



Parent & Student Handbook

2023 - 2024



Welcome

to the Central Co-Op Nursery School Program. This handbook is designed to give you information about our early childhood programs and to familiarize you with our policies.



We always welcome your questions, comments, and concerns.

Tuition Fees & Information

Please Note: If you wish to pay your annual tuition in ten equal monthly installments, the payments will be due on the first of each month from August to April, in addition to the advance tuition payment due July 1, 2023..

Fee Schedule:

Five Day 9:00am – 12:00pm	\$545.00/month	Five Day Full Day	\$956.00/month
Four Day 9:00am – 12:00pm	\$483.00/month	Four Day Full Day	\$825.00/month
Three Day 9:00am – 12:00pm	\$404.00/month	Three Day Full Day	\$708.00/month
Two Day 9:00am – 12:00pm	\$309.00/month	Two Day Full Day	\$579.00/month

ALL TUITION PAYMENTS ARE NON-REFUNDABLE!

Payments can be made online through your bank or checks can be mailed to:
Chelmsford Co-Operative Nursery School • P.O. Box 142 • Chelmsford, MA 01824

Registration:

- A non-refundable registration processing fee of \$65.00 per child is required.
- Central Co-Operative Nursery School opens registration to the general public on February 1st of each year for the following school year. Currently enrolled students have the option of registering for the following school year during the month of January. Precedence for returning students and their siblings takes place during this time. New students and their parents may make an appointment for a tour at the school. Both verbal and written information is given at that time and potential parents of students are free to observe classes in session.
- Appropriate registration forms, medical forms, parent handbooks, and other information will be available upon registration at the Co-Op. All signed and completed forms must be returned to the Co-Op office by July 1 or your child's spot will be forfeited to the waitlist. If you have any problems returning the completed forms by the due date, please contact the Director immediately to make arrangements.
- When a child with a disability registers at the nursery school, parents may be asked for information concerning the child's participation in the center's program from the local education agency, Early Intervention Program, or other health or service providers. Any child with a disability shall be admitted to the center unless the accommodations required would cause an undue burden to the center.

Tuition Payments:

- **One month non-refundable advance tuition payment per child is due by July 1, 2023. This July payment secures your child's final placement in a class. Tuition is calculated on a school year and then divided into ten equal payments starting July 1st and ending April 1st.** Checks for the remaining nine (9) months

of tuition can be made payable to Central Cooperative Nursery School. Payments are due the 1st of every month or if the 1st falls on a weekend, the first Monday thereafter.

- A late charge of \$20.00 will be charged for checks received after the 15th of the billing month. If tuition remains unpaid following notice, the family may be suspended or even terminated unless special arrangements have been made with the Director and/or Board of Directors. Please note that special arrangements may not always be possible.
- As stated in bold above, there are no tuition refunds based on child's illness, inclement weather, emergency or holiday closings, vacations or other legitimate conditions beyond the control of Central Cooperative Nursery School.
- **Return Check Policy:** A service charge of \$25.00 will be charged for any and all returned payments.

Student Pickup Late Fees:

- The Co-Op closes at 4:00pm. Please make every effort to pick up your child on time. When a child is picked up late, he/she may experience feelings of sadness or worry, leading to a difficult departure. Late fees will be assigned as follows: Starting at 4:05pm parents will be charged **\$5.00** for every **five** minutes they are late. This will need to be paid with the following month's tuition. We sincerely hope that these charges will rarely ever be needed. Extended Day is available for an additional fee. Extended Day fees are prorated with a minimum half hour charge.

Preschool Tuition Contract:

- The preschool tuition contract is for the full September through June preschool program year. I understand that once registration is accepted that I will be responsible for the full year tuition. I understand that the tuition will be divided into ten equal installments, but I will be required to pay the full year tuition regardless of whether my child withdraws, fails to attend or has incomplete attendance. Exceptions may be granted under limited circumstances with a written request to the Co-Op Director.
- Upon entering the program, parents are required to download, read this handbook, and adhere to the policies set forth by Central Cooperative Nursery School.

Emergency Closure:

- In the case of a wide-spread health emergency or emergency closure, special policies regarding students, employees, and other related policies may be announced.

2023-2024 Calendar

September 6 – Meet & Greet and Mandatory Parent Meeting

September 7 – First day for TTH, 4-day, and 5-day students. This will be a ½ day.

September 8 – First day for MWF students. This will be a ½ day.

September 11 – Full day begins for MWF, 4-day, and 5-day students.

September 12 – Full day begins for T/TH students.

October 9 – NO SCHOOL – Columbus Day

October 30 – Halloween parade for MWF classes

October 31 – Halloween parade for TTH, 4-day, and 5-day classes

November 10 – NO SCHOOL – Veterans Day

November 21 – Thanksgiving concert and feast

November 22 – Thanksgiving concert and feast; no full day – all classes dismiss at 12:00pm

November 23 – 24 – NO SCHOOL – Thanksgiving Break

December 21 – Holiday concert

December 22 – Holiday concert; no full day – all classes dismiss at 12:00pm

December 23 – January 1 – NO SCHOOL – Winter Break

January 2 – School re-opens

January 15 – NO SCHOOL – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

February 19 – 23 – NO SCHOOL – February Break

March 29 – NO SCHOOL – Good Friday

April 15 – 19 – NO SCHOOL – April Vacation

May 10 – NO SCHOOL – Professional Development Day

May 27 – NO SCHOOL – Memorial Day

June 5 – Last day for MWF students

June 6 – Last day for TTH, 4-day, and 5-day students; no full day – all classes dismiss at 12:00pm

June 6 – Graduation (time TBD)

June 7 – Picnic Day – This is not a school day; details will follow next year.

Our Co-Op Philosophy

The Chelmsford Central Co-Op Nursery School is founded on the belief that the pre-school years are critical in a child's physical, intellectual and emotional growth. This is an exciting time for children, when they are busy discovering the world about them and how they fit into it. It is a time of experiencing life through the senses, and for children to explore their creative potential. A cooperative nursery school provides a bridge between home and this exciting outside world. Here, with the support of their parents, children learn how to treat others, how to get along in a social setting, and how to build a sense of assurance about themselves as individuals.

Balance is the key word in the formation of our program: balance between individual and group experience; between free play and structured activity; between small and large muscle development. Freedom is stressed, but within limits imposed by concern for the group. A warm and supportive atmosphere is provided by parents and trained, sensitive teachers working with small groups.



Activities include sand and water play, clay and play dough, sculpture, painting, collage work, blocks and dramatic play, cooking, nutrition education, gardening, music and rhythms, stories, animal care and a wide variety of outdoor play.

Our school has an international and multicultural population. We cherish and encourage contributions from families of diverse backgrounds.

A Parent's Role

A co-operative nursery school is a bundle of wonderful experiences for both child and parent. It is a school created by mothers and fathers with the help of professional leaders. It continues through the planning and participation of the parents' elected officers, who form the Board of Directors. A parent receives from the school a full program for his or her child, which represents the educational philosophy of the school. Parents can observe their child, and other children, objectively in a natural setting and thereby become acquainted with the typical behavior of young children. This opportunity for observation gives parents a good basis for understanding and interpreting the development and behavior of their child. It also provides them with the tools for responding to various parenting situations gained through observations and insights. Members also develop familiarity with materials and equipment suitable for play activities with young children, a familiarity that can be carried over into the home.

Central Co-Op receives from its parents a readiness to participate in school activities. Parents are expected to participate in the daily program of the school; to attend school meetings and offer ideas and suggestions at school meetings; to assume a contributing job at the school; to participate in fundraising; and to help keep the school functioning smoothly. For all of us the school offers an opportunity to be active in, and feel part of, our community as well as making friends for our children and ourselves.

Co-oping

The Central Co-Operative Nursery School strongly requests that the parent, legal guardian, or other caregiver of the child attending the school participate in some aspect of volunteering throughout the school year. There are many opportunities to volunteer your time and/or expertise. Some of these opportunities include helping out in the classroom, being a member of the Board of Directors, and getting involved in fundraising. We have plenty of ways that will fit into your schedule. Please contact the VP of Scheduling and Volunteering to schedule your volunteer time or use the sign-up sheet on the door to your child's classroom. We only ask for one volunteer per day, per class.

On your volunteer day, please arrive at school a bit early with your child. Help greet the other children and their parents. Assist them with drop off and engage in activities until drop off is complete. During the day, your duties may include washing tables, assisting with hand washing, or reading to small groups of children.

At the end of the day, you will assist the teacher in filling backpacks with notices and projects, wipe the tables and/or stack the chairs. Each teacher will distribute individual guidelines at the beginning of the year and discuss helpful hints towards your volunteering.

