



***PARENT
HANDBOOK***

2024-2025

The Village Nursery School, Inc. is a non-profit, non-denominational preschool that does not discriminate in providing services to children and their families or in its employment policies on the basis of race, religion, cultural heritage, political beliefs, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability. Children are not required to be toilet trained to attend Village Nursery School.

School policy is set by the Board of Trustees whose membership is comprised of the director, parents, alumni, and or community members serving 1, 2 or 3 year staggered terms. A volunteer Parent Association assists the director and a business manager in the daily operation of the school. A paid professional teaching staff is led by the director.

The Village Nursery School is licensed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Office of Early Education and Care. The office is located at:

324-R Clark Street
Worcester, MA 01606
(508) 461-1454

Parents may contact the above EEC office at any time to inquire for the compliance record of the Village Nursery School.



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HISTORY OF THE VILLAGE NURSERY SCHOOL

Early in 1953, members of the Couples' Club of the Harvard Unitarian Church, realizing a local need, opened a non-sectarian nursery school, naming the Couples' Club as the parent organization. The school's first planning committee included: Esther Fairbanks, Lois Johnson, Bernard Pond, Nancy Donaldson, George Hill, Charles Briggs and Chick Doe. Emilie Coolidge served as advisor. Sixteen preschool age children were enrolled in the first class and tuition rates were set at \$15.00 per month. The school was housed until 1956 in the Alliance Rooms of the old Unitarian Church, which later burned to the ground in 1964. Equipment was donated and made by parents, who also ran several fund-raisers for the school each year.

In 1954-55 a set of bylaws was established for the Village Nursery School and a Board of Trustees was elected to manage the school. In 1955 Dr. Abigail Eliot joined the Board as its Advisor. Dr. Eliot, founder and director of the Eliot-Pearson School of Nursery Education at Tufts University, was nationally known as a pioneer in early childhood education. She was the guiding light in formulating the educational policy at the Village Nursery School (VNS). Her valuable experience in practical administration helped the Board develop a sense of professionalism. Dr. Eliot continued her active affiliation with the school Board, and was a frequent observer in the classrooms until 1970.

When the facilities at the old Unitarian Church became crowded, the Finkelppearl House in Shaker Village became the temporary quarters for the school in 1956. At that time the church's Fellowship Building was in its planning stage, and two rooms of the floor plan were designated for the nursery school. The building was completed in the fall of 1959 and the school then moved in. Again, parents helped to build inside and outside equipment. The annual Spring Dance was initiated in 1962 as a source of revenue for a new scholarship fund.

In 1963 the population of the town had grown to the point where the Board of Directors voted to begin double sessions. Enrollment climbed to 62 students with a waiting list for all groups.

The Village Nursery School became an independent, non-profit organization in 1968. In order to maintain a liaison with the Unitarian Church, a member of the Standing Committee of the Unitarian Church also sat on the nursery school Board of Trustees

After the public kindergarten law was implemented in Harvard in 1974, the Village Nursery School opened classes to the three-year-olds in town. In the spring of 1975, an experimental extended day class was initiated and the following fall it became a part of the school's programs.

During the 1989-1990 school year The Village Nursery School made plans to lease space in the Hildreth Elementary School for the next several years. This move would provide larger classrooms for the expansion of the nursery school's program offerings. Fundraising, such as The Village Nursery School's publishing of The Harvard Phone Book allowed the school to afford such a move. During the school year of 1989-1990 and summer of 1990, parents and teachers worked to help move the school to the public school building and set up classrooms. In the fall of 1990 the Nursery School opened in the Elementary School with three four-year-old classes, two three-year-old classes. Extended Day for both preschoolers and kindergarteners was also offered.

In 1992, after having learned that the Elementary School would not be able to offer VNS a long term leasing option, the Board of Trustees formed a building committee. In December of 1994 the school selected a parcel of land on Poor Farm Road in Harvard. After a lengthy pre-construction process, the school began construction in the spring of 1996. In September of 1996, with great excitement and a sense of permanence, The Village Nursery School opened its doors at 40 Poor Farm Road. In 1997 VNS added kindergarten to its program offerings.

PHILOSOPHY

The primary goal of the Village Nursery School is to provide a preschool education that is a healthy and happy experience. We recognize each child as an individual and foster an environment where everyone has the opportunity to develop at their own rate emotionally, socially, physically, and intellectually.

Our teachers challenge students to progress to new levels of maturity and learning while maintaining a secure atmosphere that is relaxed, supportive, and responsive to the fundamental needs and differences of each child. All children are encouraged to undertake new adventures and to acquire a diverse repertoire of developmental skills and experiences by working or playing independently or cooperatively with their peers, or in close interaction with the teaching staff.

The variety in and appropriateness of early childhood education contributes significantly to the growth of sound bodies, healthy personalities and positive attitudes toward learning. It is important to provide foundations for learning that are stimulating in materials, activities and opportunities.

The Village Nursery School offers small classes, each of which is supervised by either a head teacher and assistant teacher or a team of two co-teachers. The school employs an EEC qualified director, teachers, and assistants. When necessary, early childhood specialists may also be consulted to help meet the needs of the children and uphold the school's philosophy and goals.



THE DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAM AT VNS

Our most important function at The Village Nursery School is to ensure that each child's first school experience is a safe, joyful, and enriching one. Our program is developmental with the following underlying assumptions implicit:

- 1) child development follows a natural sequence and there are general characteristics which may be observed at different stages of development;
- 2) each child's development varies from every other child's;
- 3) each child's individual personality must always be respected, as must their personal home environment;
- 4) each child should be allowed to comfortably progress at their own rate without being hurried;
- 5) children learn through play and their play is their work;
- 6) children learn best in an ordered, yet stimulating environment;
- 7) children deserve an environment which provides them with a sense of security that will foster the development of a positive self-image;
- 8) children deserve the time to experience the joys of childhood.

We will not confuse intelligence with maturity. We will challenge the children without pressuring them to perform beyond what we as professionals perceive to be an appropriate, comfortable level for each child.

A truly developmental program should provide for as many individual needs as possible within the confines of what is age-appropriate in the class. Our program offers many different classes to accommodate many different needs. All of our classrooms provide a wide variety of materials and enrichment activities. Many are teacher-made to suit specific needs within the class. Learning centers are provided daily to allow the children to enjoy activities of their choice. The literature based, integrated curriculum presents math, science, language, fine and gross motor, and music activities.

THE TWO-YEAR-OLD PROGRAM.

ART

- Sensory explorations including water, sand, paint, playdough, and other materials
- Painting
- Glue
- Crayons, markers, dot markers

MATH

- Counting
- Soft blocks
- Shapes
- Colors

LITERACY AND LANGUAGE

- Invitations to play and explore new materials, manipulatives, and age appropriate toys
- Rich, responsive language experiences
- Reading Aloud
- Singing

SCIENCE

- Sensory explorations
- Nature walks
- Seasonal changes

SOCIAL STUDIES

- Responsive care from teachers, strengthening social and emotional development
- Social interaction modeling
- Self awareness

MUSIC

- Singing
- Instruments
- Listening to music
- Dancing and movement

Dramatic Play

- Theme oriented dramatic play
- Dress-up
- Play house
- Manipulative play (animals, people, dolls, etc..)
- Puppets

THE THREE-YEAR-OLD PROGRAM

ART

- Introduction to and experimentation with media such as paint, watercolors, and play-dough
- 3D sculptures
- Gluing
- Cutting
- Collage
- Drawing (pre-writing)
- Printing

MATH

- Counting
- Patterns
- Sorting, classifying
- Beginning number recognition
- Shapes
- Blocks

LITERACY & LANGUAGE

- Show and tell
- Reading aloud
- Name recognition
- Conversation with teacher and peers
- Group conversation
- Letter recognition
- Rhyming

SCIENCE

- Nature walks
- Observation skills
- Animals
- Seasonal changes
- Cooking
- Exploration of basic science concepts
- Sensory table (sand, rice, etc.)

MUSIC

- Singing
- Dancing
- Instruments

SOCIAL STUDIES

- Being part of a group
- Friendship skills
- Taking turns

- Respect for others
- Listening
- Self-awareness
- Cooperative play
- Following directions
- Sharing

DRAMATIC PLAY

- Puppets
- Dress-up
- Theme oriented dramatic play (igloo, bear cave)
- Play house
- Manipulative play (animals, people, cars, etc.)

