



HAMPSHIRE COOPERATIVE  
NURSERY SCHOOL

## FAMILY HANDBOOK

*2018-2019*

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# **Hampshire Cooperative Nursery School**

## **Our Mission**

Our mission is to provide a joyful, play-based learning environment that helps children develop their unique selves and their capacity to connect with others. We are a school community where teachers, parents, and children respect each other, nurture each other, and learn from each other in an atmosphere of true cooperation.

## **Our Vision**

Our vision is that children who attend our school emerge from a deeply enriching experience eager to learn, embracing of others, and empowered to share their gifts with the world.

## **HCNS Philosophy**

### **Welcome to your school where...**

- ~ children are expected to be messy sometimes
- ~ learning is meaningful and fun so children develop the disposition and desire to continue learning
- ~ the classrooms reflect our belief that young children learn best through play and exploration.
- ~ children explore science and math through nature, experience art and engineering through projects, and investigate the world and their role in it using imagination and creativity
- ~ we support a small, family-like atmosphere that is positive and nurturing.
- ~ each child's creations are expected to be different from those of others; adult-made models, patterns, and pre-drawn forms are used infrequently
- ~ we can choose our own activities, our own materials
- ~ children and parents don't need to worry about being right or wrong
- ~ we celebrate nature, and incorporate natural materials into daily learning
- ~ children are not expected to sit for long periods of time
- ~ parents aren't judged by their child's behavior
- ~ there is no "right way" to be a parent – be yourself!
- ~ boys can play with dolls; girls can use hammers
- ~ we encourage parent involvement, and a communal feeling of acceptance and respect among parents, teachers, and children
- ~ we hire and support a teaching staff of the highest caliber, who can provide an individualized preschool program for each child and family, and who bring to it warmth, flexibility, and a sense of humor
- ~ we cherish our beautiful location on the Connecticut River, next to the Dartmouth Organic Farm, where we can learn about growing a garden from seed to harvest
- ~ we celebrate the diverse family backgrounds of each child
- ~ respect for all differences between people is cultivated and guides our curriculum and classroom environments.

## **A MESSAGE FROM YOUR STAFF:**

We value your child's sense of wonder - questioning, exploring, experimenting, even testing limits. All activities are planned by the teacher to stimulate social, emotional, intellectual, and physical growth in your child. Our classrooms are children's laboratories where they may:

- Experiment with art materials - the process and the moment are important, so we don't expect the product to be identifiable.
- Wonder about nature - asking questions, testing ideas, exchanging ideas with each other. The questions are more important than the answers, the observations are more important than the facts.
- Find out who they are - with respect to themselves, the other children and the adults, and in relation to equipment and materials.
- Experience the excitement of learning - using the powers of their own minds and bodies, experiencing both success and frustration, feeling comfortable enough to take risks.

Although we don't know what the chemistry of each group will be, we do know that there will be numerous situations throughout the year that will produce anxiety: separation from family, sharing one's parent, trying a new activity, trying to make a friend, the frustration of not being able to cope, the death of an animal, or the presence of a substitute teacher. Each child has a right to all of his/her feelings. We intend to help him/her understand that there are constructive ways of expressing those feelings and that other children may have feelings that differ from their own.

At HCNS we continually try to provide opportunities for children to exercise control over their lives by offering them real choices throughout the day. Within the framework of these free-choice opportunities, children will learn positive social behavior, care of materials, safety, voice control, and appropriate ways to dispel energy. We emphasize that conflicts at school will be resolved through dialogue, that everyone should be treated with respect, and that game rules and play behavior must assure the safety of all.

Occasionally a situation will arise where a child/children will have needs that are greater than can be met within the normal classroom setting. When this type of situation arises, the staff will meet to determine the next course of action, making sure that there is a healthy working environment in each classroom. If the staff decides that a specific child needs to have a professional assessment done, parental/guardian approval is required. The parent/guardian may request to have this assessment done privately at their own expense. If a parent/guardian refuses to allow a professional assessment done on their child, then the school retains the right to dismiss the child from HCNS.

From time to time an educational assistant will be present in the classroom to assist a child who needs extra help participating fully in the classroom's activities. The need for a child to have an educational assistant is determined by a team consisting of the parents, Early Intervention staff members from the public school, the classroom teacher, and director. The public school staff interviews all educational assistants, checks references, and does a formal background criminal history check. The educational assistant is not the financial responsibility of HCNS.

We at HCNS respect the rights of confidentiality of all families and cannot disclose the name of the child supported by the educational assistant without the permission of the child's parents/guardians.

Sharing between your home and school will be an important experience for your child, so your teacher will support sharing from one child to another. We welcome things that relate to the particular focus of the class at that time. For those treasures that do come to school, we ask that you keep them in a safe place such as a cubby or backpack. We ask that toys of violence, danger, fragility, or "canned imagination" (as in superheroes) remain at home.