Please be aware that when you are volunteering in the classroom, you may **NOT** bring any other children except for the child who is enrolled in the class you are specifically assigned to. Please make any necessary arrangements for child care.

Please Note: It is helpful to teachers if parents can keep them informed when family events may reflect in your child's behavior. Employment changes, business trips, death(s) of family members or pets, or any other situation can all contribute to temporary changes in character for your child. If you or your family is experiencing any issues, please speak to your child's teacher or someone in the office.

Fundraising

Because we are not subsidized by the Chelmsford Public School system or any other agency, fundraisers are necessary in order to cover our operating expenses and keep tuition reasonable. Fundraisers seek money for enrichment activities, field trips, and the purchase of books, equipment and other items not covered in our daily operating budget (financed by tuition). The fundraising done depends entirely on the parents, their ideas and participation.

Roles of Staff

The staff of the school consists of a Director, Teachers, and Teaching Assistants. The Director is the professional head of the school. She is responsible for all matters concerning the children and daily operation of the school. The Teachers and Teaching Assistants have challenging jobs, both planning the daily program for the children and helping parents gain new insights into the children. Parents can help them do their jobs better by having a cooperative spirit.

The staff is interested in furthering the education of parents in the principles of child guidance through observation and participation. They are also available for conferences with parents.

Members of the Board of Directors

Each year the membership elects officers to serve as the Board of Directors. It is their responsibility to administer the affairs of the school. They are the overall policy-making body of the school.

Board Members act not as individuals but as representatives of the membership at large. Each Board Member tries to carefully consider the best interests of parents and represent this interest in formulating Central CoOp policy. Each Board Member considers decisions in terms of what is good for the whole group, not just for an individual child, or the convenience or pleasure of the Board Member. Board Members take a long view of the future of the Central Co-Op. They attempt to consider how present decisions will affect the school and the membership in years to come. Board meetings are open to Co-Op parents. Each family's voice carries equal weight at these meetings. Board members are required to attend all board meetings as a part of their job duties.



Standing Rules & Policies

Arrival & Departure Procedures

For your child's safety, we require that you or other authorized adult (18 or older) bring your child into the program each morning and get them settled. The classroom teacher will sign your child in upon your arrival. Be sure that staff is aware of your child's arrival before you leave. Do NOT leave your child in the hallway. All children must be accompanied into the classroom either by a designated Co-Op employee at the "car pool" door or yourself. Please notify BOTH the office and your child's teacher if your child will be picked up by someone other than yourself. If we have not met the person picking them up we will ask for identification. If the person picking up the child is not on the Authorization and Consent form, a written note is required. **WE WILL NOT DISMISS A CHILD WITH A PERSON WITHOUT THE PROPER CONSENT.**

We ask that you do not arrive at school prior to the start of the session. Our teachers are preparing the classroom for the day and need this time for preparation. If you are going to be away from work for the day, be sure to leave a phone number where you can be reached in case you are needed for a medical emergency. Please call the program in advance if your child will not be attending on that day.

When picking up your child, be sure that the teacher knows the child is leaving (*this is for your child's protection*).

Note: Please do not park in the first four parking spots nearest to the entrance at the front of the school. These spaces are reserved specifically for the Pastor and his church staff.

Background Record Check & EEC Essentials Training

PARENTS & VOLUNTEERS

ALL volunteers are **REQUIRED** to complete an EEC Background Record Check (BRC), which includes a fingerprint check, Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) check, Department of Children and Families (DCF) check, and a Sex Offender Registry Information (SORI) check.

Volunteers must fill out the consent form and submit it with a copy of your driver's license to the director for submission to the EEC BRC. Once received, you will receive an email from EEC with instructions on how to set up your fingerprint check. Once this check is complete, the CORI, DCF, and SORI will be processed. All candidates must pay a \$35.00 fee to undergo a fingerprint based check. Identogo, the fingerprint vendor will confirm that the name on the legal document (i.e., passport, driver's license) matches the name that you used to register for fingerprinting and to complete the EEC BRC.

In addition, **ALL** volunteers are **REQUIRED** to complete a free online Emergency Response course through the EEC Essentials training program. Massachusetts has announced the creation of the StrongStart Online Professional Development System (PDS) to support early educators and programs. The EEC Essentials training is a new federal requirement with the StrongStart Online PDS that is designed to increase the knowledge of staff in child care programs about child development, health, and safety topics. This program now requires that all volunteers, interns, or substitutes who do not count in the child/teacher ratio complete a one-hour training module called “Emergency Response.” Online Emergency Response training must be completed annually. Parents/Caregivers **MAY NOT** volunteer in the classroom until they have been deemed suitable for volunteering by EEC and have completed the EEC Essentials course. Once these steps have been satisfactorily completed, you will receive a link to sign up to volunteer in your child’s classroom.

CENTRAL CO-OP STAFF

All staff are **REQUIRED** to complete an EEC Background Record Check (BRC), which includes a fingerprint check, Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) check, Department of Children and Families (DCF) check, and a Sex Offender Registry Information (SORI) check. Teachers must fill out the consent form and submit it with a copy of your driver’s license to the director for submission to the EEC BRC. Once received, you will receive an email from EEC with instructions on how to set up your fingerprint check. Once this check is complete, the CORI, DCF, and SORI will be processed. The Co- Op will pay the \$35.00 fee to undergo a fingerprint based check. Identogo, the fingerprint vendor will confirm that the name on the legal document (i.e., passport, driver’s license) matches the name that you used to register for fingerprinting and to complete the EEC BRC.

If the BRC identifies disqualifying offenses, you will receive an email with instructions on how to proceed. The Co-Op will not be notified of your disqualifying offenses. EEC will only share your final suitability determination with the program. If no disqualifying offenses are found, you will be deemed “suitable” for teaching and EEC will notify the Co-Op. This suitability status is valid for three years, after which staff must undergo another fingerprint based check in order to continue employment.

Staff will not be hired until they have received a suitable determination. In addition, **ALL** staff who are counted in the staff/child ratios are **REQUIRED** to complete the StrongStart EEC Essentials courses through the EEC Essentials training program. Massachusetts has announced the creation of the StrongStart Online Professional Development System (PDS) to support early educators and programs. The EEC Essentials training is a new federal requirement within the StrongStart Online PDS that is designed to increase the knowledge of staff in child care programs about child development, health, and safety topics. Staff **MAY NOT** begin working at the Co-Op until they have been deemed suitable for volunteering by EEC and have completed the EEC Essentials course.

Birthdays

Birthdays are wonderful social experiences for all the children. Parents and their birthday child are welcome to supply a special and practical snack on their special day. Please check the allergy list before bringing in a snack to share. If you are unsure, please talk to your child’s teacher. Arrangements should be made with the child’s teacher

for children whose birthdays fall on days when their child is not in school. Birthday party invitations may not be distributed in school unless the **ENTIRE** class is being invited.

Books & Toys

Your child may bring a book to school if it is clearly marked with his or her name. Please do not send toys to school, as they are easily lost or broken and often cause conflicts between children. When children do bring toys from home, they will remain in a separate storage box until pick-up time. No “weapons” will be allowed.

Inclement Weather

Children play outside in nice weather when the temperature and conditions are safe and practical. As a general rule, we will go out as long as the temperature is 20 degrees or above. During the winter it is very important to have the proper outdoor gear for your child.

The clothing that your child needs for outdoor cold weather play are:

- Hat
- Snow Pants
- Warm Jacket
- Gloves/Mittens
- Boots

Please label all of your child’s winter gear and place it in a reusable bag!

In the event that the temperature is below 25 degrees, raining, or otherwise deemed impractical to go outside to play, we will organize playtime inside the school.

Tooth Brushing

Toothbrushing is a regulation, however at this time, the Central Co-Operative Nursery School is not offering it.

Nap/Rest Time

ECC regulations require that an extended period of sleep, rest or quiet activities be provided for children in preschool longer than four hours. Children who choose not to sleep or awaken early will be offered quiet activities (i.e. books, puzzles, manipulatives). The school provides mats for rest time. Children may bring a crib sheet, blanket, soft toy or pillow in the bag provided for napping. Nap items will be sent home weekly to be laundered. Nap takes place in the classroom and teachers position themselves so they can see and hear children at all times.

We adhere to mandatory EEC guidelines for nap/rest times:

- The nap/rest area is set up in a way that minimizes noise and disturbance.

- A separate mat is provided for each child.
- There is no use of restraints on children while sleeping
- Mats are individually marked and are in good repair.
- Blankets and mats are stored in a safe and sanitary manner.
- Mats are set up with a minimum of two feet between each mat on all sides.
- Mats are arranged so that children are easily accessible during an emergency.
- There is appropriate and adequate lightning for quiet activities for children who do not sleep.
- There is adequate lighting to allow for appropriate supervision.