THE FOUR-YEAR-OLD PROGRAM

ART

- Collage materials/free exploration
- Painting
- Cutting
- Gluing
- Drawing (recognizable pictures)
- Thematic art projects
- Textures

MATH

- Sorting and classifying
- Patterning
- Counting
- Number recognition
- Hands on activities
- Measuring
- Graphing

LITERACY AND LANGUAGE

- Themes (Forests, Famous Artists, Fairy Tales, Favorite Authors, etc...)
- Letter identification
- Rhyming
- Word patterns
- Exposure to print
- Writing names
- Reading aloud
- Show and tell
- Journals
- Dictate stories
- Class books

SCIENCE

- Cooking
- Blocks
- Magnets
- Mixing colors
- Seasonal changes
- Nature walk
- Animals

- Life cycle

MUSIC

- Singing
- Dancing
- Instruments
- Rhythmic patterns
- Celebrations and performances

SOCIAL STUDIES

- Respect for others
- Exposure to cultural diversity
- Friendship skills
- Self-awareness
- Map skills
- Multicultural books, food, games
- Cooperative games
- Self-esteem building
- Kindness and compassion

DRAMATIC PLAY

- Puppets – creative storytelling
- Dress-up
- Theme oriented dramatic play (gingerbread house, Japanese tea-house, rocket ship, office, etc.)
- Role playing

ACTIVITY OR MATERIAL	VALUE TO THE CHILD
Blocks	Stimulates imagination, a setting for diverse dramatic play. Offers opportunity to develop eye-hand coordination, a sense of balance, recognition of basic 3-dimensional shapes, number concepts, and concepts of more or less. Social interaction.
Wooden trucks, trains, accessory toys Open shelf:	Imaginative play; social interaction; dramatic play; coordination. Solitary and group interaction; freedom of choice of activity; responsibility for replacement of activity to proper place.
Puzzles	Eye-hand coordination; finger dexterity; awareness of shape; following patterns; problem solving.
Design blocks	Development of color perception; awareness of differences in size and shape; dexterity.
Pegs and peg patterns	Visual perception in finding and keeping one's place; develop sense of spatial relationship; form constancy; ability to copy patterns of different visual planes.
Stringing beads	Small muscle development; sequencing.
Geoboards	Visual organization; ability to relate part to whole; problem solving techniques.
Tracing templates	Eye-hand coordination; preparation for writing; accuracy.
Housekeeping corner	Dramatic, imaginative play; emotional outlet; social contacts; social cooperation; language development; opportunity to act out life experiences.

ACTIVITY OR MATERIAL	VALUE TO THE CHILD
Dress-up, puppets, masks	Self-expression of world around them through a "make believe person"; social interaction; emotional outlet.
Circle time	Opportunity for self-expression; speaking experience before a group; obtaining desired information through questions and answers; recognizing the need and value of communication; recognition of individual's worth; news and information exchange; listening; politeness.
Carpentry	Large and small muscle development; eye-hand coordination; imaginative construction; three-dimensional experience in creativity; safety; living within limits; sense of self-accomplishment and confidence.
Nature study:	Increase child's awareness, curiosity, and understanding of natural forces and the environment; develop a respect for all living things.
Leaves, seeds, shells	Awareness of differences in size and shape; develop ability to sort according to characteristics.
Seasons, calendar, weather	Sense of time; awareness of cycles in life.
Caterpillars, frogs, chicks, seeds, bulbs, plants	Awareness of growth and development; needs of all living things (light, air, food, temperature).
Scales, rulers	Measurement.
Pond water, micro pond creatures, dinosaurs	Awareness of differences in forms of living things.
Music:	Appreciation of a variety of forms of music; auditory discrimination; listening.
Recordings	Stimulation of imagination; awareness of differences in sound (high/low, slow/fast, soft/loud).
Toy instruments	Appreciation of musical qualities through self-experience; coordination; self-expression; auditory discrimination.
Finger plays, songs, nursery rhymes	Auditory memory development; auditory discrimination; vocabulary and speech development.
Dancing	Spontaneity; coordination; awareness of body parts.
Art:	Creative experience through a variety of materials; self-expression.
Cutting	Dexterity; small muscle development; eye-hand coordination.
Clay, finger-paint, play dough	Creative, sensory experience; manipulation; experiences in dimension; composition; tension outlet; social interaction.
Pasting, collage, crayoning, easel painting, wet chalk, etc.	Small muscle activity; self-expression; experience in color, shape, texture; spontaneity.
Stories, picture books	Widen the child's world; increase social understanding; recognition of written word as means of communication; stretch attention span; increase vocabulary; listening skills; appreciation of books, stories, poems; left to right sequence; top to bottom sequence.
Playground:	Large muscle coordination; social skills; awareness of natural environment.
Sandbox, water play	An emotional outlet; sensory experienced opportunity for solitary, parallel, or cooperative play; measuring; experimental time; coordination; volume; cooperation.
Jungle gym, swings, climbing equipment	Large muscle activity; balance and co-ordination development; social growth; safety education.
Field trips	Expansion of classroom experiences; broadening knowledge of community; self-responsibility in new environment; following directions; listening skills.
Birthdays	Recognition of self-importance; peer recognition.
Clean-up	Care of environment; sense of orderliness and cooperation; respect for own and other's properties; self-satisfaction in completion of task; following directions.

ACTIVITY OR MATERIAL	VALUE TO THE CHILD
Toileting, hand washing	Experience in good health habits; self-direction; completing a sequence of activity.
Juice, snacks	Opportunity for eating and talking with others; social contacts; practice in pouring; taking turns; self-reliance; awareness of basic nutrition.

NUTRITION

Food for birthday and holiday celebrations is welcome, but please notify the classroom teacher ahead of time. There may be allergies or food restrictions in your child's class.

Parents should alert the classroom teacher of any food allergies their child may have.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE VILLAGE NURSERY SCHOOL IS A NUT-SAFE SCHOOL.

HEALTHY SNACKS FOR KIDS: suggested by the Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital.

1. Vegetables (red pepper strips, carrots or celery) with low fat ranch dressing
2. Whole wheat pita slices with hummus
3. Low fat yogurt cup with berries on top
4. Fruit: grapes, apple, orange or melon slices
5. Low fat popcorn
6. Dry whole grain cereal: Barbara's Cinnamon Puffins or Kashi Go Lean Crunch
7. Low fat cottage cheese cup with sliced melon
8. Part-skim mozzarella string cheese sticks
9. Box of raisins or dried cranberries
10. Fruit smoothie made with a frozen banana, low fat yogurt and berries
11. 100% fruit juice pop (frozen)
12. Whole grain toast with a slice of reduced fat cheese
13. Low fat yogurt cup
14. Low fat pudding cup
15. Baked chips with salsa
16. Turkey and reduced fat cheese roll ups
17. Whole wheat crackers (such as Triscuit or Ak Mok crackers with a scoop of low fat cottage cheese)
18. Trail mix with high fiber cereal and dried fruit*
19. Frozen banana dipped on low fat chocolate pudding
20. Small slice of vegetable and cheese pizza

***VNS IS A NUT SAFE SCHOOL**

We strive to keep peanuts and tree nuts out of the school. We ask for help from parents to check all ingredients when packing snacks and lunches each day. Teachers will read ingredient labels and may send an item home with a note if there are any questions that an item may contain nuts.

All Village Nursery School staff members receive training in USDA recognized nutrition requirements for the health, growth, and development of children as well as food choking hazards. The training includes the following:

- Good nutrition and why it is important.
- Meal patterns – what are they and how are they different for each age group
- Snacks – what should be included in a nutritionally complete snack.
- Information on the five main food components of milk, meat and meat alternatives, vegetables, fruits, and grains, and breads that are used in meal patterns.
- USDA Food Guide for children.
- Foods that may cause choking in children and how to respond appropriately.
- The importance of physical activity.
- The importance of a curriculum for children that includes nutrition education.

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

PROGRAMS

Sessions/Staffing

The Village Nursery School offers programs for children from twenty-one months through 6 years 0 months.. The student-teacher ratio in the two year old class is approximately four to one. The ratio in the three-year-old classes is approximately six to one, in the Young 4's class is approximately six to one, the Pre-K classes is approximately eight to one. Teachers are fully qualified under The Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) guidelines, and frequently have several years of professional experience, advanced degrees, and coursework in early childhood education.

