials' recommendations for the duration of school dismissal will be made on a case-by-case basis using the most up-to-date information about COVID-19 and the specific cases in the community.
- During school dismissal, also cancel extracurricular group activities (e.g. playdates, events).
- Discourage staff, students, and their families from gathering or socializing anywhere. This includes group childcare arrangements, as well as gathering at places like a friend's house, a favorite restaurant, or the local shopping mall.

Communicate with staff, parents, and students. Coordinate with local health officials to communicate dismissal decisions and the possible COVID-19 exposure.

- This communication to the school community should align with the communication plan in the school's emergency operations plan.
- Plan to include messages to counter potential [stigma](#) and discrimination.
- In such a circumstance, it is critical to maintain confidentiality of the student or staff member as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act.

Clean and disinfect thoroughly.

- Close off areas used by the individuals with COVID-19 and wait as long as practical before beginning cleaning and disinfection to minimize potential for exposure to respiratory droplets. Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area. If possible, wait up to 24 hours before beginning cleaning and disinfection.
- Cleaning staff should clean and disinfect all areas (e.g., offices, bathrooms, and common areas) used by the ill persons, focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces.
- If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- For disinfection, CNS will use a diluted household bleach solution.

The CNS community will follow these guidelines for determining when an infected/exposed child/staff member/co-oper can return to the school:

See CNS Health & Safety Plan, 2021-22 - Addendum A, School Exclusion Scenarios AND the CNS Handbook

Illness at School

CNS staff will perform ongoing screening throughout the day in an effort to limit the transmission of COVID-19. If a child, staff member, or co-oper develops a fever of 100.4 °F or greater OR any

combination of the following symptoms (outside of allergies), he/she/they will be isolated at the school:

- chills
- fatigue
- myalgia (muscle or body aches)
- headache
- sore throat
- congestion or runny nose
- nausea or vomiting
- diarrhea

If a child, staff member, or co-oper develops any one of the following symptoms , he/she/they will be isolated at the school:

- shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- new loss of taste or smell
- atypical rash on fingers/toes

A parent/guardian/emergency contact will be required to promptly pick up the child; if the impacted person is a staff member or co-oper, they will be sent home immediately.

Guest Teachers (Staff Absence)

A pool of guest teachers will be established prior to the start of the school year. In situations that call for prolonged teacher absence, all attempts will be made to utilize a guest teacher that can remain in place for the duration of the absence.

Guest teachers must adhere to all of the stated safety guidelines and expectations as defined above for all staff. This includes proper waiver signing, handwashing, wearing of a face mask or face shield when applicable, and daily symptom and temperature checks.

CLEANING, SANITIZING, AND DISINFECTING

The following checklists will be used:

- Daily Co-oping Checklist
- Weekend Co-oping Checklist A
- Weekend Co-oping Checklist B

Water bottles will be refilled by teachers as necessary. If a school glass/cup is used, it will be sanitized in our commercial dishwasher before being returned to the cabinet.

The office is to be used by staff members only. After use of any item, the staff member is expected to use a sanitizing wipe to disinfect all surfaces touched.

Ventilation

Two of the doors, the main entrance and the upstairs room, shall be opened each morning by staff before the school opens. The third door is shared with the rental apartment above the school and should only be used in case of emergency.

Windows on both sides of the buildings shall be opened upon arrival by staff each morning and left open throughout the school day, weather permitting. Staff will close the windows before leaving the school for the day.

The bathrooms are equipped with exhaust fans which shall be turned on each morning when staff arrives and left on throughout the school day. They shall be turned off by staff at the end of the school day.

First Aid

First aid kits will be available both inside and outside of the school. In the event of an injury, a teacher will attend to the injured child while wearing fresh disposable gloves. All items used to treat the child shall be disposed of immediately as well as the gloves. Any reusable items (such as wound wash), shall be wiped off with a sanitizing solution before being returned to the first aid kit. The teacher shall wash his/her/their hands before and after attending to the child's needs.

If the injury requires further medical attention, existing protocol shall be followed including calling emergency contacts or EMS as needed. Teachers/Co-ops are not to transport children for emergency care.

MODIFICATIONS TO IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION DUE TO CLOSURE

If guidance from state and local authorities demands smaller group sizes, the COVID-19 planning committee will consider shifting to an alternating day schedule.

If guidance from state and local authorities demands closing in-person facilities, we may implement distance learning procedures. These will be prepared by teachers ahead of time, and will include packets of activities and a schedule of Zoom meetings to connect with peers and teachers.