Necessary Supplies

Children should be appropriately dressed for the weather. Keep in mind that during the spring and fall, the temperature varies according to the time of day. Sandals and other open-toed shoes are not recommended. For safety purposes, children should wear sneakers or other closed-top shoes. All children should keep an extra change of clothes at the Co-Op. The children will get wet and/or dirty on a fairly regular basis, so clean clothes are a necessity. Children who are in the full day program will need a light sheet, a pillow, and an optional snuggle item for nap time. All items should be **clearly labeled** with the child's name and placed in a pillowcase or drawstring bag.

Parent Conferences & Progress Reports

Children will receive written progress reports twice a year, usually in February and May. Private conferences are held at the request of the parent(s) or teacher. We encourage parents to communicate with teachers through phone calls, email, or private meetings when dealing with personal issues concerning your child.

School Clothing

When attending school, children should wear comfortable clothing and footwear that is easily washable. All clothing should be clearly labeled. Children should have an extra set of clothes in a bag available in the classroom in the case where a teacher needs them.

Snack

Please provide your child with a healthy peanut/tree nut free snack. **Please use an ice pack in your child's snack bag to ensure the food doesn't spoil.** Snacks should contain healthy options.

Snow Days

The Central Co-Operative Nursery School will close completely if the Chelmsford Public School system cancels school for the day due to poor weather conditions. In the event of a Chelmsford Public School system delay (i.e. 90 minute/2 hour delay) any Half Day classes will be canceled for that day. In the event where the Chelmsford Public School system issues a delay, the morning Full Day program opening will be delayed as indicated below:

- **If Chelmsford Public delays opening by 90 minutes, then our opening time would be 10:30 a.m.**
- **If Chelmsford Public delays opening by 2 hours, then our opening time would be 11:00 a.m.**

The safety and well-being of our staff and students take priority therefore, snow days cannot be made up at any time during the school year and tuition cannot be refunded for days missed due to inclement weather. If weather becomes hazardous during the day and necessitates early dismissal, you will be notified by email and text message.

Toileting

- Children are encouraged to be self-sufficient in the bathroom.
- If a child has a bowel movement accident the staff will assist the child through the steps of cleaning up and changing into clean clothes.
- Soiled clothing will be placed in a sealed plastic bag and then in a brown bag, labeled with the child's name and returned to the child's parent at the end of the day.
- When it is necessary for an educator to change a child who has had an accident, plastic disposable gloves should be worn, and the child should clean himself with a disposable wipe before clean clothes are put on.
- When the child is done cleaning himself the staff member should check to make sure the child has done a good job and is clean. If the child needs assistance, the educator will assist the child in cleaning using a wipe.
- Soiled pull-ups/diapers will be placed in the diaper pail and taken to the dumpster at the end of the day. The pail will be disinfected with bleach and water daily.
- Both the child and staff member will wash their hands with warm water and liquid soap before leaving the bathroom.
- Children will be supervised in the bathroom.
- Children's privacy will be respected while in the bathroom.
- No child will ever be punished for soiling, wetting or not using the toilet.



Parent Information

Chapter 28A, section 10 and subsequent amendments to the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts mandates to the Office of Early Education and Care as the legal responsibility of promulgating and enforcing rules and regulations governing the operation of child care centers (including nursery schools), and school age programs.

Parental Input

The licensee must appropriately involve parents of children in care in visiting the program, meeting with the staff and receiving reports of their children's progress. The program must have a procedure for allowing you to give input and make suggestions, but it is up to the program to decide whether or not they will be implemented.

Meeting with Parents

In group child care programs, the licensee shall assure that the administrator or his designee meets with the parent(s) prior to admitting a child to the program. The parents shall have an opportunity to visit the program's classrooms at the time of the meeting or prior to the enrollment of the child. In school age programs, the licensee shall provide an opportunity for the parent(s) and child to visit the program and meet the staff before the child's enrollment.

Parent Information

The licensee must provide to the parents upon admission of their child the program's written statement of purpose, including the program philosophy, goals and objectives, and the characteristics of children served; information on the administrative organization of the program, including lines of authority and supervision; the program's behavior management policy; the program's plan for referring parents to appropriate social, mental health, education and medical services for children; the termination and suspension policy; a list of nutritious foods to be sent for snacks or meals; the program's policy and procedures for identifying and reporting suspected child abuse or neglect; the procedures for emergency health care and the illness exclusion policy; the program's transportation plan; the procedure for administration of medication, and, upon request, a copy of the complete health care policy; a copy of the fee schedule, and in school age child care, the procedures for on-going parent communication. All of this information may be contained in a "Parent Handbook".

Parent Conferences

The licensee must make staff available for individual conferences with parents at your request.

Progress Reports

A report is issued after the first six (6) weeks of school letting you know how your child is transitioning to the school year. A written report is prepared in January and in June. We will provide a copy to you as well as a copy to be kept in your child's file. If at any time you would like to meet with your child's teacher to discuss the report, a meeting will be scheduled.

If your child is identified as having a disability, you will receive a written progress report at least every three (3) months. Program staff must bring special problems or significant developments to your attention as soon as they arise.

Children's Records

Information contained in a child's record is privileged and confidential. Program staff may not distribute or release information in a child's record to anyone not directly related to implementing the program plan for the child without your written consent. You must be notified if your child's record is subpoenaed.

Access to Your Child's Record

You are entitled to have access to your child's record at reasonable times on request. You must have access to the record within two (2) business days of your request unless you consent to a longer time period. You must be allowed to view your child's entire record, even if it is maintained in more than one location. The center must have procedures governing access to, duplication of, and dissemination of children's record, and must maintain a permanent, written log in each child's record which identifies anyone who has had access to the record or who has received any information from the record. This log is available only to you and the people responsible for maintaining the center's records.

Amending Your Child's Record

You have the right to add information, comments, data, or any other relevant materials to the child's record. You also have the right to request deletion or amendment of any information contained in your child's record. If you believe that adding information is not sufficient to explain, clarify or correct objectionable material in your child's record, you have the right to a conference with the licensee to make your objections known. If you have a conference with the licensee, the licensee must inform you in writing within one week of his decision regarding your objections. If the licensee decides in your favor, he must immediately take the steps necessary to put the decision into effect.

Transfer of Records

When your child is no longer in care, the licensee can give your child's record to you, or any other person you identify, upon your written request.

Charge for Copies

The licensee shall not charge an unreasonable fee for copies of any information contained in your child's record.

Providing Information to the Office

The program must make available any information requested by the Department to determine compliance with any Department regulations governing the program, by providing access to its facilities, records, staff, and references.

Reporting Abuse or Neglect

All center staff are mandated reporters. They are required by law to report suspected abuse and neglect to either the Department of Social Services or to the licensee's program administrator. The licensee must have written policies and procedures for reporting and must provide the written policy to you upon enrollment.

Notification of Injury

The licensee must notify you immediately of any injury which requires emergency care. The licensee must also notify you, in writing, within 24 hours, if any first aid is administered to your child.

Availability of EEC Regulations

The program must maintain a copy of the regulations, *102 CMR 7.00: Standards for the Licensure or Approval of Group Day Care and School Age Child Care Programs*, on the premises of the center and must make them available to any person upon request. If you have a question about any of the regulations, ask the center to show them to you.



Discipline Policies

Children will learn to consider and respect others and their environment around them. Clear and consistent age appropriate limits will be set, and with these limits, each child will gently learn what it is appropriate behavior. Children are encouraged to solve as many of their own problems as possible under the guidance of a staff member. Children are encouraged to use words to handle their differences and shown how to stop others from interfering with their activities. When a teacher must intervene, age appropriate and constructive methods of discipline are used, starting with a verbal intervention, redirecting and removing a child from the situation if necessary. Physical or emotional danger will be grounds for a teacher to intervene immediately.

The parents are included in this discipline process so children can see that both parents and teachers reinforce limit setting. Parents are notified verbally or in writing regarding disciplinary action taken by the teacher, to better aid the child in improving their behavior. In the interest of maintaining a safe and happy learning environment, Central Co-Op reserves the right to exclude any child from the program for a specified period of time or to terminate any child's enrollment if that child is found to be continuously disruptive to our program.

Behavior Guidance

Staff shall provide each child with guidance that helps the child acquire positive self-concept and self-control. Behavior guidance used by each caregiver will be constructive, positive, and suited to the age of the child at all times. The following rules and standards apply:

To prevent unacceptable behavior from occurring the staff will:

- Model appropriate behavior.
- Arrange the classroom environment to enhance the learning of acceptable behaviors
- Use descriptive phrase praise when appropriate occurs, i.e., “Look how high you are building the blocks! Let’s count them.”