Extended Day

In addition to its regular programs, the Village Nursery School offers extended day sessions after school, lunch bunch from 11:45-12:55, and Extended Day from 1-3 and for 1 hour before school (8-9am), as a service to children and their families. Classes are supervised by members of the school staff who engage the children in group and individual activities that make full use of the school's facilities, equipment, and supplies. Teachers create enriching activities and curriculum appropriate for the children's development and interests. The afternoon program follows a predictable schedule each day, including 30 minutes of quiet rest time, snack, activities, and outdoor play.

Pre-registration for your child to attend extended day is required. Please sign up with Maureen before the school year begins if you are interested in signing up for this program.

The fees for extended day are based on an hourly rate of \$16.00. Early morning drop off is billed at \$16.00, regardless of the time you drop off between 8-9am. Parents are billed monthly and payment, in cash, check, or credit card is required upon receipt of the bill.

Please be respectful of the teacher's time. Last pick up Monday through Thursday is at 3pm and Fridays at 3pm. Late pick-ups will result in a \$1 per minute payment made directly to the teacher. Families who incur such a late fee will be invoiced.

ADMISSIONS

Enrollment Procedures

Any family with a child at least 21 months of age by Sept. 1 may apply for a spot at the Village Nursery School. We encourage all families who are interested in the school to take a personal tour with the Director. At that time the prospective families are able to view the classes in session through the viewing windows. They are apprised of the school's philosophy and curriculum as well as practical issues such as daily schedules, music, and enrichment specials, and outdoor play. They are made aware of extra options such as extended day, enrichment classes and Parent Association activities. All policies and procedures pertaining to the school are discussed in the Parent Handbook which is offered to the families. The application covers the procedures for admission as well as the cost of each program.

All applications that are received by January 31st, are put into the application pool. Current students, their siblings, and alumni families are placed in the first pool. Priority is given to Current students, their siblings, then alumni. All current students are guaranteed an age appropriate spot the following year. If asking for a spot outside your child's appropriate age bracket, please speak to the director. Incoming families(new to VNS) through a second pool, fill the remaining slots. Those applications must be received by February 15th. If there are more applicants than spots, a lottery will be conducted. A class specific waiting list is kept for any student for whom a slot is not available. They are offered a placement at any time during the year should one become available.

Once admissions are determined every effort will be made to accommodate parents' preferences in class assignments, however the Director's discretion will be used in balancing classes in order to achieve an optimal preschool experience for the students. Shortly after notification of acceptance VNS will issue an

enrollment contract for each student. This contract will contain a statement of agreement as well as of tuition liability.

Age Requirement

Children applying for the two-year-old class must be 21 months old by September 1. Children applying for a three-year-old class must be 2 years, 9 months by September 1st.. Children applying for the Young Fours Program will turn four between Sep 1st and February 1st. Children applying for the Pre-K Program must be 4 years old by September 1.

Required Medical Forms

Health requirements are to be completed before the opening date of school. The child will not be allowed to attend classes without all health forms on file. Parents must provide a written statement from a physician that indicates that the child has had a complete physical examination within one year of each enrollment. The school will waive this statement if a parent indicates in writing that he/she objects to such an examination on the grounds that it conflicts with his/her religious beliefs.

It is mandated by the Department of Public Health that parents have their children screened for lead paint poisoning by a physician or appropriate clinic at ages 2 and 3. Dated proof of a lead test must be provided.

Age Appropriate Immunizations

Parents must provide a physician’s certificate that their child has been successfully immunized in accordance with the current Department of Public Health’s recommended schedules against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (whooping cough), poliomyelitis, chicken pox, HIB, Hep B, measles, and other such communicable diseases as specified by the Office of Early Education and Care. No child shall be required to have any such immunization if his/her parents object, in writing, on the grounds that it conflicts with their religious beliefs or if the child’s physician submits documentation that such a procedure is contraindicated.

Parent Authorization, Consents, Information

Parents must provide the following: a brief physical and developmental history of the child, an emergency medical procedure permission form, an allergy record sheet, a permission slip for class field trips, and a written authorization for any person other than a parent to take the child from the school at the termination of the day, a signed transportation plan, a form to administer medication if applicable.

Tuition and Fees

A non-refundable registration fee is due when the application is made. The Board of Trustees sets tuition payment schedules each year. Enrollment is secured with a non-refundable tuition deposit after acceptances have been communicated. Special arrangements for payment schedules may be made with the Business Manager. **Upon signing an enrollment contract, families are responsible for the full year’s tuition.**

Scholarships generally are available for those seeking financial assistance. All information is strictly confidential and is reviewed only by Finance Committee members. Applications may be obtained from the Director.

	Two's Programs
Contract	\$785
August 1	\$392.50
Sept. 1	\$392.50
Oct. 1	\$392.50
Nov. 1	\$392.50
Dec. 1	\$392.50
Jan. 1	\$392.50

Feb. 1	\$392.50
March 1	\$392.50
TOTAL	\$3,925.00

	Three's Programs	
	Two Day 3's	MWF 3's
Contract	\$877.60	\$1318.60
Aug 1	\$438.80	\$659.30
Sept 1	\$438.80	\$659.30
Oct 1	\$438.80	\$659.30
Nov 1	\$438.80	\$659.30
Dec 1	\$438.80	\$659.30
Jan 1	\$438.80	\$659.30
Feb 1	\$438.80	\$659.30
Mar 1	\$438.80	\$659.30
TOTAL	\$4,388.00	\$6593.00

	Four's Programs		
	Young Fours	Pre-K	Creative Connections
Contract	\$1,219.00	\$1,563.00	\$402.00
Aug 1	\$609.50	\$781.50	\$201
Sept 1	\$609.50	\$781.50	\$201
Oct 1	\$609.50	\$781.50	\$201
Nov 1	\$609.50	\$781.50	\$201
Dec 1	\$609.50	\$781.50	\$201
Jan 1	\$609.50	\$781.50	\$201
Feb 1	\$609.50	\$781.50	\$201
Mar 1	\$609.50	\$781.50	\$201
TOTAL	\$6095	\$7,815.00	\$2010.00

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

Calendar

VNS operates for 36 weeks, with one week of a summer program option if we can secure staffing annually. We begin in September just after Labor Day, and end in the middle of June, with two weeks off in December. A calendar is supplied in the summer newsletter for incoming students.

Clothing

Children's clothing should be simple, comfortable and sturdy. Old clothes are best for painting and similar activities. Children can best learn to dress themselves if snowsuits, boots or rubbers are large enough to put on easily. Children must be dressed appropriately for school, including a diaper, Pull-Up, or underwear. An extra shirt, slacks, underpants, socks and slippers (for the students in the three-day classes) should be left at school. **THE CHILD'S NAME MUST BE MARKED ON ALL THEIR CLOTHING, LUNCH BOXES, WATER BOTTLES, BACKPACKS, ETC...**

Special Events

Birthdays are observed simply. Your child's teacher will communicate their plans for celebrating birthdays.

The children will discuss and learn about the holidays of various cultures and be involved in activities appropriate to the event.

Field Trips

The classroom teachers with the assistance of their room parent will organize all field trips making sure that the venue is safe, available, and age appropriate. Parents will be required to sign permission slips for each individual field trip.

Children will wear identification badges which will include the name, address, and phone number of the Village Nursery School.

Teachers will carry cell phones, emergency forms, authorized medications, and first aid kits.

Any parent who will be driving a child other than their own must have on file with the Director a copy following: driver's license, registration, automobile inspection, proof of insurance (100,000-300,000), and CORI report.

Transportation Plan

The Village Nursery School does not provide transportation. Each parent is responsible for transportation to and from school and must provide a signed Transportation Form to the Director. It will be placed in the child's file.

When a parent or authorized adult brings a child to school they must park in designated areas and TURN OFF their car. The child must then be escorted to their classroom where the adult will make contact with the teacher and hand off their child to the VNS staff member. At pick-up each child will be dismissed one at a time to their designated adult and teachers will sign them out.