If school closures remain effective for longer than four continuous weeks, the board will consider furloughing staff and minimizing tuition to cover the basics of rent and utilities.

Activity packets may be made available for no-contact pickup at CNS unless the school is closed due to community exposure/spread.

Book packets containing lending library bags with themed books and activity suggestions may be provided. Our expectation is that they are returned and quarantined at the school before including them back into our library.

COMMUNICATION

Alerts of an emergent nature will be provided to the CNS community via Remind, our Google Group, and/or email. Our bi-weekly newsletter will also contain non-emergent information.

TRANSPORTATION

CNS does not provide transportation for students or staff, except in the event of field trips. While under activity restrictions related to SARS-CoV-2, all field trips are suspended.

HEALTH AND SAFETY PLAN AFFIRMATION STATEMENT

The Board of Directors for the Cooperative Nursery School at the Unitarian Society of Germantown reviewed and approved the Health and Safety Plan on May 12, 2021.



Signature of Board Chair

Andrew Piccone

Printed name of Board Chair

CNS Health & Safety Plan, 2021-22

Addendum A, School Exclusion Scenarios

Last update: 02/11/2022

*In addition to following expected COVID-19 safety protocols at and outside of CNS, your honesty and diligent adherence to the protocols below will **keep our community safe and our school open**. This protocol is to be followed regardless of vaccination status, unless otherwise noted.*

Any time COVID-19 testing is required, results must be provided to CNS staff. A photograph of an at home test is acceptable.

COVID-19 SYMPTOMS

<u>Two</u> of the following symptoms: fever (measured or subjective), chills, fatigue, myalgia, headache, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea	<u>One</u> of the following symptoms: new or persistent cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, or new loss of taste or smell
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HOW TO HANDLE EXPOSURE TO COVID-19 WITHOUT SYMPTOMS

Defined as close contact, within 6 feet for 15 minutes or more, to an individual with a positive or probable COVID-19 case regardless of masking.

UNVACCINATED:

IF someone in your household has been exposed to a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19

THEN you (co-oper)/your child may return to CNS

AFTER 10 days after last exposure if remained asymptomatic

OR

AFTER 7 days if a negative COVID-19 test result is received (test must be taken at least 5 days after exposure)

FULLY VACCINATED:

IF someone in your household has been exposed to a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19

AND you (co-oper) are /your child is fully vaccinated

AND you are able to isolate from that household member

THEN you may return to CNS without quarantine while self-monitoring for symptoms for 14 days

HOWEVER a COVID-19 test taken 5-7 days after exposure is required

IF someone in your household has a confirmed case of COVID-19

AND you are unable to isolate from that household member (due to caregiver status or other living arrangements)

AND you (co-oper) are /your child is fully vaccinated

AND you receive a negative test result on day 8 (eight) after the household members initial positive test date

THEN you may return to CNS 10 days after the household members initial positive test date

1) *Fully vaccinated means it's at least 2 weeks after the final dose of a one- or two-dose vaccine.*

- 2) *The most protective recommended quarantine is 14 days post exposure.*
- 3) *Symptom monitoring should continue until day 14 post exposure regardless of test results and/or vaccination status. If symptoms appear, follow protocol for symptomatic COVID-19 illness.*
- 4) *If symptoms do appear and the person with direct exposure to a positive COVID-19 case has been at CNS between exposure and knowledge of exposure, CNS requests 3 days post-exposure to help assess risk to the CNS community.*
- 5) *Please note that the day symptoms first appear or the day of the first positive test is day zero.*

HOW TO HANDLE COVID-19-LIKE ILLNESS

Strictly comply with all masking guidance until symptoms are fully resolved.

IF you (co-oper)/your child has COVID-19 symptoms

AND COVID-19 test result is negative OR have doctor's note with differential diagnosis

AND no known COVID-19 contacts in the past 14 days

THEN you (co-oper)/your child may return to CNS

WHEN fever has been resolved for 24 or more hours without the use of fever-reducing medications

AND respiratory symptoms have improved

1) *For illnesses not similar to COVID-19, please see the CNS Handbook for protocols to be followed.*

2) *Without a COVID-19 test, follow protocol for COVID-19 positive illness, even if vaccinated.*

HOW TO HANDLE SYMPTOMATIC COVID-19 POSITIVE ILLNESS

Strictly comply with all masking guidance until symptoms are fully resolved.