When unacceptable behavior occurs or is about to occur, staff will use:

- redirection—substitute a positive activity for a negative one
- distraction –change the focus of the activity or behavior
- active listening to determine the underlying cause of the behavior
- holding and rocking a child will be done when needed
- Time-out (separation from the group) is used as a last resort, only when less intrusive methods have been tried and or behavior of the child is dangerous to himself and others. In the event a time out is used, a child will be separated from the group for a maximum of 5 minutes.

We must be aware of and comply with all federal and State, and local laws prohibiting corporal or abusive punishment in child care settings. Staff is expressly prohibited from using unproductive or shaming methods of punishment.

All teachers and parent volunteers will abide by EEC guidelines for discipline as found in the regulations.

These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Corporal punishment shall not be used, including spanking
- No child shall be subjected to cruel or severe punishment, humiliation, verbal or physical abuse, neglect, or abusive treatment.
- No child should be denied food as a form of punishment
- Force feeding children is not allowed
- No child shall be punished for wetting, soiling, or not using the toilet.
- No child shall be forced to remain in soiled clothing as a form of punishment
- No child shall be punished by being forced to remain on the toilet or any other excessive practices for toileting.

Parents and childcare staff will always work together to deal with persistent behavioral issues such as biting, or unusual or dangerous aggression to self or others. If a child appears unusually stressed or anxious, or otherwise motivated to engage in negative behaviors, it is the duty of the child care staff to consult with the parents.

Children Who Endanger Other Children

At the Co-Op one of our primary goals is to provide a safe, nurturing, and pleasant environment for all of the children we serve. We recognize that one of our jobs is to help children learn appropriate ways to handle conflicts. We work on this as conflicts arise, helping children find satisfactory solutions. We also have “Conflict Resolution” and “Empathy Learning” as a part of our curriculum. We understand that many preschoolers may use misguided behavior because they have not yet learned what it is acceptable behavior. However, at times a child’s behavior may endanger others.

We want to ensure parents that we will address such behavior immediately following these guidelines:

- A first incident will be reported to the parent.
- A second incident will result in a parent-teacher conference to discuss the behavior and establish a plan of action.
- A third incident will result in the parent being called, and another conference will be set up with the teacher(s) and the director to continue the discussion to understand what might be causing the problem. Referral for outside advice will be suggested. The Central Co-Op reserves the right to terminate any child’s enrollment if any further incident occurs, or if we feel that any of following conditions exists:
- The school cannot meet the child’s needs.
- The parents are not able to work with the school to find an acceptable solution.
- The continuing behavior endangers the wellbeing of other children, staff, and/or the child engaging in the behavior.

Termination of Services

Other reasons which may result in the termination of a specific care arrangement include:

- Non-payment for preschool services and/or lack of adherence to our tuition payment policies.
- Lack of cooperation by the parents with the program’s efforts to resolve differences and/or to meet the child’s needs through parent/staff meetings or conferences.
- Abusive behavior and/or verbal threats by parents toward program staff will not be tolerated. This will result in immediate termination.

In the event a child is asked to leave the school, the following procedure is used:

- Parents are notified verbally
- A meeting is arranged to discuss the situation
- Written records will be available to the parents
- Upon dismissal, the child will be told by the teacher, director, and parents as consistently as possible.
- Parents will be notified in writing of the dismissal

- The decision will be made by the Executive Board upon the recommendation of the teacher and director.
- A list of resources is given to the child's parents to help with the child's appropriate placement
- Referrals to the proper agencies are given to the parents
- There is a two-week grace period during which the dismissed child has time to find other appropriate placement
- Written documentation is provided to the child's parents as to the reasons for the termination of services or suspension of services.

Referral Procedure

In the event that a parent or child would be in need of a reference to an educational, social, mental health, or medical service, the following procedure will be used:

1. Any parent or staff member will bring their concern to the attention of the director upon formal observation of a child and as soon as the problem is suspected.
2. All observations to support the referral will be documented in writing and kept in the child's file.
3. The director will discuss their concern with the parent in a private meeting at the school.
4. All documentation will be done by the director, parent, and child's teacher and shared with the parent during a group meeting.
5. The Co-Op will have parental consent in writing before any referral is made.
6. The director provides referral information to the parent(s), including information on Chapter 766 and Early Intervention Programs.
7. Follow up is conducted with the child's parent(s), agency or service provider. The Central Co-Op will meet the child's needs as completely as possible within the confines of the center.
8. The director has the overall responsibility for implementation of the written plan.
9. The Board of Directors shall be notified only when the well-being of other children is at stake.
10. If the Board of Directors is notified of a problem, the person referred shall remain anonymous.
11. The child's progress will be reviewed every three months
12. Written statement to the parent includes:
 - Reason for the referral
 - Summary of observations
 - Efforts to accommodate the child's needs within the confines of the center.
 - Co-Op will assist the child's parents in making the referral
 - There will be a written record of the referral, including information at the parent conference, and results of the conference and testing.

Disagreement between Co-Op and Parents

The Co-Op is committed to high quality education. We hope that the Co-Op is a pleasant experience for the staff and families. Sometimes, however, conflicts will arise between the staff and a parent. We have found that through open communication, most conflicts can be resolved promptly and to everyone's satisfaction. We encourage open dialogue and respectful sharing of our concerns. The director and/or the president of the board of directors should be informed of any conflict and will assist with a resolution if required.



Health, Nutrition, and Safety Policies and Procedures

Health Standards

- Each family shall have health forms completely filled out as required by the Massachusetts Department of Social Services, including identification and emergency information and the child's health history. Each member and staff must have a pre-employment physical examination (signed by a physician) and present updated evidence of a negative TB test, whether tine, x-ray or intradermal as specified by Massachusetts Department of Social Services.
- Basic responsibility for the child's health rests with the parents.
- The Director and the teachers have the authority to isolate and send home a sick child.
- To prevent group exposure to contagious disease, parents are required to notify the Director when a child has had exposure to, or become ill with, any contagious disease.
- Children with a fever of 99.5 degrees or diarrhea/vomiting must be kept home 24 hours after the symptoms have stopped. Children will not be readmitted to school until they have been fever free without medication and diarrhea/vomiting have stopped completely. Children should be kept at home with any two of the following symptoms: Runny nose with a colored (yellow or green) mucus, sneezing, cough, complaints about body aches or pains, general lethargy.
- Children who are lethargic, or who generally do not feel well enough to participate, will not be admitted to school. The classroom teachers will do a health check when children arrive at school each morning. Teachers have the authority to send home children who are not feeling well enough to attend school
- Parent volunteers who become ill should not attempt to volunteer at the Co-Op.

Emotional Health

It is helpful to the teachers if parents can keep them informed when family events may reflect in your child's behavior. Employment changes, business trips, the death of a family member or pet can all contribute to temporary changes in character for your child. If you or your family is experiencing any of these issues, please speak to your child's teacher or the office.

Emergency Evacuation

When the decision is made to evacuate the Center facility, the Director will make the announcement in the most expeditious way possible that all persons are to evacuate to the assembly area and await further instruction. The building is to be evacuated completely. The Director will notify appropriate personnel and communicate what type of emergency is present.

In the event of an actual fire, the Director will be responsible to notify 9-1-1 of the emergency from a cell phone outside the building once the evacuation is complete.

Central Co-Op staff will evacuate the children as follows:

- Emergency evacuation plans will be posted at all exits.
- During an emergency evacuation, the Lead Teacher will be responsible for taking the attendance sheets and emergency contact information for his/her students.
- The assistant teacher will be responsible for leading the children out of the building using the safest exit.
- The director 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 by the brown shed in the parking lot and wait for the go-ahead by the Program Director before re-entering the building.
- Under no circumstances are the staff to stop for any of their own or a child's personal belongings including jackets, shoes, purses, etc.
- Upon arriving at the designated evacuation area, all children must be physically accounted for against the attendance record and the results reported to the Director immediately.
- The Center will maintain a daily attendance list that is current. Lead teachers are responsible for signing children in and out of the center by arrival and departure times.
- The attendance list will be kept with the Lead teachers and be readily accessible in case of an emergency evacuation.
- The Lead teacher will be responsible for taking the attendance list and for accounting for all the children in the class once they are safely out of the building.
- Emergency evacuation drills are conducted every month at different times of the program day as determined by the Program Director.
- Children and staff practice using different evacuation routes so that the children and staff will be familiar with them.
- 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.

Emergency Management Plan

In the event that the building should lose heat, water and/or electricity during the winter months, and the inside temperature falls below 65 degrees Fahrenheit, we will notify all parents of our plans to close. The staff will remain until the last child is dismissed.