Parents may volunteer to drive a child other than their own to a field trip provided the following plan is implemented:

- there is signed permission from all parents for each trip
- each child has their own car seat which is installed in the back seat

- the parent who is driving has had a CORI check
- volunteer drivers have provided the director with a copy of their drivers license, car Inspection, and registration as well as proof of insurance.
- the teachers as well as all drivers carry cell phones

Other Miscellaneous Information

1. Parents must notify the appropriate teacher and give written permission for a child to leave school with anyone but a parent. This is a strictly enforced safety measure at VNS.

2. If a child will be absent from school, the Director should be notified as soon as possible at info@villagenurseryschool.org or 978-456-3993.

3. **On snow days VNS will be canceled if the Harvard Public Schools are canceled, or delayed if the Harvard Public Schools have a delayed opening.** School cancellations will be announced on local news outlets. VNS will also make announcements via the VNS Facebook page.

4. Children are not encouraged to bring toys to school during the first days of school. Each classroom teacher will make their wishes known regarding toys from home. Often these are allowed, even encouraged, for show and tell. However, **toy guns and knives, sharp pointed objects, fragile toys, candy, and money may not be brought to school at any time.** Items smaller than a fist may be easily lost and should also not be brought.

5. All items brought to school must be labeled.

6. Students must be promptly picked up at dismissal time. Five minutes after dismissal time, students who have not been picked up will be brought to sit with the director outside her office. Parents will be charged \$1 per minute if late to pick up their child.

7. The doors of the classrooms will open at 9:00 a.m. Or 8:45 depending on the classroom start time. If students arrive before school is open, please wait until the appropriate time to drop your child off.

8. Due to space constraints, lunch boxes cannot be refrigerated. If food spoilage is a concern, lunch box ice packs are recommended.

9. There is a parent space located on the first floor, as well as a library area on the second floor available for gatherings at any time.

10. The cost of the summer program may vary but will be indicated on the sign-up sheets.

Media Policy

Teachers frequently take pictures in the classroom to document activities and developmental progress. These photos may be displayed in the classroom or within the school. Pictures are saved to a password protected school account and are used outside the classroom only when written parental permission is given. Permission must be given for photos and videos to be used on school social media sites, advertising, website, and classroom distribution. Once photos are saved to the school account they are deleted by teachers on any personal devices.

Identifying pictures of children will only be posted with parent permission to our private Facebook page.

Similarly, parents who take pictures of children at school may only post pictures of their own children.

ORGANIZATION OF THE SCHOOL

Staff

The staff includes the School Director, Assistant Director, teachers, and assistant teachers. A healthcare consultant is on-call. Educational and mental health professionals are available to consult with the staff as needed. All staff complete the EEC required Background Record Check.

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees, the governing body of the school, is composed of the director, elected parent representation, community members, and alumni. The Board meets quarterly and minutes of the meetings, which are open to parents, are available upon request.

Parents

Active parent participation is welcomed. Parents are also invited to participate as members of the Parent Association, which works closely with the director and the business manager.

Volunteers

As the Village Nursery School is fully staffed with paid professionals the use of volunteers is minimal. However occasionally we may have a student intern or a parent volunteer with us on a limited basis. In such cases the Director will provide that volunteer with a parent and staff handbook so they may be familiar with all policies and procedures. No volunteer will be allowed to be in contact with the students unless under the direct supervision of VNS staff.

The Director will document the dates and hours of service as well the responsibilities of the volunteer and provide requested feedback to a student who may have an academic supervisor. All volunteers must have an EEC Background Records Check.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parent Visits

Parents are always welcome at VNS. In addition to scheduled visits and observation days in their child's classrooms, parents may speak to their child's teacher about spending time in the classroom.

Parent Communication

The Village Nursery School constantly strives to maintain open and continuous communication with its families. Before enrolling in the school all families are given individual tours by the Director, at which time a complete introduction to the school's philosophy, curriculum, and practical matters pertaining to enrollment are discussed. The parents are encouraged to ask any questions they may have. The application for admission as well as the contract contains information pertaining to the procedures for admission, tuition rates, and withdrawal policies. A detailed newsletter including the yearly calendar and the staff biographies are mailed to all families in July and August. Throughout the year, each educator sends daily or weekly reports to their students and families in regard to what is happening in their classroom. Newsletters and memos are emailed from the administration as well as the Parent Association along with occasional memos placed in cubbies. Parents are encouraged to bring any questions or concerns to educators and administrators at any time during the year.

Reports to Parents

Teachers prepare a written progress report of each child's participation in the school program twice a year. These reports are maintained in the child's school record. The school will provide a copy of the child's report to the parent for their comments and signature.

Special problems or significant developments are brought to the parent's attention as soon as they arise.

Parent Conferences

Teachers meet individually with parents to discuss the child's activities and participation in the school at conferences at the end of January. These reports are based on the teacher's observations of the child and their work and address all areas of development. In addition, parents may request individual meetings with school personnel at any time. Appointments with the child development consultant may also be arranged by request to the Director.

Parent Participation

VNS depends on parents as integral members of the VNS organization. Parents are welcome to share their talents and experiences with the children, assisting with such activities as transportation for field trips and

special and routine class functions, and providing classroom snacks. The Parent Association provides for additional opportunities for families to become active with the VNS community.

Parent Conduct

Behavior of parents/guardians may result in termination of care. All parents and staff are expected to mutually respect one another, both in behavior and language. If at any time a parent speaks to any staff member, either in person or written communication, in such a manner that the staff person feels threatened or uncomfortable, the Director and Board of Trustees may decide that we are no longer able to provide care. Should such a situation occur, care will be terminated, and the family will forfeit their tuition deposits. Conversely, if a parent has an interaction with a staff member that they are not comfortable with, they should bring it to the attention of the director immediately.

RECORDS AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Childrens' Records

While the student is enrolled in the Village Nursery School, the school maintains a written record for each child that includes a fact sheet identifying the child, periodic progress reports, medical records, necessary authorizations and consents, and pertinent correspondence.

Maintenance of Records

The School Director is responsible for maintenance and supervision of each child's records. Questions, issues or requests regarding these confidential records should be discussed with the Director. Upon written request the school will transfer a child's records to the parents. After five years all records will be destroyed.

Confidentiality and Distribution of Records

Information contained in a child's school record is privileged and confidential. The school will not distribute or release this information to anyone not directly related to implementing the program plan for the child without the parent (s) written consent. The school will notify parents in the event their child's record is subpoenaed.

Parents may have access to their child's record at reasonable times, upon request. In no event will such access be delayed more than two business days after the initial request without the parent's consent. Upon such request for access, the child's entire record will be made available.

The school maintains a permanent, written log in each child's record indicating any persons to whom recorded information has been released. This log is available only to the child's parents and the school Director.

Amending the Child's Record

Parents have the right to add information, comments, data, or any other relevant materials to their child's record. Parents are also entitled to request deletion or amendment of recorded information. Such a request may be made if the parent is of the opinion that adding information is not sufficient to explain, clarify, or correct objectionable material in their child's record. In this event, the parent has the right to confer with the school to make his/her objections known. The school is then obliged to render, within one week of the conference, a written decision. If this decision is in favor of the parent, the school will take immediate steps to put the decision into effect.

Transition Plan

Transition within the Village Nursery School

The VNS Director and staff meet in late spring to determine the placement of children currently in a VNS program into a developmentally appropriate program for the following school year.. These determinations are made with the best interest of each child in mind and include parental requests, social and personality compatibility and gender ratios. Class lists are published and mailed to the parents during the summer.

Before leaving the twos, three's, and young fours classes, the children are given the opportunity to visit the teachers and classrooms of their next programs. In addition each class hosts a visiting day for students and parents the day before school opens. Information on helping children make a smooth and comfortable entry into school is provided to parents in the summer newsletter.

Transitions from the Village Nursery School

Personnel from the local public schools may request a visit in the spring to meet students entering their systems in the fall. If requested, a copy of the children's records may be forwarded to them in order to assist with assessment and placement.

NO INFORMATION WILL BE SHARED AMONG VNS STAFF OR OTHER EDUCATIONAL PROFESSIONALS WITHOUT WRITTEN PARENTAL CONSENT

Transfer of Records

Upon written request of the parent, the school will transfer the child's record to the parent, or any other person the parent identifies, when the child is no longer enrolled.