We ask parents to accept a high standard of confidentiality and professional ethics and to exercise appropriate discretion and the sensitivity required within a small community by holding in the strictest confidence the names and any personally identifiable information of students and families that you may encounter during your time spent in the classroom.

We all look forward to this year, with its many opportunities, to get to know you and your child.

*Melissa Kelly, 2-Day Teacher*

*Sandy Bailey, 3-Day Teacher/Afternoon Teacher*

*Blythe Keane, 4-Day Teacher*

*Giovanna Lepore, Afternoon Teacher*

*Meg O'Leary, Director*

## **COMMUNICATIONS:**

Your questions and concerns are important to us. If any questions or concerns arise, please discuss them with your classroom teacher, the director, classroom representative, or any other member of the Board of Directors.

Teachers share information with families about classroom rules, expectations, and routines not only at enrollment but also as needed throughout the year. (Translation services are provided upon request). They communicate with family members on an on-going basis to learn about children's individual needs and ensure a smooth transition between home and program through the following means:

### **Bulletin Board**

Outside each classroom is a bulletin board on which class newsletters and helping child schedules, are displayed. Board meeting notices and other school and community information can be found on the HCNS Family bulletin board.

### **Parent Portal**

The HCNS Parent Portal platform is our primary source of communication throughout the year. You can access the parent portal via the "Parent Portal" link on the HCNS website. The following is a list of ways we use the parent portal to communicate with each other:

- We: Post quarterly/monthly invoices to your portal. Parents: View and pay your tuition online
- Parents: Update contact, emergency and child pick up information
- Parents: Upload required documentation such as health exams and immunizations
- Teachers post newsletters and notifications regarding your child's class and upcoming field trips
- Parents can indicate (in advance) upcoming vacations or other days your child will not be in class on your parent portal calendar
- Teachers and Parents can send messages to each other

**Please note:** While only the teachers in your child's class will see your direct messages, several HCNS staff can also view all messages in the parent portal. If your questions or comments are highly sensitive and you would like only one person to have access to your message please email or call that person directly.

### **E-Mail**

Please reserve email conversations for sensitive communications you would like to remain private. Also, the Board will continue to communicate via e-mail.

### **Pick-up Time**

This is a time for a **quick** check-in regarding your child's day.

## COMMUNICATIONS, cont.

### Family Conferences

In the fall your child's teacher will send out an email discussing goals for your child. If you have any concerns regarding your child, the teacher will be happy to find a time to meet to discuss these concerns with you. The teachers also schedule an individual parent-teacher conference about your child in the late winter/early spring, and an end-of-year written report. **You** are the ones with the most sharing knowledge about your child and we gain much from this sharing. The teachers will contact you more often if there's a need. You should also feel free to contact your teacher at any time if you have a question about your child.

### Written Notes to Your Child's Teacher

Please inform your child's teacher in writing about:

- Any carpool arrangements
- Changes in routine (carpool, death, scare, parent trip, etc.)
- Medications you're giving your child so we may be alert for side effects.

A written note ensures that the teacher has a tangible reminder about something pertaining to your child's well-being.

### When You Need to Speak to Your Child's Teacher

Some conversations regarding your child's needs are helpful to have with your child present, and some are not. Feel free to make an appointment for a conference, call, send a message through the parent portal, email, or leave a note. We'll make every effort to respond promptly.

## CHILDREN'S CLOTHING:

Think of your child's time in school as time to explore everything and anything. Please dress your child comfortably in serviceable clothing that can get dirty. We do get messy! We prefer rubber-soled shoes and shoes with backs for safe footing.

It's essential that you send your child with the proper outer clothing for the weather. We do take advantage of the outdoors, and one child without proper clothing could spoil the plans for the entire group. **Assume that we'll be out unless it's pouring rain or the wind-chill factor is 0 F or below.**

To protect your child against sun injury, we recommend your child wear sun-protective clothing, and/or sunscreen or sunblock with UVB and UVA protection of SPF 30 or higher.

When organizing your child's outdoor clothing for the year, please assume he/she will be dressing him/herself. We'll be encouraging the children to do so. Some suggestions to make it as easy as possible to learn these skills:

- Plan with your child the order in which items will be put on, saving the mittens for last.
- Keep in mind large zipper fasteners are easiest to handle.
- Provide boots that your child can pull on him/herself.
- Teach your child to store mittens in their hat in the sleeve of their jacket (unless they're soggy).

Please, **mark all pieces of clothing**. It helps us to keep track and to prevent your supply from dwindling.