In the event of a natural disaster (tornado, hurricane, flood, major storm or unusual situation including chemical spills, bomb threats) we would be in touch by phone, email alerts or in person. We will contact local authorities to determine whether to evacuate or shelter in place. If it is determined by authorities we would need to leave the school building, we will evacuate the building in the manner we practice monthly. Once we have met in the parking lot, attendance will be taken to ensure all children are out of the building. We would walk across the street to St. Mary's Catholic church hall. (St. Mary's is equipped with a full kitchen, rest rooms, and is handicapped accessible and handicapped equipped). We will contact parents by cell phone and/or email using our staff phone tree and remain at this location until all parents have been contacted and arrangements have been made for each and every child.

If our secondary shelter was deemed not safe, we would then contact the Red Cross and local authorities by cell phone or in person to determine where we should seek shelter.

The contact person for St. Mary's Church is Paul Firicano - 978-256-2374 Extension 11

Procedures for Conducting a Fire Drill

1. Inform the staff in advance. The Center Director informs the staff that there will be a fire drill later in the day/week.
2. Familiarize the children with the fire drill. Teachers talk to the children in their classroom about the bell/ alarm, rules, and procedures for vacating the building.
3. Evacuate the building. The Director will sound the whistle and the Center will be evacuated.
4. The Assistant teacher will be responsible for leading the children out of the building using the nearest exit.
5. Children will proceed immediately with their Assistant teacher to the outside designated area.
6. Lead teachers will count their children and take attendance sheets, emergency information, and cellphones with them. They will follow the children and be sure all children are accounted for.
7. The Center Director and assistant checks bathrooms and "hiding places" for children.
8. The Center Director retrieves the emergency binder and cellphone.
9. Time the drill. The Center Director times how long it took to vacate the building.
10. Verify accurate recount of all persons. The Center Director or designee checks with each group to verify an accurate recount of all persons.
11. Return to the building. The Center Director or designee gives approval to re enter the building.
12. Document the completed fire drill. The Center Director completes a written documentation that contains the specifics of the drills: date, time and location of fire drill and the length of time required to vacate the building.
13. A fire drill will be practiced at least once a month, at different times of the day. All children should have the experience of a practice fire drill to be better prepared for a real emergency.

School Lockdown Procedures

1. In the event of a lock-down, the Center director will use the school password to disseminate the need to assume the lock-down mode.
2. If the police have not initiated the lock-down, they will be notified by the director, we will follow our procedures and instructions and any additional instructions by the Town of Chelmsford. If the police initiate the lockdown,

we will follow the policies and instructions set forth by the Town of Chelmsford. The director will act as the liaison with the police of Town of Chelmsford officials and will follow all guidelines.

3. Teachers will pull all shades in the classroom and cover all door windows with black felt.
4. The Lead teacher for each classroom is responsible for his/her attendance clipboard and emergency binder, implementing the Directors instructions by taking attendance, and establishing a calm atmosphere. Teachers will keep the children in the classroom away from doors and windows. The children will be directed in quiet activities.
5. The Central Co-Op will remain in lock-down until notified by officials, at which point the school will notify all parents that they can come and pick up their children.
6. The Central Co-Op will practice age appropriate lock-down procedures throughout the year as part of our Emergency Management Plan.

Procedures in the Event of a Missing Child

1. The Lead teacher alerts the Director **IMMEDIATELY**.
2. The Director and the Assistant teacher search indoor areas within the school in case the child is hiding. In the event that the child is found, the parent should be notified and the Lead teacher will be subject to a review.
3. In the event that the child was not found, the Director, while maintaining ratios, delegates the Assistant teacher to search the school grounds starting with the exit routes. In the event the child is found, the parents would be notified of the incident and the Lead teacher would be subject to review.
4. If the child is not located, the parents, if not already on site, and the police would be contacted by the Director.
5. Once the police arrive, formal responsibility for the search will pass to the police, but the Director will ensure that the staff makes themselves appropriately available to assist further with the incident.
6. The Director will ensure appropriate reassurance and comfort are provided to the children, parents and staff.
7. The Director will be responsible for notifying the EEC.

First Aid and Transportation to the Hospital

1. In the case of an emergency or illness (such as a seizure, a serious fall or serious cut), the teacher in charge will begin administration of emergency first aid while the assistant teacher, or director takes other children to another area or room. Both staff members will remain calm and reasonable.

2. One of the supervisory staff will contact the parent to come and pick up the child or, if response time is a factor, to have the parent meet the child and accompanying staff at the emergency room of the hospital utilized in emergencies.
3. In the event a situation arises that is life threatening an ambulance will be called immediately. The parent will be called to meet the child and staff at the hospital. The director or other designated staff will go with the child in the ambulance. The child's file will be taken, including permission forms and pertinent insurance information if the center has it. If a parent cannot be reached, the child will be taken to the facility in the same manner and periodic attempts will be made to first reach the child's parent(s) and then the other names listed on the emergency form.
4. The administrative assistant will take over as teacher in the classroom while the director and teacher are tending to the child.

Emergencies while on Field Trip

If an accident or acute illness occurs while on a field trip, the director will take charge of the emergency, assess the situation, and give first aid as needed. The method and urgency of transportation for the child to receive medical treatment will be determined by the director based on the severity of the emergency or illness. If a child becomes mildly ill, he/she will be separated from the group and brought to the car that the director or assistant arrived in. If necessary, an ambulance will be called.

As a preventive measure, prior to departure from the center, the program director and lead teacher will determine appropriate guidelines to be followed during the field trip to insure continuity and safety of the children including:

1. A first aid kit will be taken in all vehicles on all field trips.
2. Emergency information, including contacts and telephone numbers, will be taken on all field trips.
3. On a field trip, staff must know the location of a telephone and have appropriate change to be able to use it or have a working cell phone available.

Plan for Injury Prevention

1. To prevent injury and to ensure a safe environment, the staff member who opens each 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 to the Director. The Program Director will monitor the outdoor playground and remove any hazards prior to any children using the space.
2. No smoking is allowed on the premises.
3. Toxic substances, sharp objects, matches, and other hazardous objects will be stored out of the reach of children.
4. A first aid kit and emergency contacts and telephone numbers for the children will be taken on all field trip.
5. An injury report for any incident which requires 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 accident or injury, description of

injury and how it occurred, name(s) of witnesses, name(s) of person(s) who administered first aid and first aid required. Staff should use the Accident/Injury Report Form to record the above information. Staff should submit the completed form to the Program Director for review.

The injury forms are located on the back of each classroom door. Each teacher is responsible for maintaining their log.

Once the Program Director has reviewed the Accident/Injury Report form and has signed it, it should be given to the parent. The parent should be allowed to review it, sign it, and then be given a copy. The staff member should then log the report in the Central Log of Injuries and then file the report in the Child's file.

All Central Co-Op staff have been trained in First Aid administration. First aid kits are located on the shelves in the hallways on the first and second floor. The director updates the first aid kits and it is the teachers' responsibility to let the director know what needs to be replaced.

Plan for Managing Infectious Disease

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

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

- the illness prevents the child from participating in the program activities or from resting comfortably;
- the illness results in greater care need that the child care staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children;
- the child has any of the following conditions: fever, unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficult breathing, or other signs of serious illness;
- Testing positive for Covid
- diarrhea;
- vomiting two or more times in the previous 24 hours at home or once at the center;
- mouth sores, unless the physician states that the child is non-infectious;
- rash with a fever or behavior change until the physician has determined that the illness is not a communicable disease;
- purulent conjunctivitis (defined as pink or red conductive with white or yellow discharge, often with matted eyelids) until examined by a physician and approved for re-admission, with or without treatment;
- tuberculosis, until the child is non-infectious;

- impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment has started or all the sores are covered;
- head lice, free of all nits or scabies and free of all mites;
- strep infection, until 24 hours after treatment and the child has been without fever for 24 hours;
- Many types of hepatitis are caused by viruses. The symptoms are so alike that blood tests are needed to tell them apart. In the U.S. the most common types of hepatitis are A, B, and C. Types B and C are spread through blood and other body fluids. Type A, is spread through contaminated food and water or stool (feces). Fact sheets are available from State Department of Public Health: www.state.ma.us/dph
- chicken pox, until the last blister has healed over.

Children who test positive for covid must remain out of care consistent with guidance from state or local health departments or updated program policies.

Covid exposure

When children and staff are exposed to covid in our program, our program will follow guidance from the state and local health departments and the Centers for Disease Control's exclusion protocol. In the event that state and local health departments and the Centers for Disease Control do not provide an exclusion protocol, our program may implement protocol, as determined at the sole discretion of the center administration.

The Central Co-Operative Nursery school will not be requiring universal mask use for healthy individuals.. Any individual who wishes to continue to mask, including those who face higher risk from COVID-19, will be supported in that choice. For those who need or choose to mask, masking is never required at the Co-Op while the individual is eating, drinking, sleeping, or outside.