Availability of Information to the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC)

An authorized employee of the State EEC may request, from the school, any information required in or reasonably related to the performance of their duties. Notwithstanding the provision established under Confidentiality and Distribution of Reports (Massachusetts EEC), the school will make available such information to the Office.

Detailed Massachusetts Office of Early Education and Care regulations are available upon request from the Director.

APPROACH TO CHILD GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE

VNS's approach to discipline focuses on prevention through community building as well as encouraging children to make appropriate behavioral choices. Whenever possible, children are included in forming clear and consistent rules for behavior in the classroom, on the playground, and in choosing solutions to their own conflicts. Preventative solutions may include: adequate resources, consistent routines, a varied and interesting curriculum, well planned and announced transitions, and a firm grasp of the principles of child growth and development by the staff. The teachers discuss with the children why appropriate behavior is necessary in school in order to ensure their safety and the safety of others and why they need to begin to understand that their behavior affects the feelings of their classmates. It is often helpful for the teacher to point out a sad or hurt look and have the offending child try to come up with a way to make the other child feel better. As with all behavioral goals, children should be exposed to the ideas of empathy, compassion, and sharing throughout the curriculum, not merely at times that require correction. Teachers will reinforce these concepts with their own respectful behavior toward the children and each other, and must never allow their own feelings of anger or frustration to be apparent.

As most children begin to grasp these concepts the teachers will allow them to try to work out conflicts on their own. If intervention is warranted, the teacher may actively coach the child. For example if two children want the same toy she will say to the child who wants it, "Ask Susie to give you a turn when she is finished." The teacher will also use the redirecting technique to settle things down and place the child in a less upsetting situation. She may also read a story, play a quiet game, or take the child to the sofa in the parent room in order to provide additional comfort. It is our policy to allow the children to experience their feelings, but in a way that is safe and controlled and not upsetting to the other children. They can make the decision with the teacher as to when they have an understanding of what happened and when they feel ready to rejoin the group.

Although words are always the first method in handling discipline issues, kind and gentle holding of a child may be necessary if they are physically hurting or intending to hurt themselves, other children, the staff, or property. This may take the form of hugs, taking the child by the hand, picking up a child and moving them to a safe place or placing them on one's lap. The Village Nursery School provides sofas and rocking chairs to help facilitate the calming process.

Other helpful methods in supporting children's behavior include: fostering positive self esteem, independence and coping skills, and the understanding of natural consequences. Positive reinforcement of good behavior, while ignoring simple inappropriate negative behavior, is also useful. Staff is also advised to carefully

document problematic behavior, discuss with parents what is being done in the classroom and seek their support.

Occasionally, children may not be able to gain control of their behavior in spite of the best efforts of the staff. If this is a consistent issue, the procedures outlined in the Social Service policy may need to be implemented in order to access professional services.

In the event of more serious behaviors (physical violence and harm to themselves and/or others, or destruction of property, the EEC Incident Action Plan will be used and teachers will engage the following plan:

1. Parents will be notified and the Incident Action Plan will be shared and signed by both parties.
2. If another incident requires an Incident Action Plan, the social service policy will be implemented.

Interactions among staff and students must always be:

Warm
Attentive
Consistent
Courteous
Respectful

Under no circumstances will any of the following behaviors by staff be tolerated:

Spanking
Physical or verbal abuse
Humiliation
Neglect
Deprivation of food
Force feeding
Discipline for toileting issues
Physical restraint or force

HEALTH CARE POLICIES

Important Numbers

Procedures For Emergencies and Evacuations

Evacuation Plan

Plan For Evacuation in Place

Location Of Utility Panels

Location Of Medical Supplies

Procedures For Using and Maintaining First Aid Kit

Procedures For Emergencies

Injury Prevention Plan

Injury/Accident Reports

Plan For managing Infectious Diseases

Plan For Mildly Ill Children

Medication

Medication Administration

EEC Regulation on Medication Authorization

Individual Health Care Plans

Procedure For Identifying and Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect

Child Guidance Policy

In an Emergency dial 911

**Village Nursery School
40 Poor Farm Rd
Harvard, MA 01451
978-456-3993**

EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Health Care Consultant

Name: [Nicole Gentile](#)

Address: Craggs Road, Harvard, MA 01451

Telephone Number: 857-201-9926

Emergency Telephone Numbers (to be posted by all telephones)

- Fire Department: 978-456-3648
- Police Department: 978-456-1212
- Poison Control: 1-800-222-1222
- Ambulance: 911
- DSS/Child Abuse: 1-800-792-5200
- Public Health Dept.: 978-456-4106
- Designated Emergency Adult: Pam Hebert (508-797-7567)
Maryanne Marcoux (508-733-9649)
8 Ohlin Lane, Harvard, MA 01451

Hospital(s) Utilized for Emergencies

Name: Emerson Hospital

Address: 133 Old Rd to 9 Acre Corner, Concord, MA 01742

Telephone: 978-369-1400

Name: Nashoba Deaconess Hospital

Address: 200 Groton Rd. Ayer, MA 01432

Telephone: 978-784-9250

Procedures for Emergencies and Evacuations

During an emergency evacuation the Lead Teacher will be responsible for taking the attendance information and for leading children out of the building. Assistant teachers and other staff will assist in the evacuation and check for stragglers.

The program Director will make a visual inspection of each classroom before exiting the building.

All classrooms, once evacuated, will meet at The Meeting Place, by the second lamppost on the circular driveway and wait for the go ahead by the Program Director to re-enter the building.

The school will maintain daily attendance list that is current. Staff is responsible for signing children in and out of classrooms by arrival and departure times. The attendance list will be kept on clipboards at the entrance of each classroom and be readily accessible in case of an emergency evacuation. The lead teacher will be responsible for accounting for all children in attendance once they are safely out of the building.

Emergency evacuation drills are conducted monthly at different times of the day as determined by the program director.

Children and staff should practice different evacuation routes.

The Program Director will maintain documentation of the date, time, and effectiveness of each drill in the Fire Drill Log. This documentation will be maintained for five years.

Evacuation Plan

In the event of an emergency requiring the evacuation of the school the following procedures will apply:

The children will evacuate the building as practiced during fire drills and directed in the evacuation plans posted in each classroom.

The Director will call the Emergency Person (Pam Hebert and Maryanne Marcoux 8 Ohlin Lane Harvard). Children will be escorted by teachers across the street to 8 Ohlin Lane, and await parent pick-up.

The Emergency phone chain will be activated by The Director notifying the Room Parent Coordinator. All parents will be called by their designated room parent

The Director will remain until all children have been transported home.

In the event of an electrical power loss during school hours, the school will remain in operation utilizing battery powered emergency lights and stored bottled water for drinking, washing, and toilet flushing.

In the winter, the building will retain heat throughout the morning session (4 hours). If the power is not restored by noon, the parents will be called. The school will then remain closed until the power is restored.

Plan for Shelter in Place

Should the school become aware of an external contaminant in the air the following procedure will be implemented. "Shelter in place."

1. The Director will immediately call 911
2. All doors will be locked
3. All doors and windows will be sealed with plastic and duct tape
4. The HVAC system will be shut off
5. If a child or student becomes chemically contaminated they will be continually rinsed with cool water until EMS arrives.
6. When the fire department arrives they will decontaminate before the EMT's begin treatment and transport. There are some substances that should not be washed off, but brushed off such as caustic cleaners.

To keep the students and staff safe from an unauthorized intruder the following steps will be taken:

1. A buzzer system is installed at the front door, and all side doors and back doors are locked. The front doors will be opened at drop off and pick up and then locked. All visitors at the front door will be buzzed in.
2. Should a suspicious person gain entry and they are determined to pose a threat, the children will be taken to designated lock down areas. Downstairs- bathrooms. Upstairs- office and storage areas. The teachers will bring attendance sheets and cell phones with them. Every attempt will be made to keep the children calm.

In the event of an emergency The Director will call the room parent coordinator. She will then call each room parent who will in turn notify each parent of the situation. Parents will be given specific instructions as to where and when to pick up their children.

The above plans have been discussed and approved by the Harvard fire and police departments.

Location of Utility Panels

Electrical-next to the staff bathroom downstairs

Gas-rear of playground, near the parking lot

Water- in the mechanical room, middle door facing playground. Key on Director's office bulletin board.

Elevator- locked door in kitchen

Fire-inside front door

Location of medical supplies

Each classroom contains a labeled first aid kit, as well as “go bags” containing first aid kits and emergency forms, which travel with teachers out of the classroom.

