



# **FULLERTON COMMUNITY NURSERY SCHOOL HANDBOOK**

**A PARENT PARTICIPATION SCHOOL  
LICENSED FACILITY #300600353**

**2050 YOUTH WAY, FULLERTON, CA 92385  
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[www.fcns.org](http://www.fcns.org)**



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**Please feel free to contact the school at**

**(714) 525-1251 or [fcns@att.net](mailto:fcns@att.net)**

**Visit our website at [www.fcns.org](http://www.fcns.org)**

# **INTRODUCTION**

## **CONGRATULATIONS!**

You have chosen a school that has earned accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children. To earn NAEYC Accreditation, FCNS went through an extensive self-study process, measuring the program and its services against the ten NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards and related Accreditation Criteria. The standards reflect the latest research and best practices in early childhood education and development. Earning the NAEYC accreditation ensures that our program is one of the best in the nation! For more information about accreditation you can go to [www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org).

## **WELCOME**

It is a pleasure to welcome new mothers and fathers to what we hope will be a pleasurable learning experience for both you and your child. Certainly, you are anticipating that the preschool experience will benefit your child. The unexpected bonuses are the new insights you will receive into children's behavior and the new friendships you will make with parents whose goals for their children are similar to yours.

FCNS is a non-profit, parent participation nursery school that is incorporated and is licensed by the California State Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division. FCNS was started in 1950 by a group of enthusiastic parents who were anxious to provide their children with a stimulating group experience. Services are offered on a non-discriminatory basis, without regard to race, religion, or national origin. FCNS is affiliated with the California Council of Parent Participation Nursery Schools, and is one of the founders of the Orange County Council of Parent Participation Nursery Schools.

As you and your child enter the parent participation nursery school, there may be many questions about responsibilities and school procedures. This handbook will answer many of these questions and give you a lot of important information. Policies and procedures are also presented in detail in our By-Laws and Standing Rules which can be found on our website, [www.fcns.org](http://www.fcns.org).

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

Fullerton Community Nursery School is a warm, nurturing school that provides a place for children to develop social skills and cultivate curiosity to help maximize later education. We respect each child for his/her unique individuality and accept his/her learning pace. We know the importance of play and will not rush children through the experiences of being a child.

In addition, we provide an environment where parents can share in their child's growth while receiving the support and training of a professional staff and other parents. Our school atmosphere nurtures the family spirit and a concern for all children. We respect and reflect cultural diversity.

# **PRESCHOOL PROGRAM**

## **DEVELOPMENTAL OBJECTIVES**

Preschool is the place where life lessons are learned: how to be a friend, how to behave in groups, how to be respectful to peers and adults, and the importance of kindness and good manners. Preschool nurtures the excitement and joy of learning. To this end, FCNS has specified these learning goals for 3, 4, and 5 year olds in each of the following domains:

1. **Self-Esteem & Independence**  
encouraging each child's pride in individual characteristics, families, experiences, and accomplishments and each child's responsibility for personal care, actions, and words.
2. **Interaction & Cooperation**  
promoting children's social skills for diverse adult and peer relations, including listening, turn-taking, following directions, rules and routines, group participation, care for shared materials, and conflict resolution.
3. **Communication**  
facilitating comprehension and expression skills beginning with oral and progressing to written language.
4. **Discovery & Exploration**  
fostering a positive attitude toward learning through questioning, observing, and experimenting with varied materials related to diverse themes.
5. **Physical Capabilities**  
giving children opportunities to use their growing bodies to develop small and large motor skills and coordination.
6. **Artistic Expression and Appreciation**  
cultivating each child's ability to express ideas and emotions through art, music, movement, and drama.

## **CURRICULUM**

Fullerton Community Nursery School has a theme based developmental curriculum. It provides experiences that meet children's needs and stimulates their natural curiosity to learn socially, physically, emotionally and cognitively.

The following is a short list of regular classroom activities included in our curriculum that are implemented with attention to the different needs, interests, and developmental levels of the individual children.

- **Small Motor Skills:** Legos, clay, beads, manipulatives, blocks, scissors, writing, painting, art, puzzles
- **Gross Motor:** bike riding, swinging, running, digging, sand and water play, jump rope, climbing, sweeping
- **Social Skills:** helping, playing games, cooperating, negotiating, following directions, getting along with others

- **Cognitive Development:** stories, poems, field trips, games, conversations with adults and classmates, experimenting with writing and drawing, telling stories, sharing toys
- **Emotional Growth:** conversations, friendships, games, stories, songs, role playing, puppets

The curriculum is planned to support the goals for each child's individual success based on the dynamics, needs, and interests of each group. Also included in the curriculum are the special skills, culture, and traditions that are shared by the diverse families in the school. These support the children's natural excitement and joy of learning and provide them with a model of respect for all people.

## **ASSESSMENT**

We hold a "new parent" conference in the fall before school starts where parents can meet one on one with their child's teacher to share information and/or concerns about their child.

In September we offer parents the opportunity to fill out a nationally normed developmental questionnaire called the Ages and Stages questionnaire. This simple activity can help point out any red flags in your child's development. If any flags are seen, we can assist parents in finding resources for further evaluation.

Our teachers are constantly observing and evaluating your children. They make anecdotal notes all year as well as informal "testing" to see what each child can or cannot do. Teachers use these assessments to alter curriculum to help meet the needs of the individual children. Once a year, the teachers use these informal assessment techniques with a more systematic assessment of each child relative to the school's developmental objectives for the purpose of describing each child's developmental progress. These descriptions are shared with parents in writing via personal conferences just before Kindergarten registration. The reports for the 3's include narrative descriptions of children's progress in self-esteem & independence, interaction & cooperation, communication, and motor skills, while the 4's also include some basic knowledge and kindergarten readiness.