## **TOWARD HEALTH FOR ALL:**

### **At school we take the following measures towards this goal:**

- 1) Your staff washes and disinfects the bathroom and sink fixtures daily.
- 2) Each child and staff member has a personal, labeled hand towel that is washed regularly.
- 3) Reusable items used for snack preparation and service are washed and air-dried.
- 4) Because head-lice epidemics have occurred in the public schools in the past few years, we do the following to minimize the chances for this to occur at HCNS:
  - We ask all children and adults to store hats in the sleeve of their jacket.
  - We check heads routinely when necessary.
  - We may restrict the use of dress-up hats during outbreaks in the community.
- 5) We practice universal precautions by covering open wounds and using latex gloves when a child is bleeding.
- 6) When a child becomes ill but does not require immediate medical help, a determination will be made by the staff whether the child requires exclusion. The child will be excluded if:
  - The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities.
  - The illness results in a need for care that is greater than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children.
  - The illness poses a risk of spread of disease to others.

### **You can help, too:**

- 1) We invite you and your family to work with us in preventing the spread of contagious diseases in our school. Please keep your children home if any of these symptoms develop:
  - Appears to be severely ill
  - Fever above 101 F orally, and behavior change or other signs and symptoms (e.g. sore throat, rash, vomiting, diarrhea).
  - Diarrhea
  - Blood in the stools not explained by dietary change, medication, or hard stools
  - Vomiting more than once in the previous 24 hours, unless the vomiting is determined to be caused by a non-communicable condition and the child is not in danger of dehydration.
  - Abdominal pain that continues for more than 2 hours or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs or symptoms.
  - Mouth sores with drooling.
  - Rash with fever or behavioral changes.
  - Pink or red conjunctiva (pink with puss) in whites of eyes, often with matted eyelids after sleep and eye pain, or redness of the eyelids or skin around the eye until treatment has been started.
  - Tuberculosis, until the child's physician or local health department states child is on appropriate treatment and can return.
  - Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment has been started.
  - Strep throat or other streptococcal infection, until 24 hours after treatment has been started.

- Head lice or nits, until after the first treatment (need to be re-checked by staff).
  - Scabies, until after treatment has been given.
  - Chickenpox (varicella) until all lesions have dried or crusted (usually 6 days after onset of rash)
  - Pertussis, until 5 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment.
  - Mumps, until 9 days after onset of parotid gland swelling.
  - Measles, until 4 days after onset of rash.
  - Hepatitis A virus infection, until 1 week after onset of illness or jaundice or as directed by the health department when immune globulin has been given to the appropriate children and adult contacts.
  - Any child determined by the local health department to be contributing to the transmission of illness during an outbreak.
- 2) Please call or email before 8 a.m. to inform us whenever your child won't be in school.
  - 3) Let us know whenever your child is being given medication. ALL medications have possible side effects for us to watch for. The board has established the policy that **we will not be responsible for giving a child any medication except in emergency situations when the child's health is perceived to be at risk and only after a release form is signed by the child's parents.** Prescription medication will only be administered upon completion of a "Permission to Administer Medication" form. The medication must be in its original container and clearly labeled by the pharmacy, with dosage, content, schedule and time. For medicines administered via inhaler, the child's name must be on the inhaler, and the prescription label or written instructions from the prescribing doctor must accompany it.
  - 4) Children should not bring cough drops, salves, etc., for self-administration.
  - 5) We do not administer over-the-counter medication, except with instruction from the child's physician.
  - 6) Please help us in preventing the spread of contagious diseases in our school. Hands spread most disease. If you begin establishing the following patterns at home with your family, you'll lessen your child's confusion at school (where we practice these patterns) and will benefit everyone's health.

**Everyone washes hands:**

- upon arrival at school;
- after using the bathroom; (children are encouraged to wipe themselves after using the bathroom).
- after nose blowing; (children are encouraged to blow/wipe their own nose and to discard the tissue).
- after coughing into hands;
- after touching any body fluids such as blood, mucus or vomit;
- before preparing food. During food preparation and service, wash hands as often as necessary to remove soil and contamination and prevent cross contamination when changing tasks and when switching from working with raw foods and ready to eat foods;
- before meals and snacks;
- after handling pets and other animals or any materials such as sand, dirt, or surfaces that might be contaminated by contact with animals.

**Adults also wash their hands:**

- after assisting a child with toileting;
- after handling garbage or cleaning;
- after cleaning with disinfecting chemicals.

**Proper hand-washing procedures are followed by adults and children and include:**

- using liquid soap and running water;
- rubbing hands vigorously for at least 10 seconds, including back of hands, wrists, between fingers, under and around any jewelry, and under fingernails; rinsing well; drying hands with a paper towel, a single-use towel, or a dryer; and avoiding touching the faucet with just-washed hands (e.g., by using a paper towel to turn off water ).

Except when handling blood or body fluids that might contain blood (when wearing gloves is required), wearing gloves is an optional supplement, but not a substitute, for hand washing in any required hand-washing situation listed above.

- wear gloves when contamination with blood may occur.
- do not use hand-washing sinks for bathing children or for removing smeared fecal material.