Main first aid supply kit is in the top drawer of the file cabinet in the Director’s office.

Procedures for Emergencies and Illnesses

Medical conditions other than common illnesses or minor injuries, at the discretion of the Director, may require transport to the Nashoba Community Hospital in Ayer, Mass., or Emerson Hospital in Concord, Mass.

911 will be called immediately. In such an instance the child’s Emergency First Aid Form (located in the director’s office with a copy in each classroom) will be read by the Director for parental instructions and the parents contacted immediately.

If they cannot be reached, their designated contact person and the child’s physician will be notified of the situation.

The teacher and/or the Director will accompany the child to the hospital along with the permission forms and any approved medication.

The Lead teacher will perform these responsibilities in the absence of the Director. The Director will notify the EEC should a child require hospitalization or emergency medical treatment due to illness or injury.

If a child becomes ill, or is slightly injured while at school they will be brought by their teacher to the Director’s office for evaluation or rest. If the situation warrants, minor first aid will be administered, an injury report will be written and the parents contacted.

The parent will be given the opportunity to come to the school if they choose to make their own assessment and a decision will be made as to whether the child is well enough to return to the classroom.

The Director will remain with the child in the office in a comfy chair until either they are picked up or is determined to be well enough to return to class.

Items used by a sick child will be cleaned and disinfected by one of the classroom teachers.

A parent’s signature will be requested on the injury/illness form with one copy going to the parent and one in the child’s file. The incident will then be logged into the injury file.

Staff members will carry the medical treatment permission slips along with approved medications on all field trips along with a first aid kit.

Procedures for Using and Maintaining First Aid Equipment

The main first aid kit is located in the upper drawer of the director’s file cabinet located behind her desk. The drawer is inspected annually by the Director to ensure that it has all of the items specified by the EEC regulations. These items include:

- Bandages
- Gauze pads
- Tweezers
- Compress
- Scissors
- Disposable non-latex gloves
- Gauze roller bandages
- Adhesive tape
- Instant cold pack
- Thermometer

Each classroom is also equipped with a first aid kit. Its location is marked. The classroom first aid kit contains bandages, cold packs, and disposable gloves for use when there is contact with bodily fluids. Classrooms also maintain "Go bags" which include first aid kits, emergency forms, and EPI pens if required by a child in the class. These bags are taken with the class to the playground and on field trips. Several books on First Aid, CPR, and childhood diseases are available in the Director's office.

First Aid and CPR

The Village Nursery School requires that all staff members are certified annually in CPR. The school provides and pays for this training as well as training every two years in First Aid. This ensures that there is always trained staff on the premises and that all educators may provide first aid and CPR.

Injury Prevention Plan

To prevent injury, and to ensure a safe environment, the staff member who opens the classroom is responsible upon arrival each day for monitoring the environment and for the removal of any hazards. Any needed repairs or unsafe conditions should be reported immediately to the Director.

The Director and/or the Assistant Director makes a daily visual inspection of the playground and corrects any problems that may potentially cause injury. The teachers are instructed to report any broken equipment or hazardous situations (such as poison ivy on the playground) to the director immediately. The chairperson of the Board's buildings and grounds committee will be notified of the situation and tend to it immediately. In the meantime the children will not have access to the item in question.

All classrooms as well as the kitchen and janitors closet have locked storage cabinets in order to prevent the children from accessing hazardous materials. Toxic substances and sharp objects are stored out of the reach of children.

All staff members will check that no classrooms have any cords, wires, or ropes that may entangle children and that no child is wearing scarves, jewelry, or jacket/sweatshirt cords while at the Village Nursery School. "Go Bags" including First Aid kits and emergency forms are taken on all field trips.

Injury/Accident Reports

Injury Reports for any incident requiring first aid or emergency care will be maintained in the child's file. The injury report includes the name of the child, date, time, and location of the accident or injury, description of the injury and how it occurred, names of witnesses, names of person who administered first aid, and first aid required. Staff will use the Accident/Injury Report form to record the above information. Staff will submit the form to the Director for review.

Once the Director has reviewed the Accident/Injury Report form and has signed it, it should be given to the parent. The parent will review it, sign it, and then be given a copy.

The staff member will then log the incident and place the form in the child's file.

Plan for Managing Infectious Diseases

To minimize the spread of infectious disease, the following precautions will be taken:

The children and the staff will wash their hands with warm running water and liquid soap before eating and after toileting, sneezing, nose blowing, cleaning, or handling pets. Hands are dried on disposable paper towels. Children will be taught to sneeze into their elbows.

Tables will be washed with soap and water and then sprayed with a 10% bleach solution, or EPA approved spray before and after eating.

The staff will wash and disinfect the following items after each use: mops used to clean bodily fluids, mouthed toys, and water play tables.

The building is cleaned on a daily basis by a professional cleaning service. This includes the washing and vacuuming of all floors, and the cleaning and disinfecting of all bathrooms,

Cots and mats are washed with an EPA approved spray after each use. Blankets and pillows are sent home to be washed weekly.

Before the opening of school in September, and periodically throughout the school year all toys and equipment are washed and bleached.

Staff wear non-latex gloves when coming into contact with bodily fluids. Specifically when changing diapers, toileting, or administering first aid.

Clothing that comes into contact with bodily fluids or blood will be double bagged and sent home.

Each staff member will be trained in the above infection control procedures upon employment and before working with children, and then annually.

Children will be excluded from school if they exhibit any of the following symptoms:

- evidence of a fresh cold
- has had a fever within the past 24 hours
- has a rash that has not been seen by a medical professional
- has sore or discharging eyes, ears, or a sore throat
- has a diagnosed communicable disease
- vomiting or diarrhea
- an illness requiring greater care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children.
- a cough that is so severe it keeps children from actively participating in the school day.

When a child is not well enough to participate in the program or does not feel up to par for any reason he/she should be kept at home. If a child exhibits any of the above symptoms while at school, the parents or emergency contact person will be called to come and get the child as soon as possible. In the interim they will be placed in the care of the Director and placed on the sofa to rest.

A child who has had a communicable disease or rash will be readmitted to school when their physician has determined that they are no longer contagious. Likewise, if a child is taking antibiotics for an infection, the physician will determine when he/she is well enough to return. A child may return to school if a fever is no longer present, if they have ceased vomiting or diarrhea for 24 hours, or a lesion is no longer draining. If a child has had a cold or the flu, they may return when they no longer have an active cough or nasal discharge with a fever.

When a communicable disease has been introduced to the school, the Director will inform all of the parents by written notice.

Plan for Mildly Ill Children

Children who are mildly ill may remain in school if they are not contagious (see plan for infectious diseases) If a child's condition worsens or, if it is determined that the child poses a threat to the health of others, or if the child cannot be cared for by classroom teachers, the Director will call the parents to have the child picked up from school. The child will be cared for by a teacher or Director in a quiet area until the child's parents arrive to take the child home.

Any toys, blankets, or mats used by the child will be cleaned and disinfected.

Covid-19

- Quarantine is no longer required nor recommended for children or staff in these settings, regardless of vaccination status or where the exposure occurred. All exposed individuals may continue to attend programming as long as they remain asymptomatic. Those who can mask should do so until Day 10, and it is recommended that they test on Day 6 of exposure. If symptoms develop, follow the guidance for symptomatic individuals, below.
- Children and staff who test positive must isolate for at least 5 days. If they are asymptomatic or symptoms are resolving and they have been fever free without the use of fever-reducing medicine for

24 hours, they may return to programming after Day 5 and should wear a high-quality mask through Day 10:

- If the individual is able to mask, they must do so through Day 10.
 - If the child has a negative test on Day 5 or later, they do not need to mask.
 - If the individual is unable to mask, they may return to programming with a negative test on Day 5 or later.
- Symptomatic individuals can remain in their school or program if they have mild symptoms, are tested immediately onsite, and that test is negative. Best practice would also include wearing a mask, if possible, until symptoms are fully resolved. For symptomatic individuals, DPH recommends a second test within 48 hours if the initial test is negative.
 - If the symptomatic individual cannot be tested immediately, they should be sent home and allowed to return to their program or school if symptoms remain mild and they test negative, or they have been fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and their symptoms are resolving, or if a medical professional makes an alternative diagnosis. A negative test is strongly recommended for return.