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

If a child has already been admitted to the Center and shows signs of illness (for example: a fever equal to or greater than 99.5 degrees by the oral or axillary route, a rash, reduced activity level, diarrhea, etc.), he/she will be offered their mat, cot, or other comfortable spot in which to lie down. If the child manifests any of the symptoms requiring exclusion (as listed above) or it is determined that it is in the best interests of the child that he/she be taken home, his/her parents will be contacted immediately and asked to pick the child up as soon as possible.

When a communicable disease has been introduced into the Center, parents will be notified immediately, and in writing by the Program Director. Whenever possible, information regarding the communicable disease shall be made available to parents.

The program requires, on admission, a physician's certificate that each child has been successfully immunized in accordance with the Department of Public Health's recommended schedule. No child shall be required, under 102 CMR 7.00 to have any such immunization if his parent(s) object, in writing, on the grounds that it conflicts with their religious beliefs or if the child's physician submits documentation that such a procedure is contradicted. This must be

maintained in the child's file. No child will be admitted into the program without the required documentation for immunizations. (Childhood Lead screening must be done on all children; it is not considered an immunization). The program will maintain a list of the children who have documented exemptions from immunizations and these children will be excluded from attending when a vaccine preventable disease is introduced into the program. The Massachusetts Immunization Program provides free childhood vaccines. The toll-free telephone number is 1-888 658-2850.

Plan for Mildly Ill Children

Children who are mildly ill may remain in school if they are not contagious (*refer to Plan For Infectious Disease*) and they can participate in the daily program including outside time.

If a child's condition worsens or, if it is determined that the child poses a threat to the health of the other children, or if the child cannot be cared for by the classroom staff, the Program Director will contact the child's parent(s). The parent(s) will be asked to pick up the child. The child will be cared for in a quiet area, a classroom or in the Center's office by a teacher qualified staff member or by the Program Director until the parent(s) arrive to take the child home.

Any toys, blankets, or mats used by an ill child will be cleaned and disinfected before being used by other children.

Plan for Infection Control

The program director shall ensure that staff and children wash their hands with liquid soap and running water using friction. Hands shall be dried with individual or disposable towels. Staff and children shall wash their hands minimally at the following times:

Before eating or handling food;

1. After toileting;
2. After coming into contact with bodily fluids and discharges; 3. After handling center animals and/or their equipment; and
4. After cleaning.

The program director or lead teacher shall ensure that the specific equipment, items or surfaces are washed with soap and water and disinfected with a fresh, standard bleach solution (1/4 teaspoon per 1 qt.) using the following schedule:

After each use;

1. Sinks and faucets used for hand washing after the sink is used for rinsing a toilet training chair;
2. Toys mouthed by children;
3. Mops used for cleaning bodily fluids; and

4. Thermometers

At least daily;

1. Toilets and toilet seats;
2. Sinks and sink faucets;
3. Drinking fountains;
4. Water table and water play equipment;
5. Play tables;
6. Smooth surfaced non-porous floors;
7. Mop used for cleaning; and 8. Cloth washcloths and towels.

At least monthly or more frequently as needed to maintain cleanliness, when wet or soiled, and before use by another child:

1. Cots, mats or other approved sleeping equipment; 2. Sheets, blankets or other coverings; and
3. Machine washable fabric toys.

All staff will wear non-latex gloves when they come into contact with blood or body fluids. Specifically, gloves will be worn during diapering, toileting, when administering first aid for a cut, bleeding wound, or a bloody nose, or when feeding an infant breast milk.

Gloves will never be reused and should be changed between children being handled. Proper disposal of infectious materials is required. Any disposable materials that contain liquid, semi- liquid, or dry, caked blood will need to be disposed of in the secured trash receptacle located in the janitor's closet and marked "Biohazardous waste." The bags will be removed and securely tied each time the receptacle is emptied. Cloth items that come into contact with blood or bodily fluids will be double bagged and sent home. Each staff member is trained in the above Infection Control Procedures upon employment and before working with the children and then annually.

Procedures for Using and Maintaining First Aid Equipment

- All staff have been trained in first aid administration.
- First aid kits are located on the shelves in the hallways on the first and second floor. It is marked by a red cross located on the front of the container. The first aid kits are stored out of reach of the children but easily accessible in case of emergency. The director updates the first aid kits. They are inspected monthly but supplies will be replaced as needed
- **Contents of First Aid Kits:** Band-Aids | Disposable Non-Latex Gloves | Gauze Pads | Gauze Roller Bandage

Medication Administration

Prescription Medication

1. Prescription medication must be brought to school in its original container and include the child's name, the name of the medication, the dosage, the number of times per and the number of days the medication is to be administered. This prescription label will be accepted as the written authorization of the physician.
2. The Center will not administer any medication contrary to the directions on the label unless so authorized by written order of the child's physician.
3. The parent must fill out the Authorization For Medication Form before the medication can be administered.
4. Written records will be kept on each medication given to any child. These records will be completed and stored in the child's file. Any medication that is not used will be returned to the parent in its original container as soon as it is no longer needed.
5. If a parent comes to school to dispense medication, the child is removed from the classroom and brought into the office to receive medication.

Non-Prescription Medication

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

Topical Ointment and Sprays

1. Topical ointments and sprays such as petroleum jelly, sunscreen, and bug spray, etc. will be administered to the child with written parental permission. The signed statement from the parent will be valid for one year and include a list of topical non-prescription medication.
2. When topical ointments and sprays are applied to wounds, rashes, or broken skin, the Center will follow its written procedure for nonprescription medication which includes the written order of the physician, which is valid for a year, and the Authorization for Medication form signed by the parent.
3. The licensee shall not administer any such medication contrary to the directions on the original container unless authorized to do so by a written order from the child's physician.
4. The licensee shall keep all medications labeled in its original container with the child's name, the name of the drug, and the directions for its administration and storage.

All Medications

1. The first dosage must be administered by the parent at home in case of an allergic reaction.
2. All medications must be given to the Director directly by the parent.
3. All medications will be stored out of the reach of children. All medications that are considered controlled substances will be locked and kept out of reach of children.
4. The Director is responsible for the administration of medication. In his/her absence, the Lead Teacher will be responsible.
5. The Center will maintain a written record of the administration of any medication. This completed record will become part of the child's file.
6. All unused medication will be returned to the parent.

Meeting Specific Health Needs

- During intake, parents will be asked to record any known allergies on the face sheet. The face sheet will be updated yearly.
- The names of children with allergies that may be life threatening (i.e. bee stings) will be posted in conspicuous locations with specific instructions if an occurrence were to happen. The program director will be responsible for making sure the entire staff receives appropriate training to handle any emergency allergic reactions.
- Allergy lists will be updated as necessary when new children enroll or unknown allergies become known.
- All staff and substitutes will be kept informed by the Director so that children can be protected from exposure to foods, chemicals, pets, or other materials to which they are allergic.
- Teachers monitor what the child eats and what she/he is exposed to in the classroom.

****See administration on prescription medications.**

Procedure for Identifying and Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect

All staff members are mandated reporters according to Massachusetts General Law C119, Section 51A. This means that if a staff member has a reasonable suspicion of abuse or neglect of a child he/she must file a report with the Department of Social Services. See attached information for definitions, reporting procedures, etc.

The following procedure will be followed:

1. A staff member who suspects abuse or neglect will document his/her observations including the child's name, date, time, child's injuries, child's behavior, and any other pertinent information. The staff member will then discuss this information with the Director.
2. The Director or the staff member will make a verbal report to DSS, to be followed by a required written report 51A within 48 hours.
3. If a staff member feels that an incident should be reported to DSS, and the Director disagrees, the staff member can still report to DSS directly.
4. All concerns of suspected abuse and neglect that are reported to DSS will be communicated to the parents by the Director unless such a report is contra-indicated.

***Department of Social Services Telephone Number is (508) 452-8970 Child Abuse
Hotline Telephone Number is (508) 454-5255***

Procedure for Identifying and Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect While in the Care of the Co-Op

It is the Center's commitment to protect all children in care from abuse and neglect. The following are procedures for reporting suspected child abuse/neglect while the child is in the Center's care.

Any report of suspected abuse or neglect of a child will be immediately reported to the Department of Social Services and the Department of Early Education and Care. A meeting will be held with the staff member in question to inform him/her of the report that has been filed.

Department of Social Services Telephone Number is (508) 452-8970

The staff member in question will be immediately suspended from the program with pay pending the outcome of the DSS and EEC investigations.

If the report is screened out by DSS, the Director has the option of having the staff member remain on suspension pending the EEC investigation or allowing the staff member to return to the classroom. This decision will be made by the Director and will be based on the seriousness of the allegations and the facts available. If the allegations of

abuse and neglect are substantiated, it will be the decision of the Director whether or not the staff member will be reinstated.