Staff/parent dialogue during conferences strengthens our understanding of each child's developmental profile and often leads to ideas for individualizing both staff and parent support of children's learning, as well as plans for smooth transitions for the next school year. You are always welcome to discuss your child's behavior and development with the teacher. Referrals for further assessment are given when needed. Notices are posted when the community is offering developmental screenings. If you have any questions or concerns about our assessment process and your child's needs, please speak with your child's teacher or the director.

## **SPECIAL NEEDS**

Our program welcomes children with disabilities and special needs. We will work with the family to meet those needs within the framework of our program.

## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

Parent involvement is what makes FCNS unique and the warm, nurturing place that it is. Because our members put time and energy into the facility, the children, and the other families, they feel ownership of the school and pride in its excellence.

There are six ways you participate at FCNS. They are:

1. Board and/or Committee Participation
2. Attend 5 mandatory meetings
3. Perform Maintenance Duty
4. Perform Housekeeping Duty
5. Fundraising
6. Your Role as Teacher's Assistant

Let's take a closer look at each of these duties.

### **BOARD AND COMMITTEE PARTICIPATION**

The administration and government of the school are overseen by the Board of Directors. The Board is comprised of school parents, some elected, some appointed. The Board hires a professional staff, a director and teachers, trained and experienced in early childhood education, to guide them and implement the program.

In order for our school to function as well as it does, and at the minimum cost to each family, every participating family is asked to either serve on a FCNS committee or hold a position on the Board of Directors. You will sign up for a committee the night of Orientation. Those parents not doing so then, and those new families enrolling throughout the year, will be assigned to a committee needing additional members.

Wherever you serve, we hope you realize how important your specific responsibilities are to the entire school. None of the necessary work is too great, if it is evenly distributed. This is where the Board comes in - they are the coordinators. Elected officers and staff serve on the Board, but the committee chairpersons comprise the majority of it. It is your governing body in all ways, and you are invited to attend its meetings.

Board meetings are open to all members. They are held the third Wednesday of each month in the building's community room at 7:00 PM. You are encouraged to try to attend at least one meeting per year. Your group representative is your liaison with the board. Feel free to discuss any matters with her or any other board member.

### **MANDATORY MEETINGS**

You are required to attend 5 meetings throughout the year. One absence is allowed- more than one and you will be assigned an extra day of housekeeping. Check your school calendar for the dates of meetings.

#### **1. ORIENTATION**

*(For all members, children do not attend)*

This nighttime meeting is held the week prior to school opening. The purpose is to prepare, orient, and welcome new and returning families. All school procedures are discussed and committee sign-ups are done.

2. **ORIENTATION WORKSHOP**

*(For all members, held during class time after about 1 month of school)*

These meetings are held under the direction of the staff. Most parents have now worked in the classroom at least once so we can go over questions you may have and the teachers can give further training on how to make the class run more smoothly. Plans for the year will also be discussed and coordinated.

3. **DECEMBER GENERAL MEETING**

*(For all members, children do not attend)*

This nighttime meeting is held to elect officers and conduct general school business. A parent education speaker is usually planned.

4. **EVALUATION WORKSHOP**

*(For all members, held during class time)*

This meeting is held to evaluate and discuss the overall school program and ensure that progress toward the program's goals and objectives is being made. Anonymous surveys will be collected before the workshops to gather information and concerns from families about the program. It is generally held in spring.

5. **FINAL GENERAL MEETING**

*(For all members, held during class time)*

This meeting is held to elect officers and conduct general school business. It is generally held at a nearby park and a potluck lunch is planned.

## **MAINTENANCE DUTY**

Every other weekend several families are scheduled for general maintenance at the nursery school. The work may be done by mom, dad, or both! It is usually planned for Saturday, but it can be done on Sunday, whichever the families agree upon.

### **Maintenance Duties -**

- Cleaning both play yards, picking up trash, etc.
- Clipping and trimming bushes or trees when necessary
- Sweeping and hosing patios and bike yard
- Checking equipment for minor repairs
- Raking sand
- Pulling weeds

Each family is responsible for one maintenance duty per year, per child enrolled. If a family is unable to take their turn, they may trade with another family on the assignment list (which appears in the newsletter). If a family fails to show up for their scheduled turn, they will be fined and rescheduled. Other maintenance tasks (such as painting or carpentry) are assigned as needed by the maintenance chairman. The work is distributed equally among all member families of the school. Families with few spare hours, who prefer to pay a maintenance fee at the start of the year, will not be scheduled. This fee is published at the beginning of each year - it increases if paid after November 1<sup>st</sup>.

## **HOUSEKEEPING DUTY**

Once a month, on a Monday or Friday, four families are scheduled in each classroom for housekeeping. You are responsible for one housekeeping day per year per child enrolled in the school. Housekeeping duties begin at noon generally lasts about 1 to 2 hours. You may

bring your children with you on your assigned day and they may play or eat their lunch outside while you work.