Note: At this time, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not approved or authorized any at-home rapid antigen test for use in children under 2 years of age. However, at-home rapid antigen tests may be used off-label in children under 2 years of age for purposes of post-exposure, isolation, and symptomatic testing. It is recommended that parents or guardians deciding to test children under 2 years of age administer the at-home rapid antigen test themselves.

Medication

The Village Nursery School will ensure that the Director and at least one educator in each classroom have received training in the administration of medication. This training is currently being offered through the EEC website. Each person who administers prescription or non-prescription medication will be trained to verify and to document that the right child has received the proper dosage of the correct medication at the correct time(s), and by the proper method. All medications given will be logged in to the child's medication log. Each person who administers any medication other than oral or topical medications, and epinephrine auto-injectors, will be trained by a licensed health care practitioner and will demonstrate annually to the satisfaction of the trainer, competency in the administration of such medication. In addition, the Director will ensure that all staff members will receive training in recognizing common side effects and adverse interactions among various medications, and potential side effects of specific medications being administered in the program.

Medication Administration

All medication administered to a child, including but not limited to oral and topical medications of any kind, either prescription or non-prescription:

Must be provided by the child's parent and must be in the containers in which they were originally dispensed with their original labels affixed. Over-the-counter medications must be in the original manufacturer's packaging.

The educator must not administer any medication contrary to the directions in the original container, unless so authorized in writing by the child's licensed health care practitioner.

Any medication without clear instructions on the container must be administered in accordance with a written physician or pharmacist's descriptive order.

No educator shall administer the first dose of any medication to a child, except under extraordinary circumstances and with parental consent.

Each time a medication is administered, the educator must document in the child's record the dosage, the time and the method of administration, and who administered the medication.

All parents with children requiring prescription epi-pens will be asked to provide one for the Directors office and one for their classroom to insure immediate availability.

Unless otherwise specified in a child's individual health care plan, all medications will be stored out of the reach of children either in the Director's file cabinet and/or in upper cabinets of classrooms. Head teachers will be responsible for the safe transport of medications during field trips. Prescription medications requiring refrigeration will be stored in the kitchen refrigerator at temperatures between 38-42 degrees Fahrenheit. All unused, discontinued, or outdated prescription medication will be returned to the parents and such return will be documented in the child's record. When return to the parent is not possible or practical, such prescription medications must be destroyed and the destruction recorded by the Director in accordance with the policies of the Department of Public Health. Medications will be counted periodically to be sure that none has been lost or stolen.

Type of Medication	Written Parental Consent Required	Health Care Practitioner Authorization Required	Logging Required
All Prescription	Yes	Yes. Must be in original container with original label containing the name of the child affixed.	Yes. including name of child, dosage, date, time & staff signature. Missed doses must also be noted along with the reason(s) why the dose was missed.
Oral Non-Prescription	Yes, renewed weekly with dosage, times, days and purpose	Yes in Large and Small Group. Must be in original container with original label containing the name of the child affixed.	Yes, including name of child, dosage, date, time & staff signature. Missed doses must also be noted along with the reason(s) why the dose was missed.
Unanticipated Non-Prescription for Mild Symptoms (e.g., acetaminophen, ibuprofen, antihistamines)	Yes, renewed Annually.	Yes in Large and Small Group. Must be in original container with original label containing the name of the child affixed.	Yes, including name of child, dosage, date, time & staff signature.
Topical, Non-Prescription (when applied to open wounds or broken skin)	Yes, renewed annually	Yes in Large and Small Group. Must be in original container with original label containing the name of the child affixed.	Yes, including name of child, dosage, date, time & staff signature.
Topical, Non-Prescription (not applied to open wounds or broken skin)	Yes, renewed annually	No. Items not applied to open wounds or broken skin may be supplied by program with notification to parents of such, or parents may send in preferred brands of such items for their own child(ren)'s use.	No for items not applied to open wounds or broken skin.

Oral Health

In accordance with EEC regulations the students at the Village Nursery School will be assisted in brushing their teeth after their lunch. They will be asked to bring a toothpaste and toothbrush in a sealed and labeled plastic bag in their lunchbox. After brushing the toothpaste and toothbrush will be taken home to be cleaned. A parent may choose to opt out of this requirement with a written note to be placed in their child's file.

SIDS

In order to minimize the chance of SIDS related deaths, infants up to one year of age, must be placed on their backs when sleeping.

Individual Healthcare Plans

An individual health care plan for each child with a chronic medical condition, which has been diagnosed by a licensed health care practitioner, will be maintained as part of a child's record. The plan will describe:

the chronic condition

its symptoms

any medical treatment that may be necessary while the child is in care

the potential side effects of the treatment

the potential consequences to the child's health if the treatment is not administered.

The educator may administer routine, scheduled medication or treatment to the child with a chronic medical condition in accordance with written parental consent and licensed health care practitioner authorization. All requirements for the proper administration of medications as previously stated will be followed.

Allergy lists will be posted in all classrooms (exposed only with written parental permission) so that all educators will be aware of each child who has an allergy. Since many children have nut allergies the Village Nursery School is a nut safe school. If a child inadvertently brings a nut product to school it will be returned unopened and an alternate food offered to the child. Any adverse reaction to a food, substance, or insect will be brought to the attention of the Director who will immediately call 911 if necessary and then notify the parents.

The Director and classroom teacher will review the specific needs of any special needs children who may be in the program and formulate a written plan to be sure that these needs are met. The teacher will document compliance with the plan and place the document in the child's file.

PROCEDURE FOR IDENTIFYING AND REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT

Department of Social Services – 1-508-727-0900 Ex. 292

EEC Worcester- 508-798-5180

If a teacher (mandated reporter) suspects abuse or neglect she will report it immediately to the Director. They will discuss the matter and, if needed, refer to the book "Child Abuse and Neglect" by Cynthia Tower. They will document their concerns and then call the Dept. of Social Services with a report. A written document will follow the phone call within 24 hours.

Upon filing a 51A report the Director will notify the EEC if the alleged abuse took place at the Village Nursery School or during one of its related activities. The school will cooperate in all investigations of abuse or neglect, including notifying parents of children currently or previously enrolled, providing consent for disclosure to the EEC of information from, and allowing the EEC to disclose information to, any person and/or agency the EEC may specify as necessary to the prompt investigation of allegations and the protection of children.

If the director is informed or witnesses abuse or neglect by a staff member, that staff member will be either issued a written warning or immediately dismissed, depending on the severity of the situation.

Definitions:

Abuse: The non-accidental commission of any act by a caretaker upon a child under age 18 which causes, or creates a substantial risk of, physical or emotional injury; or constitutes a sexual offense under the laws of the Commonwealth; or any sexual contact between a caretaker and a child under the care of that individual. This definition is not dependent upon location (i.e. abuse can occur while the child is in an out-of-home or in-home setting.)

Neglect: Failure by a caretaker, either deliberately or through negligence or inability, to take those actions necessary to provide a child with minimally adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care, supervision, emotional stability and growth, or other essential care; provided however, that such inability is not due solely to inadequate economic resources or solely to the existence of a handicapping condition. This definition is not dependent upon location (i.e. neglect can occur while the child is in an out-of-home or in-home setting).

DIAPERING POLICY

Children using diapers or pull-ups are admitted to the Village Nursery School. They are shown the in-classroom bathrooms and encouraged but never coerced into using them. The staff is always available to assist them. If the child has a soiled diaper, the director or teacher will change the child.

A supply of new diapers and wipes are stored in the two and three-year-old classrooms as well as in the bathroom across from the elevator. A child who needs to be changed will lie or stand on the changing mat which is covered with a disposable pad. Staff members will wear disposable non-latex gloves while changing a child. After diapering, the staff member will place the soiled diaper and pad in a plastic grocery bag, tie it, and dispose of it in the step can designated "soiled diapers." The mat is then sanitized. (The contents of the can will be disposed of daily by the cleaning service.) The child and staff member will then wash their hands with soap and running water, drying them with disposable paper towels.

TOILETING PLAN

All of the children at the Village Nursery School are encouraged to be toilet trained but will not be denied admission if they are not. Teachers will work with parents to support potty training at school. While training, and once trained, children are required to wear underwear, diapers, or pull ups.