The Director and staff will cooperate fully with all investigations.

Child Guidance Policy

1. The prohibitions in the EEC licensing standards:

- Spanking or other corporal punishment of children;
- Subjecting children to cruel or severe punishment such as humiliation, verbal or physical abuse, neglect, or abusive treatment;
- Depriving children of meals or snacks;
- Force feeding children; and,
- Disciplining a child for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet; or forcing a child to remain in soiled clothing or forcing a child to remain on the toilet, or using any other unusual or excessive practices for toileting.
- Please also note that EEC does not allow any licensed child care programs to use discipline or child guidance techniques that require the use of any physical restraint.

2. Child guidance goals that help children to:

- Be safe with themselves and with others;
- Feel good about themselves;
- Develop self-control and good coping skills;
- Appropriately express their feelings;
- Become more independent;
- Balance their needs and wants with those of others;
- Learn new problem-solving skills, including non-violent conflict resolution; and,
- Learn about conservation – to use equipment, materials, and other resources in caring, appropriate ways.

3. Positive methods of child guidance that include:

- A plan for appropriate behavior through the environment by arranging furniture and other materials to encourage active learning and independence;
- A plan for daily scheduling that prevents boredom, waiting, hurriedness, with time to relax and enjoy activities, as well as a daily routine with ample opportunity for children to select activities and move between them at their own pace, and that gives children ample notice of transitions ahead of time;
- Providing children with expectations that are clear, age-appropriate and applied in a consistent way.

Insect Borne Diseases

The yard is checked daily for standing water to prevent mosquito infestations. Teachers check the yard every day for insects and spiders.

Hot Foods and Liquids Policy

Liquids and foods hotter than 110 Degrees Fahrenheit must be out of the children's reach. Parents' and teachers' hot beverages will be kept out of reach of the children at all times.

Choking and Suffocation Hazard

- Frequently inspect toys to make sure there are no small detachable parts. Toys should be age appropriate. Young children often place things in their mouths.
- Heavy string and rope should be stored out of reach of young children. Encourage children to keep strings and yarns away from their necks.
- When using balloons please be cautious of any small pieces as they are a choking hazard.
- Toilets and sinks could be potential hazards for drowning. Supervise children in the bathroom at all times.
- Buttons, pins, needles, and all small, pointed instruments should be stored in a child proof container.

Choking on food is a significant hazard for preschool children. All staff have training in handling choking young children. Young children do not know how to chew well and don't really use a grinding chewing motion as adults do until about four years of age. Choking can be caused by food getting lodged in the esophagus and putting pressure on the airway or by being inhaled directly into the windpipe

All the children should be encouraged to eat their food slowly, chewing well. Encourage children to eat sitting down. Popcorn, chunks of carrots, and hard candies will not be served to children. Grapes should be cut in half and hot dogs sliced down the middle and then cut into small pieces.

Pet Policy

When pets are in the classroom or visiting, they are seen as an educational resource for children. The children will learn to care for and handle the pet in an appropriate manner.

Pets are properly housed, cared for, and licensed and inoculated when needed, in accordance with local health codes. Teaching staff supervise all interactions between children and animals and instruct children on safe

techniques when in close contact to animals. Program staff makes sure that any child who is allergic to a type of animal is not exposed to that animal. Reptiles are not allowed as classroom pets because of the risk of salmonella infection.

Hand Washing

The most important thing you can do in to prevention of the spread of illness is to wash your hands and the children's hands thoroughly and often, following the Hand Washing Procedure:

- Using warm water and soap (preferably liquid), rub your hands together vigorously for at least 20 seconds.
- Be sure to wash under finger nails, between fingers, and the back of hands and wrists.
- Rinse your hands well under running water.
- Dry your hands with a single-use paper towel or hot air blow dryer.
- Turn off water using a paper towel (if not foot or knee operated) to avoid recontamination of clean hands.

Hands should be washed:

- When you first arrive at the program.
- After using the bathroom or helping a child use the bathroom.
- After changing a diaper.
- After handling items soiled with body fluids or wastes, such as blood, drool, urine, stools, or nasal or eye discharge.
- After cleaning up messes.
- After handling a sick child.
- Before preparing food.
- Before eating or drinking.
- Before administering medication.
- After playing outside.
- After handling pets or a pet cage.

Children's hands should be washed:

- When first arriving at the program.
- After using the toilet or having their diaper changed.
- After touching a child who may be sick.
- After handling soiled items.
- After playing outside.
- After handling pets.
- Before/after they eat or drink.



Curriculum Plan

The teaching and administrative staff at Central Co-Operative Nursery School has agreed upon the curriculum policy and guide. Although it is primarily geared toward children who are in their pre- kindergarten year at our school, it also covers the curriculum for the first-year child.

Our staff would like to stress that education is a team effort between home and school. The Co-Op's entire philosophy is one in which the home and school work together in a partnership for the benefit of the child. This is also very important when we discuss curriculum. Working with your child at home, reading to your child on a regular basis, investigating subjects that your child enjoys, and going places together that spark questions and interest in many various subjects are some examples of how we can work together in this intellectual journey.

Our school has always been one in which our curriculum is developmental in philosophy. This means that teachers take their cues from the children, and learning is flexible and fluid. Schedules are merely guidelines and many times may be changed to accommodate a more spontaneous and real form of learning. Learning opportunities occur at all times of the school day including the Music, Creative Room, and Large Motor times blocks. Academic learning is not limited to "meeting" or "project" time.

The guidelines we use and which each teacher fits to her schedule are the Guidelines for Preschool Learning Experiences published by the Early Childhood Advisory Council to the Massachusetts Board of Education and also NAEYC accreditation guidelines.

General Themes

The following list of themes is a curriculum guideline that the teachers use at the Co-Op. Teachers have the freedom to explore each theme to the extent that it interests the children in their class and within each age group. Additional themes are often added as the children express their interests. We also enjoy the opportunity to learn about individual family's holidays and traditions that we can share with the children.

- My Family
- Friends & School
- Autumn
- Halloween
- Harvest
- Nutrition
- Pilgrims and Native Americans
- Holidays (Christmas, Kwanzaa, Hanukkah)
- Winter
- Hibernation
- The Five Senses
- Dinosaurs
- Holidays (Valentine's Day/Chinese New Year)
- Post Office
- Transportation/Safety/Fire Safety
- Wind and Weather
- Occupations
- Spring
- Ocean
- Animals/Insects
- Mother's Day/Father's Day

Language Arts

The foundations for learning in language arts are critical to all other curriculum areas as well as to social and emotional development. Children develop the basis for verbal communication in early childhood, beginning with nonverbal social exchanges. A solid foundation in language development prior to entering elementary school promotes success in reading and writing. A well-planned program will encourage children to learn about the world around them. Reading to children encourages their imaginations and sparks an interest in learning how to read by themselves.

- Children identify upper and lower case letters and sounds. (Usually upper case only with first year children)
- Children have many opportunities to write his or her first name in the first year, and during the second year, also recognizing, identifying and beginning writing his or her last name. Young three year olds may not be able to write any letters until their fine motor skills have progressed.

- Children recognize first and last names in print. (Usually just first name in first year)
- Children build their conversational skills.
- Children work on correct grasp of brushes, crayons and markers, with the eventual goal of holding a pencil or pen correctly.
- Children have the opportunity to retell familiar stories.
- Children are exposed to all kinds of books.
- Children draw pictures and dictate words to tell stories and experiences. • Children answer questions and discuss stories that they've read together
- Children build listening skills through stories, songs and rhymes.
- Children strengthen visual discrimination.
- Children have the opportunity to identify similarities and differences.
- Children recognize beginning print concepts such as left to right and top to bottom (called directionality) (Usually, this is a second-year skill).
- Children match like objects.
- Children identify first action in a sequence and arrange events in order when telling a story • Children develop fine motor skills using play-dough, scissors, writing utensils, and Legos.
- Teachers expose children to the concept of basic letter sounds.
- Children listen to and identify language sounds in order to develop auditory discrimination and phonemic awareness. This includes: rhyming, changing first letter sounds in a word, beginning letter sounds, and breaking words into syllables. (Advanced skills are emphasized more during the second year)
- Teachers make beginning reading books available.
- Children have the opportunity to write often.
- Children build a better knowledge and recognition of lower case letters during the second year.