### **Monthly Housekeeping Duties -**

- Clean chairs, tables, windowsills, countertops, doors
- Clean bathrooms: mirrors, toilets, walls, sinks; restock paper products; refill soap bottles
- Vacuum rugs; sweep and mop floors
- Clean dress up area, small furniture; sort blocks
- Sweep out playhouse
- Clean kitchen
- Clean adult bathroom

If a family is unable to take their turn, they may trade with another family on the housekeeping schedule (which appears in the newsletter). If a family fails to show up for their scheduled turn, they will be fined and rescheduled. A family may also opt to pay a fee at the beginning of the year and not be scheduled. Fees will be published at the beginning of the school year.

In addition to the monthly housekeeping duties, please be aware of the cleaning and sanitation frequency requirements carried out by parents and staff:

### **Daily Housekeeping Duties -**

- Clean and sanitize: countertops, tables and food surfaces; floors; door and cabinet handles; sinks and faucets; soap dispensers; toilet seats, bowls, handles, and cubicle handles; carpets are vacuumed; floors are spot mopped.

### **Additional Cleaning-**

- Floors are waxed once per year and mopped once per month in addition to the monthly housekeeping day and the daily spot mopping.
- Carpets are cleaned twice per year.
- Dress up clothes, blankets, pillows, capes are laundered about every 2 months or more if necessary.
- Toys are cleaned every time a child puts one in their mouth, and as needed to keep them looking clean and inviting.

## **FUNDRAISING**

In addition to tuition, our school is partially funded by fundraising, therefore each family is required to participate in these three fundraisers:

### ***Rummage Sale -***

Each year we hold a Rummage Sale in the fall. All families are required to bring items to sell and work a shift.

### ***Family Fun Day-***

We hold Family Fun Day in the spring. It is a children's carnival type of activity. All families are required to help with this event.

### ***Scrip -***

We also sell Scrip year-round. Scrip is a gift certificate, sold at the school. You use the scrip like cash at participating markets, discount stores, department stores, restaurants,



and more. FCNS earns a percentage of all scrip sold. Each family is required to purchase \$150 of scrip per month. It costs you nothing, yet the school makes money.

### ***Voluntary Fundraisers -***

A variety of other **voluntary** fundraisers are offered throughout the year. The board of directors decides on which fundraisers to include each year.

**There are buy-out options if you prefer not to participate in fundraising.**

## **SCHOOL PROCEDURES**

### **SCHOOL ARRIVAL**

#### **Time: 9:00 AM**

*(Please don't arrive earlier, teachers need to set up)*

1. Follow the arrows in the parking lot.
2. Watch for children and other cars while pulling into and out of the parking lot.
3. Let children out of the car when it is safe. Never leave a baby in the car.
4. Bring the children to entrance and check bulletin board for notices and reminders while you wait for doors to open.
5. Assist children to their classrooms.
6. Parents will be asked to take sick children home. (Make arrangements within your carpool for this type of emergency.)
7. Sign children in (sign-in sheet is on top of cubbies).
8. School will address specific procedures for children with disabilities as needed.

### **SCHOOL DISMISSAL**

#### **Time: 12:00 PM**

*(Please be prompt)*

1. Follow same parking lot procedure as arrival.
2. Come in. Please stay in hallway until a teacher assistant comes to door.
3. The door is to remain closed in between pick-ups, to ensure children's safety.
4. The teacher assistant will bring your child to you while you sign him/her out. If you are taking more than one child, sign them all out.
5. Remind children to take jackets and items in their cubbies.
6. Be especially careful that children do not go into the parking lot without an adult.
7. Keep children together as you return to your car, watch for moving cars.
8. If someone else is taking your child home, be sure they are on your blue emergency information card. We may ask for ID if we do not recognize them. If another parent from our school is taking them home, please indicate that on the comment section of the sign-in sheet, unless it is a regular car pool.
9. If you are visiting with other parents after school, please step into the playground areas for children to play while you talk. This will help ensure they do not run into the parking lot.
10. School will address specific procedures for children with disabilities as needed.

## **IMPORTANT REMINDERS**

### ***Please be sure to -***

- Call the office by 8:50 AM if your child cannot go to school. Explain reason so that the cause of absence can be reported.
- Be sure whoever is bringing your child or picking up is aware of the sign-in sheets on the cubbies.
- Keep your blue emergency information card up to date as to who is allowed to pick up your child.
- Report a communicable disease (other than a cold) or an exposure to a communicable disease to the Director immediately.
- Dress your child in sun-protective clothing or apply sunscreen with both UVB and UVA protection of at least SPF 15 to exposed skin on days when there will be sun exposure
- Put children's name on the tags of jackets and sweaters. This is extremely helpful for teachers and parents!
- Read the Jumping Jack Journal (our monthly newsletter) and keep it for future reference. This is your source of what's happening and upcoming at school.
- Watch for notices on the breezeway bulletin board and classroom windows. You may also check the website, [www.fcns.org](http://www.fcns.org), for information.
- We use email to send the newsletter, the work schedule, and notifications. Check it! Class groups also have private Facebook groups to share photos and communicate.

### ***Please be sure NOT to -***

- Send your child to school if he is not feeling entirely well.
- Carry any firearms on school campus.
- Smoke anywhere on campus.
- Leave a car idling in the parking lot during drop off or pick up, except in cases of extreme heat and there is an adult in the car.

## **CHILDREN'S DRESS**

Play clothes are highly recommended. We do a lot of water play and messy paint activities. We do not want children afraid to get dirty, or parents mad that they did!

The teachers recommend that the children wear tennis shoes, preferably no cowboy type boots, or flip-flops. Children's running and climbing skills are impaired with these types of shoes. When sand gets into sandals worn without socks and flip-flops, the children constantly take them off to shake it out. Also, wood chips have been known to penetrate flip-flops and clogs. For these reasons, we prefer tennis shoes.