Note: The use of alcohol-based hand rubs in lieu of hand washing is not recommended for early education and child care settings. If these products are used as a temporary measure, a sufficient amount must be used to keep the hands wet for 15 seconds. Since the alcohol-based hand rubs are toxic and flammable, they must be stored and used according to the manufacturer's instructions.

**SMOKING:** The children thank you for not smoking in or around the building and/or during the school day.

**TOWARD SAFETY FOR ALL:**

In order to ensure all of our children feel safe in their school environment, we follow these practices:

**Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting:**

New Hampshire and Vermont State law requires reporting of all suspected incidences of child abuse and/or neglect to the NH Division of Child and Youth Services, 1-800-894-5533, or(VT) Department of Social Services 1-802-295-8840.

**Discipline**

Our teachers work to avoid disciplinary problems by:

- arranging equipment, materials, activities, and schedules in a way that promotes desirable behavior.
- providing positive guidance.
- establishing rules or limits for acceptable behavior which are fair, consistently applied, realistic, designed to promote cooperation and respect, and are appropriate and understandable to the developmental level of the child.
- giving positive worded directions (telling the child what they can do rather than cannot).

- acting as a role model by demonstrating desired behavior and redirecting children to acceptable behavior; (e.g. “You can’t kick the wall, but I can give you a ball to kick when we go outside”. This gives the child the idea that kicking is not in itself wrong but that there are acceptable and unacceptable things to kick).
- using consequences related to the misbehavior and enforcing those consequences as soon as possible after the misbehavior has occurred. (e.g.: if a child throws food, he/she has chosen to leave the table).

Separation or time out is not used as a punitive disciplinary technique; instead, the child is redirected to another activity. If a child needs to be separated from the group for safety reasons, he or she shall be able to see and hear the other children, and child care personnel.

**Staff/Helping Parents may not spank, put in time out, attempt to control, verbally shame, belittle, ridicule, yell at, name call, make verbal threats towards or withhold food from any of the children.**

***If you are unsure about and/or losing patience with a situation, please ask another staff person to help.***

### **Disaster Preparedness and Evacuation Procedures**

HCNS has developed procedures for emergency situations. In case of any event that would cause harm to the children, parents/guardians will be notified as soon as safely possible. If the staff feels the need to evacuate the building, children will be transported to the Richard Black Community Center in Hanover.

### **Firearms:**

Firearms are prohibited from all areas of Hampshire Cooperative Nursery School property.

### **ABOUT THE GENERAL FUNCTIONING OF YOUR SCHOOL:**

To become further acquainted with the rules by which your school functions, refer to the bylaws posted on the “HCNS Family” bulletin board. If you have any general questions, you may also call the President of the Board.

### **About Your Child’s Program**

If any questions or concerns arise, call your child’s teacher, the director, or your class representative. The class representatives conduct surveys twice a year in order to maintain good communication among parents, the board and staff.

### **Closing for Bad Weather**

Often the roads may seem fine in your area but driving may be hazardous elsewhere. Our school follows the Hanover schools’ closings or delays. We close if they close, and we will open at 10:30, if they have a delay. Even though we may open at 10:30 on delayed days, please use your discretion regarding the road condition in your area. Also, the days when we have a delayed opening, attendance is totally optional.

Information can be found by logging on to: <http://www.wmur.com/weather/closings>, or by calling the school (603-643-4640) for a recorded message. **Please note: It has always been school policy not to make up for days missed due to bad weather unless decided on by the Board.**

### **If Your Child Will be Absent**

Call the school at 603-643-4640 or email: [HampshireCoop@gmail.com](mailto:HampshireCoop@gmail.com) by 8:00 a.m. if your child will be absent from school. Your child's teacher and friends will want to know about him/her. We also need to notify the state of outbreaks of communicable diseases.

### **To Reach Us**

Hampshire Cooperative Nursery School  
104 Lyme Road, Hanover, NH 03755  
[HampshireCoop@gmail.com](mailto:HampshireCoop@gmail.com)  
(603) 643-4640  
[HampshireCooperative.org](http://HampshireCooperative.org)

### **SCHEDULING INFORMATION:**

#### **Class Schedule**

2-day class	Tuesday, Friday
3-day classes	Monday, Wednesday, Thursday
4-day class	Monday-Thursday
Afternoon Class	Monday-Thursday

#### **Vacation Days**

Each year a detailed school calendar will be available before school starts. The following standard holidays and vacation breaks are observed by HCNS:

Columbus Day (10/8)	Martin Luther King Day (1/21)
Veteran's Day (11/12)	Winter Vacation (2/18-22)
Thanksgiving (11/21,22,23)	Spring Vacation (4/15-19)
December Holidays (12/24-1/1)	

**Teacher In-Service Dates:** October 5th and March 11th

#### **Important School Functions:**

Summer Work Day	August 25th and September 1st
Fund-Raiser Bake Sale	September 2nd
Fall Corporation Meeting	September 5th
Open House	September 4th & 5th
First Day(s) of School	September 6th & 7th
Spring Fundraiser	May TBD
Last Day of School	May 24th

## **CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT**

Your child's experience at HCNS is facilitated by a professional and engaged teacher who is committed to each child's individual academic, social and emotional growth. Teachers take advantage of the New England seasons with themes and activities and integrate key areas of content including literacy, mathematics, science, technology, creative expression and the arts, health and safety and social studies. Material presented to the children is based on research, and is relevant, engaging, and meaningful to them by reflecting their culture, gender, language, and abilities.