Math Skills

Math skills include ideas and concepts about quantity. Math also addresses logical and spatial relationships. In pre-school, math foundations are formed out of children's concrete experiences. These experiences can be embedded in almost all classroom activities including block play, dramatic play, sand and water play and outdoors. Math may also be connected to music and art in the form of rhythmic and visual patterns and symmetry. Number concepts are significant when they are applied to the child's world. **The following are math goals for children who attend the Co-Op:**

- Children at the Co-Op usually can identify numbers 1-20 by the end of the first year, and sometimes to 100 by the end of the second year. However, this goal is flexible, and may be too ambitious for the very youngest in both the first and even second years.
- Usually children can count numbers to 20 in the first year, and 50 in the second year.
- Teachers expose children to writing the numbers 1-31.
- Children have the opportunity to regularly count objects using one to one correspondence.
- Children may sort objects by various attributes such as color, shape and size.
- Children may identify relative size such as small, medium and large.

- Children identify shapes such as square, rectangle, circle, and triangle.
- Children match symbols and shapes.
- Children duplicate and create simple patterns.

The following items are more detailed and are more often taught with our second year, or older children:

- Children use concrete objects to solve simple addition and subtraction problems.
- Children observe and talk about concrete examples of whole and half.
- Children use positional language and ordinal numbers (first, second, third) in everyday activities. Children understand the terms “more, less, same as, equal to” while comparing sets of numbers. Children make estimates and verify accuracy of estimations. Children organize and draw conclusions from collected facts.
- Children graph, using objects and pictures. Sometimes teachers number graphs with older children.
- Children learn simple time concepts such as morning, afternoon and night, and calendar time such as days and months.

Science and Nature

The foundations of scientific learning lie in inquiry and explorations. These are tools of active learning. Fostering children’s natural sense of curiosity can promote a lifelong interest in scientific study. Simple, concrete and meaningful activities for young children in all areas are important for learning.

- Children explore and experience science through hands-on activities.
- Children plant seeds and discuss growing plants.
- Children learn about insects.
- Children learn about animals.
- We learn about the world around us by going on nature walks, gardening, and by observing insect and plant growth.
- We learn about the weather and how it influences the world.
- Children learn about air, wind, water and earth.
- Children learn about the change of seasons.
- Children measure, using rulers and other spontaneous informal forms of measurement (such as blocks, children etc.).
- Children learn to identify eight basic colors.
- We explore color with paint and other media.
- Children explore the properties of liquids and solids.
- We use our five senses.
- We predict outcomes of experiments and other natural phenomena.

History & Social Science Skills

At the preschool level, history and social science is built on children's personal experiences with their families and immediate communities. Meaningful topics around social studies often emerge spontaneously out of children's play and conversations. One purpose of history and social science curriculum is to help children acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed in community life. Decision making within the group lays the foundation for a democratic society. Development of a civic identity and American culture is also a part of preschool curriculum.

- Children practice problem-solving skills.
- Children sometimes work in groups or with a partner on a variety of projects (usually during the second year only).

Children share classroom materials with classmates.

We all practice using manners and appropriate polite terms such as please, thank you, excuse me. Children learn to communicate his or her needs.

- Children take care of their own needs with self-help skills and cleaning up after oneself.
- Teachers expose each child to his or her own personal information such as first and last name, school name, city, state, street and country.
- Teachers discuss "time" in relevant activities using timelines, counting down days etc.
- Children begin to explore maps.
- We learn about various holidays, and also about other countries and customs.
- Teachers discuss qualities of character such as honesty, courtesy, kindness, fairness etc.
- Teachers discuss and explore various types of work people do.
- Children become aware of important American symbols such as the flag.

Fine Arts

- Children develop a basic understanding of songs and music.
- Teachers encourage inventing and creating variations of known songs.
- Children use movement as an expression.
- Teachers present playing and learning about various musical instruments. There is singing in patterns.
- Teachers expose children to puppetry.
- Classes provide dramatic play areas with costumes and props.
- Children explore different types of paint and color media.
- Children use texture, lines, patterns and shapes in artwork.
- Children learn self-expression through music, dance and art projects.

Physical, Social & Emotional Health

- Children have many opportunities to strengthen hand and finger flexibility.
- Strengthening finger pincer-grasp and also grasp and release skills are a priority for beginning hand writing skills.
- Opportunities are there for children to strengthen their eye-hand coordination.
- Children learn about nutrition guidelines and healthy vs. not healthy food.
- Children learn about body awareness, coordination and strength.
- Children learn about directionality and position in space.
- Children learn about personal hygiene and dental health.
- Children learn the names and signs of emotions.
- Children learn about fire safety.
- Children learn about environmental health.

Writing, Letters, Sounds & More

When a child is faced with the task of learning to write and sound out 26 letters it can be quite daunting! Breaking down the process and working on a few letters at a time, will allow the child to feel more confident. The more confidence a child has in themselves the better their abilities will be to succeed at the task at hand. The language and techniques used in Handwriting Without Tears has been quite successful. Uppercase letters can be formed using the following: Long line, short line, big curve, & little curve.

Example: Uppercase A, two long lines and a little line. Other language the children may hear for the letter “A”, up the mountain, down the mountain, across the mountain.

As the children are learning how to write letters, they are also presented with the sound each letter makes. Throughout the day children are encouraged to write, say, sound out and sing songs about letters.

A	TWO LONG LINES, ONE LITTLE LINE, UP THE MOUNTAIN, DOWN THE MOUNTAIN, ACROSS THE MOUNTAIN
B	ONE BIG LINE, TWO LITTLE CURVES
C	ONE BIG CURVE
D	ONE LONG LINE, ONE BIG CURVE
E	ONE LONG LINE, THREE LITTLE LINES, ONE ON THE TOP, ONE ON THE BOTTOM, ONE IN THE MIDDLE
F	ONE LONG LINE, TWO LITTLE LINES, ONE LONG LINE, ONE ON THE TOP, ONE IN THE MIDDLE
G	ONE BIG CURVE, ONE LITTLE LINE
H	TWO LONG LINES, ONE LITTLE LINE ATTACHES THE LONG LINES TOGETHER
I	ONE LONG LINE, TWO LITTLE LINES, HE NEEDS A HAT AND SHOES
J	ONE LONG LINE, ONE LITTLE CURVE

K	ONE LONG LINE, TWO LITTLE LINES, FROM THE MIDDLE OF THE LONG LINE, FIRST DIAGONAL UP THEN DIAGONAL DOWN
L	ONE LONG LINE, ONE LITTLE LINE
M	TWO LONG LINES, TWO LITTLE LINES, UP AND DOWN - UP THE MOUNTAIN, DOWN THE MOUNTAIN, UP THE MOUNTAIN, DOWN THE MOUNTAIN
N	TWO LONG LINES, ONE LITTLE LINE, UP DOWN UP - UP THE MOUNTAIN, DOWN THE MOUNTAIN, UP THE MOUNTAIN
O	TWO BIG CURVES - LIKE A CIRCLE
P	ONE LONG LINE, ONE LITTLE CURVE
Q	TWO BIG CURVES, ONE LITTLE LINE, LIKE A O WITH A TAIL
R	ONE LONG LINE, ONE CURVE, ONE LITTLE CURVE
S	TWO LITTLE CURVES, ALL IN ONE MOTION
T	ONE LONG LINE, ONE LITTLE LINE - ONE LONG LINE WITH A HAT
U	TWO LONG LINES, ONE LITTLE CURVE - ALL IN ONE MOTION
V	TWO LONG LINES - DOWN, UP

W	FOUR LONG LINES - DOWN, UP, DOWN, UP - DOWN THE MOUNTAIN, UP THE MOUNTAIN, DOWN THE MOUNTAIN, UP THE MOUNTAIN
X	TWO LONG LINES - CRISS CROSS
Y	ONE LONG LINE, ONE LITTLE LINE
Z	ONE LONG LINE, TWO LITTLE LINES - OVER DOWN OVER



Health Care Policy - Specific Contact Information

Section 7.07 (16) requires a written health care policy statement be provided to each staff member, posted in each classroom and near each telephone.

Healthcare Consultant

Kristina Green

5 Prairie Road • Chelmsford, MA 01824

Emergency Phone Numbers

Fire Department

911 or 978-256-2541

Poison Control Center

1-800-222-1222

Police Department

911 or 978-256-2521

Chelmsford Board of Health

978-250-5241

Ambulance

911 or 978-256-2521

Hospitals/Doctors

(utilized for emergencies)

Harvard Community Health Plan

228 Billerica Road • Chelmsford, MA
(978) 250-0498

Lowell General Hospital

295 Varnum Avenue • Lowell, MA
(978) 937-6000

Information To Give in an Emergency:

1. Your name and the nature of your emergency
2. The Central Co-Op's Telephone Number: (978) 256-3033
3. The Central Co-Op's Street Address: 1 Worthen Street, Chelmsford, MA
4. Your location within the building



1 Worthen Street • Chelmsford, MA 01824
(978) 256-3033 www.centralcoop.org