We keep extra clothes on hand to change children who have gotten their clothes wet or soiled.

## **TEACHER ASSISTANT ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES**

Each day there are three parents assigned to work in each class, on a rotating basis. On average, each parent is assigned 2 working days per month, per child enrolled. On your scheduled day you stay at school as the teacher assistant. Parents are assigned to provide support as Art Parent, Snack parent, or Game Parent on their scheduled day, as noted on the work schedule calendar that is published each month. You will always be supervised by the classroom teacher, never working completely alone with the children.

## **IMPORTANT REMINDERS**

### ***Please be sure to -***

- Provide a substitute if you cannot work your scheduled turn in the classroom, at housekeeping, or maintenance.
- Report to the classroom scheduler if you are pregnant so you will not be scheduled to work on your due date! You will receive 6 weeks maternity leave from working in the classroom.
- Silence your cell phone and refrain from using it except for emergencies.
- If you bring coffee to school, it should be in a sippy cup, with your name on it, and kept in a cupboard, out of children's reach.

### ***Please be sure NOT to -***

- Bring a sibling who is not enrolled in school on your working day.
- Smoke while assisting at school.
- Carry any firearms on school campus.

## **SCHEDULED WORK DAYS AT SCHOOL**

We are a parent participation nursery school, but on an individual basis we allow caregivers to participate as long as this person is able to fulfill the responsibilities and communicate effectively with the children and other adults. Arrangements must be made in advance and these caregivers are required to have a current TB test and the proper immunizations (at your expense).

If you know of days on which you cannot participate, please notify the scheduling chairman well in advance of each schedule. A Parent Substitute List will be compiled and given to you notifying you of parents who will exchange turns. There is an option to use a parent substitute for pay (you decide how much).

Should an emergency arise, such that you cannot take your scheduled turn due to sickness at home, you are first asked to try to exchange turns with someone consulting the above-mentioned list. If you can find no substitute, call the school (emergency only).

## **TEACHER ASSISTANT DRESS**

Teacher assistants should wear casual, comfortable, washable clothes. We want you to feel comfortable interacting with the children, not worrying about dirtying your good clothes. You'll notice that is how the staff dresses

## **GENERAL PROCEDURES**

- Arrive at school 10 minutes early.
- Wash hands upon arrival.
- Wear assigned teacher assistant apron. Apron pockets contain assigned duty card, key to padlocks and pens.
- Check with the teacher for any special instructions for the day.
- Assist supervising children in activities. Be especially alert for safety matters.

- Assist children at clean up time, encouraging their help.

### **ART PARENT DUTIES**

- Help children with art activities. Put name and date on paper and replenish paint, glue, etc. as needed.
- Empty all wastebaskets - room, patio, and bathroom. Trash dumpster is in parking lot.

### **GAME PARENT DUTIES**

- Check with the teacher for any special instructions for the day.
- Vacuum rug and spot mop floor. Equipment is in each classroom closet.
- Clean bathrooms, replenish paper supplies.

### **SNACK PARENT DUTIES**

- On the monthly schedule, the notation (B) means a child is celebrating a birthday.
- Prepare snack. Cups, plates, napkins, and water are provided. There are pitchers available for the classes that pour their own water. Set the table for the number of children in attendance that day, plus the teacher and assistants.
- Load cups and pitchers in dishwasher and start dishwasher.
- Be sure to **sanitize tables both before and after snack by wiping down with our cleaning products and microfiber towels.**
- A more detailed list of snack procedures is given at orientation and is posted in the kitchen.

### **SNACK RESPONSIBILITIES**

When you are scheduled to be the snack parent, you are responsible for providing a nutritious snack for the whole class, including the teacher and other assistants. The school will provide water, cups, plates and napkins.

#### ***Snack Policy to Prevent Choking -***

In order to prevent choking, the school has a policy in regards to children **under 4 years of age**. Hot dogs must be cut in ½ inch pieces- no rounds or whole dogs. Grapes must be cut in half horizontally in ½ inch pieces. NO nuts, popcorn, raw peas, hard pretzels, spoonfuls of peanut butter or raw carrots in pieces over ½ inch, and not round. This policy is a criteria of our NAEYC accreditation.

#### ***Food Allergies -***

Your class will have an allergy list posted (with parent's permission) so you can be sensitive to the children's needs.

In the case of the enrollment of a child with life threatening food allergies (such as peanuts), we will ban those foods from the school. You will be informed, if this is the case.

If your child has any other special needs when it comes to snack, we will work with parents to insure their safety- including sitting with them, documenting how much they eat and when, etc. and will provide this information to the parents.

### ***Food Ingredients and Preparation -***

All food packages and snack ingredients from home must be in a factory-sealed container. Please do not bring any previously opened or used foods/ingredients. This will ensure the safety of foods brought from home.

If you will be cooking and preparing hot foods, please keep children out of these areas.

Liquids and foods that are hotter than 110 degrees Fahrenheit should be kept out of children's reach.

Wash all fruits and vegetables thoroughly before serving them.

Do not use plastic or styrofoam containers, plates, bags, or wraps in the microwave.

### ***Snack Selection -***

When choosing a snack please mix foods from **at least two** different food groups:

- Breads and Cereal Group
- Fruits and Vegetable Group
- Protein Group (cheese, meat, and/or soy)

Keep snacks nutritious.