The children explore science and mathematics through hands-on exploration of materials, experience art and engineering through projects, and investigate the world and their role in it using their imaginations and creativity. Our curriculum is age-appropriate and geared towards our community and families involved. Our teachers are eager to learn about each of your cultural backgrounds, past experiences, and current circumstances so they can create a program that fits the needs of all of our children and families.

For a child with special needs, the teacher works with the goals (Individualized Education Program) set by the child's educational team. Through observation, the teachers will document each child's work, play, behaviors, and interactions in all areas of development including cognitive skills, language, social-emotional development, learning style, and health. The information gathered will be added to each child's portfolio and used to help the teachers plan and modify their daily lesson plans and design goals for each child. This information will not be shared with anyone other than each child's parent or guardian without written permission

## **ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE:**

**Arrival time: 8:30 (morning classes), 12:30 (afternoon class),**

All children must be accompanied by an adult. Please call the school if your child will be absent or late.

**Dismissal time: 12:30(morning classes), 3:30 (afternoon class)**

The children will be walked to the parking lot by their classroom teacher and wait at the stop sign at the end of the fence for pick-up by their parent or authorized adult. **For safety's sake, please accompany your child to the car and keep him/her from running in the parking lot and in the front yard between the fence and road.**

### **Authorization to Dismiss**

Your child will be released only to those individuals you have authorized in your parent portal profile or in a dated note, signed by the child's parent/guardian.

When a last minute change occurs, please call the director to give details and permission over the phone. We will not release your child to anyone for whom we have not received permission.

In cases where no authorized person arrives to take the child, we will take the following action: attempt to contact the parent(s) or guardian, call people on the Emergency Release form, call the police department in the child's district.

### **Carpools**

Please personally deliver and pick up the children in your carpool.

## **YOUR CHILD'S DAY (Morning Classes)**

### **8:30 Exploratory Play Time (Discovery Learning)**

For 45 minutes to an hour, the children can choose to play with any of the children, adults, and activities available. Sample choices include:

- sand and water table
- books
- blocks
- puzzles and manipulatives
- artifactory (materials for drawing, cutting, pasting)
- sensory activity
- science exploration
- house corner/dramatic play
- art project (process oriented)

Following Exploratory Play Time, your child will be involved in:

### **Cleanup Time**

Everyone pitches in.

### **Snack**

Parents are asked to provide a variety of healthful foods for the whole class on their child's helping child days. Please refer to the Snack List enclosed.

### **Group Times**

Conversation, stories on the rug, weather and calendar, music and movement, or large motor activities are planned.

### **Playground/Outdoor**

If the weather is nice, we go to the playground or for a hike. If the weather is poor, we'll provide large-motor activities inside.

### **Lunch**

Children will return to their classrooms for lunch.

### **12:30 Dismissal**

Each child will be picked up in the parking lot by an adult indicated as responsible to do so.

## **YOUR CHILD'S DAY (Afternoon Class)**

- **12:30 transition** from lunch (morning students staying for the afternoon) or **arrive** (PM only students)
- Quiet Activity Time
- Music and Movement
- group meeting ~ sharing thoughts, questions, knowledge of current study topic
- Outdoor Exploration, Art and Snack
- 3:30 dismissal ~ meet at parking lot

## **Field Trips**

Field trips to places like farms, the fire station and hikes will be arranged periodically by the classroom teachers. We must have written permission from a child's parent(s) or guardian before the child is allowed to participate in a field trip.

It may be necessary to leave your child's car seat at the school on the day of a field trip.

Children will be transported in private cars driven by parents of your child's classmates who have gone through the State's background check, and who have adequate automobile liability insurance (a minimum of \$100,000 - \$300,000). Driver's License, Registration Card, and Insurance for all such drivers will be checked and must be up to date on the day of the trip.

Due to the cost of the background checks, our pool of drivers will be limited.

## **REQUIREMENTS OF PARENTS:**

### **MORNING**

- 1) Serve on either the Board or a school committee.
- 2) Contribute to fundraising through a donation of time and work.
- 3) Option to complete Helping Parent Hours to go towards a tuition credit (see following page)

### **AFTERNOON**

- 1) Serve on either the Board or a school committee.
- 2) Contribute to fundraising through a donation of time and work.

## WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A HELPING PARENT:

Your Board has had an in-depth discussions about the evolution of the Helping Parent Role. In recent years, it has become apparent that the Helping Parent role, in its traditional in-the-classroom model, has become a difficult requirement for some families. In addition, with the presence of assistants in every classroom, it is not as effective for the school as it might be. In an effort to make this role more flexible for families and more beneficial for the school, the Board, with your consensus, has expanded the definition of the Helping Parent. This change has occurred in response to comments from parents on the difficulty of meeting Helping Parent requirements in the classroom, and to acknowledge the contributions parents make to our school in so many ways.

***As a Helping Parent you will be asked to participate in providing a healthy snack to your child's class several times throughout the year.*** Your class representative will contact you regarding sign ups. Please keep in mind that snacks, if requiring assembly, should be done before being sent with your child to school, or, please give the teacher adequate notice so, if they choose, snack preparation can be included in the day's plans.

*Also, you have the option of helping in the classroom throughout the year (for credit towards 4th quarter tuition) in the following ways:*

- being In the classroom in the traditional Helping Parent role
- With field trips or school events/festivals
- With special projects like playground clean-up/work days
- Other projects deemed a priority by the preschool

You may receive up to the following credit:

2 day AM class: up to 15 hrs/\$150

3 day AM class: up to 20 hrs/\$200

4 day AM class: up to 30 hrs/\$300

(These hours were determined based upon the previous number of times, per each class, that the parent was in the classroom, i.e. 4-day class 10 times during the school year; multiplied by the 3 hours the parent was in the classroom, totaling 30, for the 4 day class, and so on). You are responsible for keeping track of your Helping Parent hours and activities. Please document your hours on the helping parent log in your child's classroom. We will not be able to honor any undocumented hours at the end of the year.

Children will be assigned Helping Child days when they do the things they have traditionally done in that role. The difference is that parents are not required to be in the classroom on that day (although they are more than welcome to if they would like).

The afternoon program will remain in its current structure, without a Helping Parent component, but as always, we encourage afternoon families to become involved in school activities that need volunteers.

As is currently the case, parents are still required to participate on the Board or on a committee.

## **IF YOU CHOOSE TO BE IN THE CLASSROOM ON YOUR CHILD'S DAY:**

**Please plan to arrive at school at 8:15** to have a chance to review the day's plans with the teacher, and help your child settle in with you.

### **Siblings**

When you do help in the classroom, please make arrangements for the care of your other children. Often families trade babysitting with other families enrolled in the school.

### **Criminal History Record**

By New Hampshire law, to screen out possible child abusers, you may be required to fill out and notarize a form.

### **Clothing**

When you're in the classroom, please wear serviceable clothing that won't be ruined by the odd paint spot and that won't restrict your movement. We value adults spending most of their time at the children's level.

## **YOUR DAY AS HELPING PARENT IN THE CLASSROOM:**

**8:15** Arrival with your child. Talk with your teacher about the plans for the morning.

**8:25** "Special time" for you and your child to spend together before you must be shared.

**8:30** Enjoy the time, and please remember to be available to all children as you help the teacher with the planned activities.

During classroom time you'll be involved in:

Play/Activity	Feel free to follow your child's interests and enjoy spending the time with your child and his/her classmates.
Cleanup	Show the children the kinds of things that need to be done. Encourage their help. Comment positively on the jobs being done.
Snack	Oversee the setting of the snack table. Expected spills are handled matter-of-factly by the children themselves.
Group Activity	Feel free to participate.
Dressing for Outdoors	Support and encourage all efforts to "do it myself," helping only when absolutely necessary.

Playground	For safety, avoid conversations with other adults - we need your eyes and full attention. Your teacher will explain specific playground rules. (See emergency procedure handout).
Room Cleanup	Help the teacher clean up the room.
Sharing	Take time to share your thoughts and questions about the day with your teacher.
Lunch	Join your child for lunch.

## **YOUR BOARD:**

The Board of Directors consists of a president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and registrar, marketing & publicity, and one or two class representatives from each class.

As established by the bylaws governing Hampshire Cooperative Nursery School, the Board of Directors is responsible for the property, interest, business, and transactions of the school. What that means is that your Board helps manage the daily and weekly business activities of the school (collecting tuition, paying bills, and so on), as well as helps establish long-term policy and procedures. The Board is responsible to you, the school as a whole; we all work together to make HCNS something special for our children.

Your Board solicits encouragement, suggestions, compliments, and complaints in any areas that concern you. Board meetings are open to parents interested in attending, and we encourage you to attend if you'd like to learn more about the school or get more involved in its operation. Notices of Board meetings and meeting minutes are posted on the HCNS Family bulletin boards in the front hall.