Two and Three-Year-Olds: In each of the two downstairs two and three-year old classrooms are located child size toilets. At the beginning of the school year, the teachers will show them to the children and explain that they may go in and use them as needed. Until the children are comfortable going in by themselves, they may ask for the teacher or assistant to accompany them. Upon finishing their toileting the children will be instructed to proceed to the child sized sinks located directly outside of the bathroom. There they will wash their hands with warm running water and liquid soap and dry them with disposable paper towels.

All parents of two and three year olds will provide a change of clothing should an accident occur. In this instance, the teacher will go into the bathroom with the child to assist them in cleaning and changing. She will then place the soiled clothing in a sealed plastic bag, label it to return to the parents. The teacher will then wash their and the child's hands with soap and warm running water.

Young Fours: The Young Fours classroom has a bathroom adjacent to the classroom. Teachers will supervise children whenever they need to leave the room to use the bathroom.

Four-Year-Olds: There are two bathrooms with child size toilets in the upstairs hallways adjacent to the four year old classrooms. If a child needs to use one, they will be instructed to notify one of the teachers that they will be leaving the room. A teacher will stand in the doorway of the classroom until the child returns. After toileting, the children will wash their hands with liquid soap and warm running water and dry them with disposable paper towels. If an accident should occur, the school will have clean undergarments available. If a child is outdoors and needs to use the bathroom, a teacher or the director will bring the child into the building and remain with them until finished.

AT NO TIME WILL A CHILD BE PUNISHED OR RIDICULED FOR A TOILETING ACCIDENT. THEY WILL BE HANDLED QUIETLY WITH KINDNESS AND RESPECT.

SOCIAL SERVICE REFERRAL and TERMINATION POLICY

The primary goal of the Village Nursery School is to provide a preschool education that is a healthy and happy experience. We recognize each child as an individual and foster an environment in which everyone has the opportunity to develop at his or her own rate emotionally, socially, physically, and intellectually. We understand, however, that from time to time in a child's life changes or stresses may temporarily affect his or her sense of security and ability to function comfortably in a school setting. We anticipate these times and are always willing to help the child and the family through them.

Occasionally, however, even the considerable time and understanding our staff is prepared to give a child may not be sufficient. If a child consistently requires the time and attention of a teacher and does not respond positively to a variety of techniques it may be necessary to seek additional help. In this instance, teachers will engage the following plan:

1. The teacher will document the issues of concern and ask the Director to do a series of observations.
2. Parents will be asked to meet with the teachers and/or the Director to discuss their findings. The documentation will be shared and a plan made by both the staff and parents to try and improve the situation. It is important that the agreed upon plan be implemented both at home and at school. The written plan will be signed by all parties and a date set to review the progress of the child.
3. In the event that progress is not made, the staff and parents may decide to continue to implement the plan for a specified period of time or a recommendation for additional support may be made. The Director will provide the parents with a list of local resources with the understanding that the initial contact must be made by the parents. Once this is done the VNS staff will cooperate in any way that is deemed necessary in order to support the family. The school personnel will communicate with the support services only with the written permission of the parents.
4. If it is decided that the child will remain at VNS, the staff will follow all plans and recommendations, making any accommodations that are deemed reasonable and do not cause any undue burden to the program. If an extra cost is involved in order to assist the child in remaining at VNS that cost will be the responsibility of the parents unless agreed upon otherwise with the Director. All documentation pertaining to the child will be gathered by the Director and placed in the child's file.
5. After a reasonable amount of time, a final assessment will be made as to whether the child can remain at the Village Nursery School or if another placement will be necessary. This decision, made in consultation with all parties, will be signed by all and every attempt will be made to help the family achieve a smooth transition if the child is not to remain at VNS. The amount of the remaining tuition will be refunded to the parents upon written request and subsequent approval of the Board of Trustees.

The Village Nursery School reserves the right to terminate a contract to attend the school if it is determined that a child or a parent presents undue burden to the school or may be a danger to themselves, other people or physical property. In addition, if after multiple attempts by the Business Manager, the payment of fees is not made, a child may be required to leave the program. Upon termination, parents may request a hearing with the Office of Early Education and Care.

Parent Conduct/Termination due to parent behavior

Behavior of parents/guardians may result in termination of care. All parents and staff are expected to mutually respect one another, both in behavior and language. If at any time a parent speaks to any staff member, either in person or written communication, in such a manner that the staff person feels threatened or uncomfortable, the Director and Board of Trustees may decide that we are no longer able to provide care. Should such a situation occur, care will be terminated, and the family will forfeit their tuition deposits. Conversely, if a parent has an interaction with a staff member that they are not comfortable with, they should bring it to the attention of the director immediately.

RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES

Federal Chapter 766 (Special Education) 617-573-1600

Massachusetts Early Intervention 800-905-8437

Lipton Center.....978-840-9354

Local Public Schools

Harvard 978-456-4144 Jen Toth, Director of Pupil Services 978-456-4143
Bolton 978-779-0359
Lancaster. . . . 978-779-0359
Lunenburg . . . 978-582-4122
Clinton978-365-4230
Stow. 978-897-5774
Boxborough . . 978-263-4569
Ayer 978-772-8600
Littleton 978-540-2500
Shirley 978-425-2630

Social/Emotional/Developmental Intervention

UMass- Developmental Pediatrics
774-442-3028

Pediatric Behavioral Health, West Boylston
508-835-1735
Pbhealth.org
Dr. Jill Damon

Liz Hooper Bala – M.Ed, BCBA
PO Box 451
Harvard, MA 0451
617-519-0551
lzhoop@hotmail.com

The Peter Pan Center
60 Willow Road
Ayer, MA 01451
978-772-1255
www.peterpancenter.com

Groton Integrated Therapies
497 Main Street
Groton, MA 01450
978-448-4001

Speech and Language

Emerson Hospital Center for Specialty Services
57 Old Road To Nine Acres Corner, Unit 1B
Concord, MA 01742
978-589-6850
mledan@emersonhospital.org

INFORMATION FOR ADULTS HELPING IN THE SCHOOL

NEVER LEAVE CHILDREN ALONE OUTSIDE OR INSIDE.

General Guidelines Which Make For A Safe And Happy Atmosphere

- Learn the location of supply materials, etc.; look in all closets, cupboard drawers until you are sure where everything is kept.
- Learn the location and how to operate the fire extinguishers; know what the procedures are and where to go in case of fire.
- Learn the name and approximate age of each child; learn location of children's cubbies.
- Keep voices low, speak directly to child; do not call.
- Allow all possible self-help.
- Quiet serenity in voice and action, warm outgoing affection.
- Confidence, encouragement, belief in the child. Avoid talking down to children; talk to Director about them only when you are sure they cannot hear you. Laugh with them, not at them.
- Do not discuss children with anyone except staff members.
- Alert watchfulness. See without seeming to see. Concentrate attention; reserve a fringe of alertness for other activities.
- Permit the children to act without adult intervention. Let teacher handle problems, but if involved follow through.
- Take positive approach, be firm. Not "Don't hit Johnny, Ted" but "I can't allow you to hit Johnny. Hitting hurts others. Use your words."

Outdoor Safety Rules

The following are safety Guidelines for supervising children in the playground:

Jungle Gym: Never put a child up on any equipment. If a child cannot get up alone, they shouldn't be up there.

Swing: Push occasionally if child asks; most 4's can pump and some 3's. Help them learn how to pump; show children how to go around swing set to avoid collision.

Sandbox: Children dig only in sandbox. Keep trucks, pails, shovels, etc., in this area.

Outerwear: Help children to help themselves and allow plenty of time to teach children to dress. Necklaces, and drawstrings around a child's neck must never be worn on the playground.

Creative (handwork) Activities

The following are suggested guidelines for promoting creativity:

- Encourage creative activity. Do not insist on the directed use of materials. Help the child if necessary but do not do the work for them.
- In painting, let child experiment. Do not ask, "What is it?" but rather, "tell me about it."
- In carpentry, adjust vise; hold wood; supervise very closely.

Bathroom

Maintain a flexible routine. Allow plenty of time. Teach child to flush toilet, wash, clean and wipe hands dry if they do not already know.

Snack

Sit with children; this is often time for conversation.

Music

Contribute as much as you can! If you are gifted, share your talent with the children; if you have an instrument, bring it.