### ***Cultural Foods -***

We welcome and encourage parents to bring snacks that reflect other cultures. Even if you're afraid that the kids won't like something, we encourage tasting and trying new foods. It's a great learning experience!

### ***Appropriate Suggested Snacks -***

- Cheese and apple slices with crackers
- Celery with almond butter or cream cheese for spreading (kids can spread)
- Smoothies (made with milk and fresh fruit blended in the blender)
- Quesadillas (kids can help grate cheese)
- Mini pizzas- made with English muffins, pizza sauce, cheese, etc.
- Sandwich quarters- almond or sunflower butter & jelly, ham, turkey
- Hard cooked eggs
- Ants on a Log- celery stuffed with almond butter or cream cheese and topped with raisins
- Fruit bowl or kabobs- mixed fruit in season (kids can cut soft fruits, put on kabobs)
- Cheese slices with crackers (kids can cut cheese with cookie cutters)
- Pudding (kids can help make at school)
- Muffins- blueberry, banana, pumpkin (can make with kids at school)
- Breads- corn, banana, pumpkin, raisin (kids eat better if there's something to spread on it)
- Variety of crackers- Ritz, Wheat Thins, Graham, soda
- Finger Jello (kids can cut into shapes with cookie cutters)
- Yogurt with fruit
- Bagels

### ***Additional Appropriate Suggested Snacks: 4 & 5 year olds -***

- Popcorn
- Vegetable spears (carrots, celery, cucumber) with Ranch dip
- Pretzel lollipops- stick pretzels stuck in cheese cubes, Jello cubes
- Snack mix- any variety of cereals, pretzels, nuts, popcorn. Kids can mix and scoop out their own at school

### ***Birthday Celebrations -***

We allow cupcakes or slightly sweeter snacks on birthdays. It should always be accompanied by a healthy item from another food group.

**Themed Snack –**

Any parent who may be interested in coordinating snack with a current classroom theme, feel free to contact your child’s teacher in advance for ideas.

## **DISCIPLINE**

### **DISCIPLINE GOALS**

Our goal is to teach children how to behave in a group. They need to learn self-control. This would include practicing sharing and taking turns, using words instead of fists to get what they want, and delayed gratification (waiting). We want to teach them how to treat people and things in a kind and respectful manner.

**Be Safe, Be Kind -**

Almost all school rules can be simply broken down into 2 major ideas: Be Safe and Be Kind. When disciplining a child, it is important to give them a reason for why their behavior is not ok. Use simple language and stop the inappropriate activity, and tell them why, and suggest another activity when you can.

Examples:

- “Stop throwing sand. It’s not safe. You can throw balls if you feel like throwing.”
- “It is not ok to hit another child. It is not safe or kind. When you are angry, you use your words to say how you feel and get an adult to help you.”
- “Do not crash the bikes. It is not safe.”

**Avoiding Trouble -**

Having lots of things to do, varied activities, and new challenges keeps children interested and busy and therefore less problems occur. Feel free to create games or get out additional activities when you feel some children need additional stimulation.

The strategy is to try to stop problems before they occur. If you see trouble brewing, insert yourself in the play or stand nearby. It is sometimes hard to know when to step in and when to leave it up to the kids to try to resolve, which is actually the goal. Standing nearby lets you monitor the situation, then step in if needed.

Examples:

- Children are building blocks and another child wants to play but the children aren’t letting him. You could suggest that the child build something with you OR you could suggest that you all work together on a building.
- There is lots of wild running and war play going on outside and some kids are getting frustrated. You could suggest playing hide and seek. Or some other organized game. You could insert yourself into their play and become the “bad guy” for them to chase, catch, jail, etc.
- Two children constantly talk during story time and disturb the others. You should move close to them and keep reminding them to listen.

We give children warnings before interrupting their activities. It gives them the opportunity to finish what they are doing, and can head off a meltdown.

### **Consequences -**

For the most part we try to solve any problems immediately by talking and redirecting. When children repeatedly misbehave we need to have a consequence. Time Out has generally been proven to be ineffective as a discipline tool. It is useful if you or the child is so angry you need a cooling off period, but otherwise, we avoid its use at school. ***The teacher should be notified of ongoing misbehavior so she can handle it.*** One strategy we use is to have the child go to the office for someone else to talk to him/her. They generally don't like "missing out" on what the class is doing and it can be helpful. In extreme cases, a teacher may call a parent to come pick a child up due to the child's repeated unsafe behavior. This is usually done only once to make a point with the child that we follow through and mean what we say.

Always give ONE warning before imposing a consequence (unless it is something VERY unsafe). Do not tell a child you are going to give a consequence you are not willing to follow through with. If you give a consequence, you must follow through.

Example:

- "You have had one warning to not crash the bike. If you crash again, you must get off the bike and choose another activity."
- "If you use the broom as a weapon I will have to take it away from you."
- "We do not jump out of the swings. It's not safe. If you do it again, you have to get off for today."

### **"I'm Sorry" -**

Please do not insist that a child apologizes for something they did on purpose. Chances are they are only sorry they got caught and you are setting up a power struggle if they refuse to apologize. When a child acts out, we have them help in the repair of the situation. If they push, hit, bite, etc., they are required to sit with the injured child, hold the ice for them, if necessary, help with the Band-aid, etc. If they knock down a block or sand structure, they help rebuild.

When children are forced to say they are sorry, they think that makes the behavior all better. They misbehave again and then say, "I'm sorry, I'm sorry!" They think that the situation is resolved.