One way HCNS hopes to maintain good communications among parents, staff, and the Board is through two surveys per year as part of an overall evaluation of the school. The class representatives from each class are responsible for conducting the survey in the fall and the board sends a survey via Survey Monkey in the spring. The members-at-large are also your liaison to the Board, so please don't hesitate to contact them with questions or concerns.

## **COMMITTEE JOB DESCRIPTIONS:**

Numbers in parentheses are the ideal size of that committee. The Vice-President oversees all the committees.

### **Fundraising (8 plus 1 Chair)**

Plans and carries out two to three fund-raisers every year. The monetary goals will be outlined in the budget. Events that solicit the support of the community (as opposed to in-house fundraisers) are strongly encouraged, with the intent of promoting the name and reputation of HCNS, thereby strengthening future enrollment. While the committee will be responsible for organizing the events, all HCNS families are expected to participate in them. For example, all families would sell raffle tickets, attend the concert, or work to promote and prepare for the festival.

### **Morning Class Representatives (1-2 depending on the class)**

Act as liaisons between the class parents and the Board, sharing duties with the other Class Rep.; prepare the Helping Child schedule; plan and organize a family fun day; oversee teacher appreciation gift, etc.

**Afternoon Class Representatives (1):** Act as a liaison between the Afternoon class parents and the Board; oversee teacher appreciation gift, etc.

### **Grants (1)**

This is a subset of the fundraising committee. The person in charge of grants will seek out and apply for grants for the preschool. In the past, we have received grants for tuition assistance, playground equipment, building improvement, outdoor space additions, and composting materials.

### **Cleaning (5 plus 1 Chair)**

Responsible for weekly cleaning. The committee chair creates the cleaning schedule and makes sure every member is aware of their duties.

### **Maintenance (3)**

Responsible for general building maintenance and assistance with minor repairs both inside and outdoors.

### **Technology (1)**

Updates the school website as needed and helps with other technology issues as they arise: e.g. setting up Paypal accounts, creating new web content, etc.

### **Enrichment (1)**

Seeks out and organizes activities outside of the classroom to educate, engage and entertain HCNS students and families. At least two programs should be planned each semester. Examples of activities include: music, dance, yoga, cooking, storytelling, etc. (Classes are open to the community if they do not fill with HCNS families.) Committee members solicit ideas for future programs from HCNS families. In addition, they create and distribute surveys to those taking part in the activities to determine how successful they are, and keep a running list of those activities and activity leaders that have been well received. Programs are promoted through email and flyers.

## **Garden (2)**

Plans and maintains the school gardens. The window boxes and front flower beds are the responsibility of the gardening committee; the vegetable garden represents a joint effort between the committee and the teachers.

## **Photography (2)**

Attends and documents a variety of (not all!) field trips, festivals, and typical school days. These photos are displayed for children to observe, shared on the website (with permission), and used for accreditation documentation. Also, the photography committee will schedule a time for each class to have a class photo taken, typically in the fall.

## **Soccer (1)**

Organize and manage all aspects of the Spring and Fall soccer programs. Specific tasks include setting the dates of the sessions, advertising, enrollment, fee collection, t-shirt ordering and distributing, recruiting coaches, maintaining the roster, communication with parents and coaches, deciding whether or not to hold practice during inclement weather, providing descriptions of drills, activities, and enrichment topics (i.e. good sportsmanship, importance of exercise) to the coaches, requesting payment for coaches, providing some kind of reward (i.e. ribbons, medals, etc) and snack/juice boxes for the children on the last day of practice.

## **FUNDRAISING:**

The goal of the fundraising committee is to supplement the operating budget, and raise money for our scholarship fund. The procedure for fundraising will be as follows:

- A fundraising committee will be one of the regular HCNS committees.
- The committee will organize two or three small fund-raisers each year. Examples include raffles, concerts, and product sales.
- While the committee will be responsible for organizing the events, all HCNS families are expected to participate in them. For example, all families would sell raffle tickets, attend the concert, or work to promote and prepare for the festival.
- The amount to be raised each year will be set in the budget. In addition to raising money, an important function of this committee is to provide a way for families to come together socially while working for the school.

## **IDEAS FOR THE LUNCH BOX:**

Fill the lunch box with a variety of healthy foods. Be sure to include plenty of fresh fruit, salad vegetables and bread or low fat cracker biscuits. Put in low fat protein food such as meats, fish, dairy products, baked beans or boiled egg.

Try a variety of breads and rolls such as whole wheat, mixed grain, white hi-fiber, bagels, pocket, lavash, focaccia, turkish and flat breads. Use margarine/butter sparingly. If sandwich filling is moist (ie. avocado, cheese, salad etc) try to leave out margarine/butter. Dairy foods, meat and eggs need to be kept cold. Put a frozen drink bottle in with the lunch box or use a cooler bag. Cut sandwiches into strips or use a shape cutter for a novelty.