IF you (co-oper)/your child has tested positive for COVID-19

AND are symptomatic

THEN you (co-oper)/your child may return to CNS

WHEN fever has been resolved for 24 or more hours without the use of fever-reducing medications

AND remaining symptoms do not impact daily functioning

AND it has been at least 5 days since symptoms first appeared and/or the positive test result was received

Please note that the day symptoms first appear or the day of the first positive test is day zero.

HOW TO HANDLE COVID-19 POSITIVE ILLNESS WITHOUT SYMPTOMS

IF someone in your household has tested positive with no COVID-19 symptoms

THEN you (co-oper)/your child may return to CNS

AFTER at least 5 days since initial test specimen was collected

AND no COVID-19 symptoms have developed

AND you/your child can wear a well-fitting mask reliably (when it is necessary to take their mask off, your child will be supervised in a separate area)

If symptoms develop during the 10 days after testing positive, follow guidance for symptomatic COVID-19 positive illness.

HOW TO HANDLE TRAVEL

The CDC recommends delaying travel for those not fully vaccinated. Fully vaccinated travelers are less likely to get and spread COVID-19. However, international travel poses additional risks, and even fully vaccinated travelers might be at increased risk for getting and possibly spreading some COVID-19 variants.

Please note: if you have questions or concerns regarding travel plans, please contact Leah (director@cooperativenurseryschool.com) and Jess (admin@cooperativenurseryschool.com) before you travel.

UNVACCINATED:

IF you travel domestically or internationally via public transportation (i.e. bus, train, plane, ship, etc.)

THEN you (co-oper)/your child may return to CNS

AFTER 10 days after your return date

OR

AFTER 7 days if a negative COVID-19 test result is received (test must be taken at least 5 days after your return date)

FULLY VACCINATED:

IF you travel domestically or internationally via public transportation (i.e. bus, train, plane, ship, etc.)

AND you (co-oper) are / your child is fully vaccinated

THEN you may return to CNS without quarantine while self-monitoring for symptoms for 14 days

ADDENDUM B, CLASSROOM IMPLEMENTATION

Although we hope to return to a traditional CNS model (fluid flow between indoor and outdoor activities), Department of Education guidance still calls for separate smaller cohorts (under 22 people, including adults) when social distancing is not reasonable or realistic. In 2020-2021, we accomplished this with the use of the USG meeting room as our second space. Unfortunately, that space is not available for our use next year.

CNS will remain a fully outdoor morning program. When students need to go indoors, they will be separated into static schedule-based groups (mornings only - Green Group vs. full day- Orange Group). The CNS building will be utilized by both groups, alternating and airing out/cleaning between uses. With 32 children enrolled, this means 16 children will be indoors together in the same space, allowing room for 3 CNS staff and 2 co-ops without violating guidelines. We are able to utilize social distancing when students are eating snack (unmasked). We can go up to 34 children and still accomplish this model, with 17 students and 5 adults in the space together. If we go past 34, we must coordinate schedules that limit the number of students who attend each day unless guidelines change.

When it is too cold/wet to eat snack outdoors:

- 8:15-9:15 - Morning play outdoors or indoors in alternating groups
- 9:15-9:30 - Outdoor circle
- 9:30-10:00 - Green group eats snack indoors, Orange stays out in free play
- 10:00-10:30 - Orange group eats snack indoors, Green stays out in free play
- 10:30-11:00 - Second circle (outdoors)
- 11:00-12:00 - Inquiry (outdoors, or indoors in alternating groups)

NOTES

- This allows us to continue with curriculum and circle-based activities
- Upstairs Circle children who are used to eating snack at 9:30 may struggle with waiting until 10.
- Parents will need to send multiple sets of weather-appropriate outerwear: you can't put wet gear back on after snack/play.
- Foul weather days will be focused on coping with weather rather than engaging in curriculum.
- More durable tents may be needed.

During extreme weather, days may be split in half to allow more indoor time.

- 8:15-10:00- Green group begins indoors, playing and eating snack. Orange group begins outdoors.
- 10:15-12:00 - Green group shifts outdoors, Orange group moves indoors for snack and play.

In unsafe weather conditions, school closures may be called for the morning-only group.

- Curriculum and circle work are set aside in this model.
- Comfort is greatly increased.
- Parents will only need to send one set of weather-appropriate gear.

Assumptions

1. We can return to a fluid indoor/outdoor model when static cohort restrictions are lifted.
2. Vaccinated co-ops are an acceptable addition to the static cohorts of children, as they add a minimal amount of risk of exposure to the group.
3. Families will provide adequate inclement weather gear
4. An improved shelter over the snack tables will be installed.