We teach the kids that when they accidentally hurt someone, it makes the other child feel better when they know it's an accident. Saying, "Oh, I'm sorry, I didn't mean to step on your hand, (or whatever)" is appropriate. They still have to help repair the situation but the other child at least knows that it was not an act of aggression.

### **What to Handle Yourself, What to Tell the Teacher -**

Small incidents should be handled by our working parents. Large incidents should be turned over to the teacher to handle.

Small incidents parents can handle:

- Sand throwing
- Arguments over toys, capes
- Encouraging taking turns
- Inappropriate or unsafe use of equipment or toys

Incidents that a teacher should be made aware of:

- The same child has been seen being aggressive (hitting, pushing, biting) towards others more than once in a morning.
- Any injury- bumps, scrapes, bites, stings.
- You hear any inappropriate language (swear words, aggression, or anything sexual in nature).

### **Common Problems and What Works –**

1. When there are children waiting for a turn on the swings, we say:

*"\_\_\_\_\_ wants to swing after you. Will you give them a turn in a few minutes?"*

Return in a few minutes and tell them it is time to get off now. If they refuse, we "help" them.

2. A child wants a turn with someone's shovel, truck, broom, etc. We say:

*"\_\_\_\_\_ wants to use that when you are done. Will you give it to her when you are done, please?"* Sometimes they give it up right away, many times they remember and go give it the person. Otherwise a reminder by you 5-10 minutes later usually does the trick!

3. A child tells you that another child won't play with them or "she said she's not my friend anymore." In this situation we would ask the child who does not want to play if there is a problem you can help with. *Did something happen? Are they mad at the child for any particular reason?* If a child is "bugging" them, we need to tell the child what they are doing so they can stop.

4. Often children take breaks from each other. We point this out by saying:

*"It sounds like \_\_\_\_\_ is taking a break from playing with you. She is still your friend but wants to play with \_\_\_\_\_ right now. Does that make you sad? Is there someone else you can play with? Can I help you find something else to do?"*

5. If there is a child that annoys you (for any variety of reasons!) it is sometimes helpful to spend time with that child. Talk to her, ask her questions about her family, likes, dislikes, etc. Getting to know more about the child, observing her more closely, may bring you new insight and warmer feelings. You must try very hard to remain respectful of all the children in the class, even those who annoy you.

### **Encourage Independence -**

When children ask for help, it is always tempting to do it for them. Remember, this is a school and we want to "teach". This is how we build self-esteem. When children learn how to do something for themselves, they feel proud and capable. This is self-esteem. Just telling someone they are great doesn't build self-esteem. It comes from actions, not words.

Here are common examples of things we can help kids learn to do for themselves:

- Pulling up pants after using the toilet
- Turning on and off the water
- Putting on a cape (4 yr. old)
- Putting a jacket or sweater on, or in their cubby, or hang it on a coat hook
- Get a chair for themselves
- CLEAN UP

### **General Tips for Talking with Children -**

- Get down on their level when possible and make eye contact while talking.
- Try to avoid long moralizing discussions and keep statements simple so the children understand and don't tune you out.
- Keep your voice calm when angry or frustrated.
- It isn't always necessary to talk and comment.
- Avoid overusing praise, especially "Good job!"



- When used, praise should be specific- "It was great that you gave your bike to \_\_\_\_\_. He has been waiting for a turn. Thank you."

### **Conversations with Children -**

One of the ways we show respect to children is to have meaningful conversations with them. It says to the children, "I want to spend time with you, I like you, I care about what you say." Here are some ideas on how to start a conversation.

- Ask a child to tell you about something they are wearing. Where they got it, who gave it to them, is it one of their favorite things? etc.
- Talk about the book we read at story time. What did they like about it, or not like, does a character in the book remind you of someone.
- Ask the child to teach you how to do something- how do you draw a rainbow? Can you show me how you made that nest out of play dough? Can you teach me to make mud pie?
- Ask open ended questions- what does that block building look like to you? What did you do this weekend? Tell me about your house. Children usually like to talk about their home life. Avoid questions with one-word answers- "What color is that?" They don't lend themselves to further conversation.

### **Conversations with Other Mothers -**

If a child has had a difficult day the teacher may ask you to let the parent know at pick up time that she wants to speak to her. Please don't take it upon yourself to say, "Boy, your kid had a terrible day!" or "What did you feed your kid for breakfast? He was out of control!" While you may be kidding, the parent may feel embarrassed, upset and alienated. While some of you have teaching experience and only mean well, the parents don't know your background and it is only appropriate for the head teacher to comment. Often, there are things you don't know about the child that the teacher does, and plans may be in place with the parents for reporting on behavior. We all need to be respectful of others feelings, differences, and needs.

If you have concerns about a child's behavior, talk to the teacher privately. Never discuss a child within his hearing or that of any other children. Please limit the time spent "chatting" with other parents while working. Remember, your main job is to supervise the children and perform the duties on the job card.

### **The Most Difficult Children -**

It is our policy and goal, in accordance with the State of California and our license, to try very hard to not expel a child from preschool. We have conferences with the parents, we suggest resources or parenting classes for the family, or we may have a parent shadow the child to keep him and others safe. We work with all children and parents in a respectful and appropriate manner. If parents will work with us, we will work with them. When other children's safety is an issue, and things are not improving, we may offer suggestions for another school for the child. Expulsion is not considered unless until all other possible interventions have been exhausted. Our more comprehensive discipline policy is available in our staff handbook and is available in the office.

## **SAFETY**

**A COMPREHENSIVE SAFETY POLICY IS ON FILE IN THE OFFICE.** However, listed below are basic health and safety procedures.