### **Try these sandwich fillings:**

- Lean roast beef or turkey with tomato and lettuce.
- Light cream cheese, grated carrot and sultanas.
- Low fat cheese, pineapple and lettuce.
- Baked beans (drained) and grated low fat cheese.
- Avocado, instead of margarine.
- Avocado, bean sprouts and tomato.
- Lean ham and fruit chutney.
- Roast beef or pastrami with salad
- Chopped egg, cucumber and lettuce.
- Chopped skinless chicken, low fat mayonnaise and lettuce.
- Tabbouleh salad, lettuce and feta cheese.
- Sunflower butter (Sunbutter) lightly spread, topped with chopped dried fruit (apricots and sultanas).
- Bananas mashed with Sunbutter.
- Humus, sliced tomato and sprouts.
- Tuna or salmon with low fat mayonnaise.

### Other ideas:

- pizza
- macaroni & cheese or other pasta dishes
- tacos, burritos
- soup
- rice mixed with meat/vegetables
- salads
- Fruit – fresh, dried, or canned, packed in small containers
- Vegetables and dip – carrots, broccoli, sweet peppers, cucumbers, etc.

### Beverages:

- milk (low fat or soy)
- unsweetened fruit juices
- tomato or V8 juice

The following food should not be offered to children younger than 4 years of age:  
hot dogs (whole or sliced into rounds), whole grapes, nuts, popcorn, raw peas and hard pretzels, spoonfuls of peanut butter, chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole.

*Adapted from: [www.chw.edu.au/parents/factsheets/fosnackj.htm](http://www.chw.edu.au/parents/factsheets/fosnackj.htm)*

## **NOTE TO PARENTS FROM THE BUREAU OF CHILD CARE LICENSING:**

The licensing authority for this program is the Bureau of Child Care Licensing. Information regarding recent licensing and monitoring visits for this program is available by calling the Bureau at 603-271-4624 or 1-800-852-3345, x 4624. **Child care programs are required to post a copy of the statement of findings and corrective action plan for the most recent visit in a location which is accessible to parents, and must maintain copies of the statement of findings and corrective action plan for the preceding visit and make them available to parents to review, upon request.** Statements of findings and corrective action plans are also available by calling the Bureau at the above numbers.

During licensing, monitoring and complaint investigation visits to licensed programs, the Bureau's licensing specialists, all of whom have education/experience in early childhood education, speak with children regarding the care they receive at the program, if in the judgment of the licensing specialist children's responses would be valuable in determining the quality and level of care provided. If you wish to be informed prior to your child being interviewed, or do not want your child interviewed, you must provide a signed, dated statement to the center director indicating your preference. This statement must be updated annually. The center director is required to inform the licensing specialist when any parent has completed such a statement.

The well-being of children is our concern. BCCL staff recognize that interviewing young children is a delicate responsibility. Therefore, the licensing specialist(s) will make every attempt to help any child they interview feel comfortable by being gentle, reassuring, sensitive and casual. They will spend time with the child and will take into account the child's level of maturity and willingness to talk to us.

The licensing specialist(s) ask the teachers to introduce them to the children and briefly explain the licensing specialist(s) role. The licensing specialist(s) ask open-ended questions. They randomly select which children they will speak with, and invite those children to tell the licensing specialist(s) about their child care program/school, however, no child is ever forced to speak with a licensing specialist. If a child appears uncomfortable about speaking or declines the licensing specialist(s)' invitation, they select another child. No child is ever pressured to speak with a licensing specialist. Generally the children enjoy telling an interested person about their day at the child care program/school, and often, children who have not been selected ask the licensing specialist(s) if they can talk to them.

Bureau staff believe it is important to interview children when monitoring child care programs because children often provide us with valuable information about the care they receive, as well as important child care activities that we are unlikely to observe. The licensing specialist(s) ask questions about meals, snacks, activities, teachers, fire drills, rest, rules that children must follow, and what happens if children don't follow those rules.



## **Hampshire Cooperative Nursery School**

is accredited by the

## **National Academy of Early Childhood Programs**

The Academy administers the only national, voluntary, professionally sponsored accreditation system for all types of schools and child care centers. The Academy is a division of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the nation's largest organization of early childhood educators.

Early childhood programs accredited by the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs have voluntarily undergone a comprehensive process of internal self-study, invited external professional review to verify compliance with the Academy's Criteria for High Quality Early Childhood Programs, and been found to be in substantial compliance with the Criteria.

A high quality early childhood program provides a safe and nurturing environment while promoting the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development of young children. In accredited programs you will see:

- frequent, positive, warm interactions among adults and children
- planned learning activities appropriate to children's age and development, such as block building, painting, reading stories, dress-up, and active outdoor play
- specially trained teachers
- enough adults to respond to individual children
- many varied age-appropriate materials
- a healthy and safe environment for children
- nutritious snacks
- regular communication with parents
- effective administration
- ongoing, systematic evaluation