### **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

We will go over safety procedures with the children and have fire drills. Once during the year we will also practice other emergency procedures (i.e. security threat). In case of fire at any point in the building:

#### **FIRE DRILL PROCEDURE**

- RING THE ALARM- PULL (there is one at each end of the hallway).
  - CALL 911- usually the director will do this, unless she is unavailable.
  - HELP EVACUATE CHILDREN ACCORDING TO FIRE DRILL PROCEDURE (Signs are posted on classroom windows)
  - FIRE EXTINGUISHERS ARE IN THE KITCHEN AND THE HALLWAY BY THE OFFICE DOOR.
1. At the sound of the alarm, one assistant will go immediately to the playground doorway, taking the children with her. The teacher and other assistants will bring the remaining children who are inside to the doorway.
  2. First assistant will lead the children out.
  3. The teacher is the last one to leave the building. She will check the bathrooms to make sure all the children are out. She will close all windows and doors in her room. She will take her sign-in sheet to recheck outside. If she is in the yard when the alarm sounds, she will go inside immediately to evacuate the children and get sign-in sheet.
  4. The leading assistant will guide the children to the fence (south fence for older groups, north fence for younger groups.) Children will line the fence holding hands.
  5. Assistant not leading the line will gather any children in the yard, hold their hands and guide them to the fence. They will check the bike yard.
  6. When everyone is at the fence, the teacher will call the roll, making sure her entire group is accounted for.
  7. Each apron has a key pinned inside a pocket (0464 key) in case of emergency evacuation from the playground. This key will unlock the gate locks.

#### **EARTHQUAKE PROCEDURE**

1. If class is inside when an earthquake occurs, the assistant teachers and teacher will help children get under a table or the loft and duck and cover. When all children are under, adults should also get under and duck and cover.
2. When shaking stops, adults should gather children, as in the fire drill procedure, and proceed to outside fence. Teacher will take roll sheet and take roll.
3. If outside when earthquake occurs, adults should gather children away from the building. All should duck and cover until shaking stops.

## **SECURITY**

Every effort is made to keep our school and its members safe. People entering the school need a code to unlock the front gate. Parents will be given this code at the beginning of the school year. We ask that you only share the code with people who need it!

In the event of a massive threat to the children's security, each teacher wears a "panic button" that she can press to sound an alarm and the police will be sent. In this situation, children will be evacuated to the St. Jude Hospital south entrance, where parents will be notified by email.

Only teachers are allowed to help children with their toileting needs- wiping bottoms, changing soiled clothes- because they have been fingerprinted and cleared by the Child Abuse Index.

## **CHILD ABUSE**

Preschool teachers are mandated reporters of child abuse. Each of us takes a Mandated Reporter training class online every year. All observations or suspicions of child abuse or neglect will be immediately reported to the child protective services agency no matter where the abuse might have occurred. The director will follow the direction of the child protective services agency regarding completion of written reports. If the parent or legal guardian of the child is suspected of abuse, the director will follow the guidance of the child protective agency regarding notification of the parent or legal guardian.

A staff member who is accused of child abuse may be suspended or given leave without pay pending investigation of the accusation. The staff member may also be removed from the classroom and given a job that does not require interaction with children. Parents or legal guardians of suspected abused children will be notified. Parents or legal guardians of other children in the program will be contacted by the director if a staff member is suspected of abuse so that they may share any concerns they have had. However, no accusation or affirmation of guilt will be made until the investigation is complete. Staff members found guilty of child abuse will be summarily dismissed or relieved of their duties. Staff who report suspicions of child abuse or neglect where they work are immune from discharge, retaliation, or other disciplinary action for that reason alone, unless it is proven that the report is malicious.

## **HEALTH**

### **ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS: Parents –**

Each participating parent must have a doctor complete a simple health assessment, ensuring that they are in good health to work as a teacher assistant. They must also provide:

- Proof of a negative TB test (Mantoux method). Adult TB tests are good for 2 years.
- Proof of immunity to measles, either by proof of vaccination or a blood test.
- Proof of a pertussis immunization within the last 10 years.
- Proof of a flu shot, or a signed statement refusing to get the flu shot.

### **ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS: Children –**

According to licensing regulations and California State law, each child must have a physical examination and current immunizations in order to participate at FCNS. Because some children have no risk factors present for the TB test, your pediatrician may not perform this test. We can only accept medical immunization exemptions signed by a licensed physician

for missing immunizations. Otherwise all children must be immunized. If an underimmunized child is attending FCNS and a vaccine preventable disease occurs in the program, that child will be notified and excluded until the risk for infection is over.

### **Daily Health Check -**

At all times you should be on the lookout for the following symptoms in your child:

- Constant cough or running nose
- Thick yellow mucous from nose
- Earache
- Rash
- Fever
- Nausea, vomiting
- Inflamed eyes
- Swollen glands
- Itching scalp- nits
- Skin lesions or spores

If any of these symptoms occur you should keep the child at home and call the family physician. You want other parents to do the same to prevent your child from becoming ill. You want to do your part to keep illness from spreading to others. A child with a suspicious throat, nose or rash will not be admitted to school. There are no provisions to care for a sick child at school.

In school your child will be:

- Observed by the teacher for the above problems
- Given first aid treatment in case of illness or accident (You will always be called if your child needs to be sent home.)
- Reminded to wash hands on arrival, before eating, after toileting, after handling pets, and when dirty
- Offered speech and vision tests for a small fee

It is necessary that you:

- Fill out the Health History when registering your child
- Have an alternate person to call in case of accident or illness at school
- Provide for your child's transportation home in case of illness
- Provide the school with current information about the means for contacting both parents in case of an emergency, if possible.
- In the event of a medical emergency, 9-1-1 will be called and the child will be transported to Saint Jude Hospital, if necessary. Parents will also be called immediately.

### **UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS -**

When working in the classroom, please observe these health precautions:

- Handwashing is the #1 preventative measure to avoid the spread of disease. Wash hands frequently and well- using soap and water. This includes washing upon arrival on your working day, after handling bodily fluids, before snack, after cleaning, before preparing or serving food, after playing in water that is shared by more than two people, after using the rest room, handling garbage, and after handling pets or materials such as sand, dirt or surfaces that might be contaminated by contact with animals. The teachers do this as well. There are handwashing instructions posted above the sinks.
- Disposable latex gloves are provided in a box on the windowsill by the Kleenex box for you to use when dealing with body fluids (bloody noses, skinned knees, cleaning bathroom).
- Cleaning solutions are available in each classroom (in the locked cabinets) to sanitize and clean tables **before and after snack**. Please use microfiber towels on the tables before snack and on the bathroom counters and toilet seats.

- Children with sores on their hands are not permitted to participate in communal water play. This will ensure that communal water does not spread infectious disease.

**COMMUNICABLE DISEASES -**

You must report to the director if your child is ill with a communicable disease, so that it may be determined whether the group has been exposed. If so, notices will be sent home.

**Do not send your child to school if he/she is not entirely well.** A child with a constant cough, thick mucous from the nose, or fever should be kept home until symptoms disappear. The same applies to scheduled parent assistants.

**SCHOOL EXCLUSION POLICY -**

<b>DISEASE</b>	<b>INCUBATION PERIOD</b>	<b>SCHOOL EXCLUSION</b>
Chicken Pox	10-21 days	7 days after appearance of first crop, or until rash is completely dry and crusted over.
Scarlet Fever	2-7 days	24 hours if receiving medical treatment. One week isolation if not under medical care.
Head Lice	8-14 days	Until treated and all nits are destroyed.
Impetigo		Until treated for 24 hours.
Ringworm		Must be under medical care. Lesions should be covered.
Strep Throat		Until treated for 24 hours.
Conjunctivitis		Until treated for 24 hours

**MEDICATION POLICY -**

In general, we do not give medications at school. However, if your child has severe allergies, we may keep an Epi-pen in a locked box in the office for use in an emergency. Any medication kept in the office must be labeled with the child’s first and last name, doctor’s name, expiration date, manufacturer’s instructions, or the original prescription label that details the name, strength of the medication and the directions for administering and storing the medication. There must be written permission from the parent or legal guardian with specific instructions on how and when to administer the medication, included with the medication itself. No over the counter medications are ever given to any child. We don’t not apply sunscreen. You may apply it before school- or during, if you are working in the class that day.

**Cleaning Products**

We use eco-friendly and safe cleaning products. Data sheets are available in the office. We are committed to using products that will not harm children or adults by breathing in the fumes or by touching the product. In most cases our products have little to no scent. Our choice of furnishings, materials, supplies, and procedures are designed to limit exposure to environmental health hazards. We do not use scented or unscented candles, air fresheners, or essential oils anywhere in the facility.

**Pesticide Use**

We follow the Healthy Schools act in regard to pesticides and pest prevention. If any kind of spraying were to occur, you would be notified in advance.

## **OTHER POLICIES**

### **FIELD TRIP POLICY**

We take several field trips throughout the year. Of course, all field trips are optional, and you may keep your child at home on field trips days if you so desire.

#### ***Carpools-***

You are welcome to arrange a carpool among your fellow classmates. FCNS is not involved in these arrangements. Be sure to use the proper car seats for all children at all times! Teachers are not allowed to transport children in their vehicles.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY**

Your children's files are kept in the school office. These files include enrollment forms, final conference reports, health assessments provided by physicians, results of health screenings conducted at school after parent authorization, reports of diagnostic assessments released to the school by parents, individual education plans, etc.

The only people authorized to look in them are the director, the teachers, and our health chairman, who checks to see that the proper immunizations have been given and that the immunizations are up to date. Parents or legal guardians are welcome to see their individual child's file at any time. Community Care Licensing is also allowed to spot check files when they make their unannounced visits.

Because the staff at FCNS works as a team, each adult knows and interacts at times with every child. Therefore, all observations and other assessment data may be shared with all staff members. Information about family situations, special needs, and other sensitive issues is shared only on a need-to-know basis. Other adults working within the school are only informed of such sensitive issues when they are a part of keeping the child safe or supporting the child's inclusion. When your child leaves our school, the files are shredded after five years.

### **GRIEVANCE POLICY**

If a parent has any concerns about a teacher, the curriculum, policy, or another member there are several people he/she can talk to. First on the list is the teacher. If that is not possible, the director or group representative may help you. You may also call the school's president.

If you feel an issue is not being handled properly, you may take the issue to the board meeting (third Wednesday of the month at 7:00 PM). It is always a good idea to write your concerns down so that there is a written record of your complaint. Be as specific as possible. FCNS makes every effort to hear and address member's concerns.

## **WITHDRAWAL**

If you wish to withdraw your child from nursery school, you must notify the director or the membership chairman of the school in writing, 30 days in advance. You are responsible for tuition and working in the classroom for this period. Registration fees are NOT refundable